

## **University of Glasgow**

**University Court – Wednesday 13 December 2017**

**Communications to Court from the meeting of Council of Senate held on 07 December 2017**

**(All matters are for noting)**

### **1. Dean of Faculties - reappointment**

Council of Senate was pleased to approve the Principal's recommendation to reappoint Emeritus Professor Jan McDonald as Dean of Faculties for a further year. Professor McDonald had now completed three three-year terms and a further two-year term in office and was the first woman to serve in the role in the University's history. Professor McDonald played a vital role in welcoming guests to graduations.

### **2. Honorary Degrees Committee**

Council of Senate received an oral report from the Honorary Degrees Committee on additional recommendations for the conferment of honorary Degrees in 2018. The Clerk of Senate would provide a report to Court at its meeting on 13 December 2017.

It was also reported that comments had been received about one of the nominations received for consideration by Council of Senate at the October meeting. The Council of Senate was reminded that one of the nominees had unfortunately died during the period between the nomination being received and the meeting of the Honorary Degrees Committee at which the nomination was considered. It was reported that the University of Glasgow had previously awarded a small number of Honorary Degrees posthumously, but that, where that had been the case, the person receiving the award had died after they had agreed to accept the award.

Comments had been received from Dr Roach regarding the conferring of a posthumous Honorary Degree to an individual who had neither received the invitation nor accepted. At the meeting, Dr Roach stressed that his concern did not relate to the individual in question, but to the principle concerned and to the precedent that would be set. It was noted that there was variation between institutions about the approaches taken to the awarding of Honorary Degrees posthumously.

It reported that the Honorary Degrees Committee had taken the view that it was legitimate to consider the nomination, as the nominee had been alive at the time the nomination was submitted. On a show of hands, the Council of Senate voted in favour of approving the nomination. It was further agreed that the nominee's family would be consulted in a sensitive manner on whether they would agree to accepting the award.

### **3. Campus Development Update**

The Director of Estates and Buildings, Ms Ann Allen, provided an update regarding the Campus Development. Council of Senate was reminded that the Master Plan for the developments had been approved in February 2017, which included a set of principles for the campus:

- Open - porous – to encourage movement
- Safe
- 'Sticky' – to encourage people to stay on campus

Court had approved in December 2016 plans for the Learning and Teaching Hub, the Research Hub, Institute of Health and Wellbeing, College of Arts Phase 1, Engineering Phase 1, the Adam Smith Business School and the Innovation Zone. So far, expenditure of £250M had been approved by Court.

The School of Mathematics and Statistics had moved to their temporary location and the vacated site was being prepared for construction of the Learning and Teaching Hub. Demolition was also underway on the Western Infirmary site and the Business case had been approved. Work had also started on the refurbishment of the Joseph Black Building. It was recognised that it was also important to think about the existing campus as well as the new development. Approximately sixty projects were underway.

Construction of the Research Hub would start in April 2018. The full business case for the Institute of Health and Wellbeing would be considered and the design for the College of Arts, School of Engineering and the Adam Smith Business School would take place. A fundraising campaign was also scheduled to begin.

Ms Allen noted a number of challenges, including the capacity of existing teaching space to accommodate the current and any increase in student numbers and increased pressure on space due to staff recruitment. It was reported that there had been 50,000 requests for change of rooms for teaching made during August 2017 alone. There were also challenges in maintaining the existing estate.

SMG had recognised that there were challenges around existing capacity and had supported £2.3M investment in immediate needs. The next five-year period would provide continuing challenges, but a series of options were being explored. SMG would consider the appropriate balance between investment in maintenance of the current campus and investment in estate development. £30M was committed to maintenance per annum and £35M was being invested in the Joseph Black Building. £30M over the next ten years was also being invested to test new ways of working. A review of conditions of the estate was being undertaken and this information would feed into plans for planned works.

The University was undertaking a level of construction not seen since development in the 1960s and 1970s. Safety was a fundamental consideration with this level of construction, and Estates were working with contractors to ensure this was a primary focus.

Noise was also a serious consideration and ways of working to keep noise to a minimum were being utilised. For example, core piling rather than hammer piling was being used for the Learning and Teaching Hub site.

The Learning and Teaching Hub was anticipated to be completed by summer 2019 and the plans for the Research Hub would be submitted to Glasgow City Council (GCC) next month.

