

# **University of Glasgow**

**University Court – Wednesday 21 June 2017**

## **Communications to Court from the meeting of Senate held on 21 April 2017**

**(All matters are for noting)**

### **1. Principal's Q&A**

No questions had been submitted prior to the meeting, however a question was received regarding the Personal Development Review (PDR) process for Postdoctoral Researchers. Points were raised concerning the process and equitable treatment by reviewers, the performance outcomes and their basis in evidence and lack of an appeal mechanism. It was also asked whether performance outcomes were monitored.

The Principal clarified that Human Resources were responsible for the PDR process, and in consequence, it was the remit of Court rather than Council of Senate. However, it was clarified that reviewers were selected on the basis of ensuring that reviews were carried out by someone within the line management structure, while being cognisant of the number of reviews any one reviewer was expected to undertake. It was clarified that there was not an appeal process for performance outcomes, but that the purpose of the discussion was to agree on the performance outcome. It was also highlighted that the objective setting was an important part of the process that influenced the review stage. It was noted that performance was monitored by profile, rather than on an individual basis.

### **2. Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016**

A paper on the recommendations agreed by Council of Senate would be received by Court on 21 June 2017.

Council of Senate received the final report of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 Working Group concerning the implementation of the Act at the University of Glasgow in respect of its implications for the University Senate. The Clerk of Senate reported that, since the last meeting of Council of Senate on 2 February 2017, the Working Group had received further legal advice which had enabled it to conclude its recommendations.

The report comprised of three sections:

#### **A. Composition of the new Senate**

Section A referred to the composition of the new Senate and would ultimately require Privy Council approval. Council of Senate was asked to endorse the proposals in Section A for onward transmission to the University Court for endorsement and the commencement of the procedure for a new Ordinance concerning the composition of Senate.

With the endorsement of the Council of Senate and the University Court and subject to the statutory approval procedure for new Ordinances, the measures proposed in Part A shall be reflected in a new Ordinance concerning the composition of Senate.

Section A was endorsed.

B. Method of election of members of Senate and Transitional Arrangements for establishment of the new Senate.

Section B referred to the method of election of members of the new Senate and the transitional arrangements between Council of Senate and the new Senate. This did not need Privy Council approval.

Members of Council of Senate raised some concerns about not seeking cover for maternity leave and about the approach to managing the gender balance; it was argued that the latter did not go far enough to establish a more representative gender balance. These concerns were noted; the restrictions concerning the desire for an equitable gender balance had frustrated the Working Group also, but, as noted above, were in line with the clear legal advice received. It was agreed that the aim was to encourage a better balance of representation and that the proposals be endorsed, but that there would be review.

C. Arrangements for meetings of Senate and appointment of officers and committees of Senate

Section C referred to arrangements for the meetings of the new Senate and the appointment of officers and committees of the new Senate. Council of Senate was asked to approve the following proposals which would then be reported to Court for its information.

Section C was approved as recommended.

**3. Student Support & Development Committee: Report from the meeting held on 23 March 2017**

Council of Senate received a report from the Student Support & Development Committee held on 23 March 2017.

The Clerk of Senate provided an update regarding the item on Counselling and Psychological Services (CaPS). It was reported that actions were being actively taken to address the challenge. As had been discussed at previous meetings of Council of Senate, it was recognised that CaPS had experienced increasing pressure, and that following discussions at Council of Senate in October extra resources were to be made available. The Clerk of Senate reported that a number of actions had already been taken, including:

- More efficient triaging of cases;
- Training of student peer supporters;
- Sharing of best practice across the institution;
- Training for selected staff in Schools and RIs.

In addition, a Student Mental Health Policy had been developed, an initiative led by the SRC, where there was scope for further development.

It had also been reported at SSDC that there was a need to develop a coherent policy across the University, and, as part of this, it had been suggested by SSDC that a Mental Health and Well-Being Champion be appointed to liaise, synchronise and develop activities and policy. It was highlighted that there were a number of Champions for protected characteristics who were

members of SMG which meant that they were a voice and conduit to discussion at SMG. There was recognition that there would be benefit in a Mental Health and Well-being Champion having a close to link to the academic base in this area.

There was discussion about whether there should be a single champion, or one in each College. It was noted that the Champion would not be a substitute for existing support and the role would be about linking the existing activity, and bring this together at a strategic level. Council of Senate agreed that there should be a Senior Management level Champion that Colleges would feed into. It was also recognised that this was not just a matter that affected students and therefore should also be referred to the HR Committee for discussion.

Council of Senate was interested to find out whether there was evidence of particular issues that were impacting on students to establish whether changes could be made to the way things are done to try to help ease the pressure. It was noted that this was seen as part of the role for the Champion, but that CaPS were also looking to better understand in order to take appropriate action.

#### **4. Convener's Business**

##### *4.1 Brexit*

The Principal reported that the Scottish Government had committed to fund EU students for 2018-19 for the duration of their studies in December 2016. This meant that the University was in a position to communicate this to applicants, which had not been possible at this stage last year, a factor which had impacted on recruitment.

A series of legal seminars had been arranged for EU and non-EU nationals to provide one to one support where necessary, although there was recognition that it was only possible to provide limited reassurance. The Principal encouraged members to support their colleagues as best they could.

Some concerns were raised about the fact that the legal advice received via the seminars had been worrying: it was reported that attendees had been advised that, if they did not take out health insurance, there was a risk to their status. It was also highlighted that there were reports that the same would also apply to students. It was reported that the health insurance matter was being lobbied on.

##### *4.2 Scottish Funding Council and Skills and Enterprise Review.*

It was reported that there had been concerns about the creation of a Super Board that would merge together current activity of Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council, and that this would impact on the constitution. Council of Senate was advised that the four existing boards would stay in place and Scottish Government had provided assurance that Scottish Funding Council would continue to receive its own budget.

It was noted that the University had been given very late notice of recruitment targets for controlled places on some courses, for example Nursing and Teacher Education. It was reported that through dialogue with the Scottish Funding Council and Scottish Government the HE sector was aiming to ensure that this would improve in future.

#### **5. Clerk of Senate's Business**

### 5.1 *Rectorial Election*

The Clerk of Senate formally reported the outcome of the Rectorial election held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017. The Council of Senate found that Mr Aamer Anwar had been elected as Rector of the University for the period 31 March 2017 until March 2020. The single-transferable voting method was used and Mr Anwar achieved the threshold for election on the first count.

### 5.2 *Election of Senate Assessors on Court*

At the end of this session, Dr Duncan Ross and Professor Karen Lury would be standing down as Senate Assessors on Court. Therefore, nominations for their successors would be sought.