Design teams had been appointed and their next focus was on the Innovation Zones, one of which had already been created at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUH) site. There was an opportunity to help transform and revitalise the area around Gilmorehill through engagement with the City, industry and the arts. It was planned that there would be a West End and Waterfront Innovation District. GCC was undertaking major investment in infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycle routes from QEUH to Gilmorehill Campus, which would have a significant impact on the City.

Members were interested to hear how the increase in traffic and people would be accommodated and what plans there were for car parking. It was reported that there were plans for 25 percent growth in related activity from the development planned. However, as there would be release of other space, there would not be a significant overall increase in staff numbers. It was reported that there would be some new parking, but much of the planning was around other modes of transport. It was also reported that there was currently a consultation regarding parking permits, but the focus of the development plans was on active travel and sustainability.

It was clarified that teaching spaces would not have glass walls, but that these would be used for circulation and other spaces, in recognition of the benefits of access to natural light

It was also reported that not all plots on the Western site had yet been allocated for specific building developments.

It was recognised that effective communication was a challenge. Ms Allen reported that the appointed University partner, Multiplex, would produce communications, and that Estates were keen to better understand how communication was working for people using the buildings affected by development. Users of the McGregor Building on the Western site reported that they did not feel that they had been kept informed of developments. Users of the Kelvin Building also requested more communications, particularly for users of the side of the building which was affected by current construction. Ms Allen welcomed the feedback from members of the council of Senate and encouraged others to contact her team if they had concerns about communication so that this could be addressed.

Ms Allen reported that the Joseph Black Building project was being reviewed after the first phase of work, as it was recognised that the first phase could have been smoother. A project manager had been appointed who would be more focused on the next phases of the work.

#### **4. REF2021 Update**

Head of Research Policy, Dr Tanita Casci provided Council of Senate with an update regarding REF2021, following the publication in November 2017 of decisions on staff and outputs and the publication of initial decisions in September, which Vice-Principal for Research, Professor Padgett had reported on at the last meeting of Council of Senate.

It had been confirmed that there would be some changes for REF2021 vis a vis the 2014 exercise. Whereas REF2014 had included a selective return, all staff with 'significant responsibility for research' would be returned in 2021. This would be based on those eligible at the census date which would be 31 July 2020. Eligible staff would:

- have a contract of employment of 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) or greater
- have 'research' or 'teaching and research' as their primary employment function
- are an independent researcher, and
- are on the payroll of the submitting institution.

It was reported that, in relation to research-only staff, the definition of 'independent researcher' remained to be clarified. Research assistants were not included in this category.

ORCID was strongly encouraged in REF2021 and would be used in subsequent REF.

In terms of outputs, the weighting had changed from sixty-five percent to sixty percent. The assessment period had been confirmed as 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020. The number of outputs per submission was 2.5 x FTE of submitted staff.

A minimum of one output would be required for each member of submitted staff, and a maximum of five outputs could be attributed to individual staff members, including staff who had left, retired, or died. A staff member could also be a co-author on up to five submitted outputs, where these were attributed to other member of staff in the unit.

There was also a change with regards to portability from the previous REF. Outputs could be submitted by both the institution employing a member of staff on the census date and the originating institution where the staff member was previously employed (in the eligible category) when the output was first made publicly available. Further detail was awaited.

From 1 April 2018, articles and conference proceedings must be made open access no later than three months after the acceptance date in order to be eligible for submission.

With regards to impact, the weighting had changed from twenty percent in 2014 to twenty-five percent. It had been confirmed that the period for impact underpinning research was 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2020, but that evidence of fresh impact would be required for case studies used in the 2014 REF. This would have to have happened during the period between 1 August 2013 and 31 July 2020. The number of impact case studies required would be one case study plus a further case study per up to 15 FTE staff, for the first 105 FTE returned, then one further case study per 50 FTE returned. This meant a minimum 2 case studies per UoA. It was required that the research underpinning impact cases must be assessed by the panel to be minimum 2\* quality.

In terms of environment, the weighting had remained the same as in the previous REF – fifteen percent. The template would be more structured than in REF2014 and use more quantitative data. The template would include explicit focus on support for:

- Interdisciplinary research
- Collaboration with organisations beyond higher education
- Impact
- Equality and diversity
- Open research, including where this goes above and beyond the REF open access policy requirements, and the effective sharing of research data.

For the University of Glasgow, the aim was to maximise the quality of submission. There was no GPA target, and it was advised that feedback from Interim Reviews and expertise across the University should be utilised.

All Research and Teaching staff would be returned, plus Research only staff, once clarification had been provided by the funding bodies.

The submission would require inclusion of fewer impact cases but with higher weighting, especially in small units, and fewer outputs. GPA would therefore be higher than in REF2014 and league table position would be dependent on percentage of 4\* outputs.

## **5. Convenor's Business**

### *5.1 University Queen's Anniversary Award Thesaurus*

It was reported that the University of Glasgow had been awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education. The prize, the highest accolade for any academic institution, was awarded to the University in recognition of its world-class research into the English language through the Historical Thesaurus. The Prize has been approved by Her Majesty The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister, following a very intensive period of assessment organised by the Royal Anniversary Trust which administers the scheme. The College of Arts was congratulated on the award.

### *5.2 Autumn Budget Statement*

The Senior Vice-Principal reported information concerning the Scottish Funding Council budget would be available shortly, following the Westminster Autumn Budget Statement had not provided insight into the Scottish Budget but that a clearer picture of SFC funding would be announced next week.

### *5.3 USS pensions*

Under UK law, all pension schemes were subject to a valuation every three years. The latest USS valuation had been carried out on 31 March 2017 and the outcome of that process would be submitted to the Pensions Regulator by 30 June 2018. The valuation exercise would determine the extent of any change in the funding position of the scheme since the previous valuation and what this might mean for members.

Changes to the benefits structure within the USS scheme, including increases to both employer and member contribution rates, had been agreed in 2014. These changes reduced the fund deficit with a 17-year recovery plan put in place that aimed to completely eliminate the deficit. However, the challenging economic climate (in particular, the very low interest rates on government bonds, known as gilts) had continued to impact on the scheme and it was anticipated that the potential funding deficit would have increased. As a result, further changes might be implemented. Discussions involving the USS trustees, individual universities, Universities UK and the Pensions Regulator had been taking place since the March 2017 valuation and would continue until the valuation outcome was submitted to the Pensions Regulator in June 2018. The Trustee (USS) would consider through the valuation process whether there was likely to be a need for further changes to future contributions by employers and members. Employers, represented by Universities UK (UUK) and USS members, represented by the University and College Union (UCU), might also consider whether the funding position merited fresh consideration of the benefit structure of the scheme. Given the governance structure of USS, UUK and UCU can discuss potential benefit changes through the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) of USS.

Proposals had been considered by the Universities UK's Board on 6 November 2017, following which proposals were put forward to members of USS. The UCU has already begun a consultation process about the proposed changes. There was a meeting scheduled on 18 December between the Board of Trustees, UCU and employees. It was likely that there would be increased contributions on both sides. It was reported that the University of Glasgow was more supportive of increased employer contributions than some other institutions

#### *5.4 Student Fees*

It was confirmed that, with respect to HE fees in England, the review of funding package for students and fee levels had concluded that the fee level would remain at £9,250 per annum. There had been suggestion previously that fees in England might be reduced to £7000: this was not now anticipated.

It was reported that pressure from extra students on campus this year had resulted in some changes; for example, the Library was open 24 hours during exams as a pilot exercise and there had been an increase in funding to Counselling and Psychological Services.

### **6. Appointment of the Clerk of Senate**

The Director of the Senate Office reported that the Finding Committee for the appointment of the next Clerk of Senate met on 20 November 2017 to consider the job description for the role. The job description has been updated to reflect changes in the University since the appointment of Professor Briggs. Accordingly, the job description reflected the recent reorganisation of University Services and in particular the establishment of the Student and Academic Services Directorate. In view of the seniority and experience necessary for the post, the committee had also recommended that the person appointed should be a member of the professoriate. In order to help attract the best candidates for the post, the Finding Committee had also wished to be able to offer the position on a less than 1.0 FTE basis, with the duties of the post matched to the availability of the appointee.

Nominations for the appointment would be sought, with a submission deadline of 8 January 2018. (Individuals interested in applying may nominate themselves.) The Finding Committee would then review nominations and, in line with its remit, consider whether to invite others to stand for appointment and may interview candidates for the position.

Council of Senate approved the job description for the Clerk of Senate.

Professor Briggs invited interested parties to speak to him about the role if they wished.