



## Court

### Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 14 April 2021 via Zoom

#### **Present:**

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Mr Graeme Bissett (Co-opted Member), Mr Liam Brady (SRC President), Dr Chris Cassells (Trade Union Nominee) Ms Heather Cousins (Co-opted Member), Dr Craig Daly (Trade Union Nominee), Mr David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Professor Carl Goodyear (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Dr Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khalique (Co-opted Member), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson (General Council Assessor), Mr Ronnie Mercer (Co-opted Member), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Mr David Milloy (Co-opted Member), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Ms Lesley Sutherland (General Council Assessor), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member)

#### **Attending:**

Gregor Caldwell (Executive Director of Finance), Professor Sara Carter (Vice Principal & Head of College Social Sciences), Professor Frank Coton (Vice Principal Academic Planning and Technological Innovation), Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Professor Neal Juster (Senior Vice-Principal and Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Professor Jill Morrison (Vice-Principal & Clerk of Senate), Professor Iain McInnes (Vice Principal & Head of College MVLS), Professor Massimo Palmarini (Director of Centre for Virus Research).

#### **Apologies:**

Ms Julia Hegele (SRC Assessor)

#### **CRT/2020/39. Announcements**

The Convener welcomed Laic Khalique to his first meeting of Court. Laic's appointment as a Co-opted Member had been approved by the Nominations Committee and Court for four years from the 13 April 2021.

The Convener welcomed Professor Iain McInnes (Vice Principal & Head of College MVLS), Professor Sara Carter (Vice Principal & Head of College Social Sciences), and Professor Massimo Palmarini (Director of Centre for Virus Research) to the meeting.

There was the following declaration of interest in relation to business to be conducted at the meeting: Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli as a Trustee of USS, as an ongoing declaration, given the updates on the scheme.

It was recorded that Steph Scholten (Director of the Hunterian Museum), Siobhan Convery

(Assistant Director – Collections Strategy and Keeper of the Hunterian Books and Manuscripts) and Nicola Cameron (Director of Property Development and Investment) had briefed Court at the pre-lunch session on the historical heritage of the University. Court's thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

#### **CRT/2020/40. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 10 February 2021**

Following discussion, it was agreed to amend *CRT/2020/29. Covid-19 Update and Planning* to include "a view had been expressed that it was important for some subject areas to return to in-person exams in examinations rooms as soon as government pandemic regulations permitted."

It was also noted that *CRT/2020/35.5 Nominations Committee* would be amended to include reference to concerns that had been expressed about the lack of racial diversity in the University's governance structures.

The minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 10 February 2021 were approved following the amendments outlined above.

#### **CRT/2020/41. Matters Arising**

Court noted that under previous item *CRT 2020.33.1 Disability Complaint* it had been agreed that Court would be updated on the outcome of the appeals and reviews. Court noted that the appeals process was still ongoing and that a further update would come to Court at its September 2021 meeting.

#### **CRT/2020/42. Covid-19 Update and Planning**

Court noted Paper 4 which included updates from the Principal, Dr David Duncan, Professor Neal Juster, Professor Frank Coton and Mr Gregor Caldow on the current planning and progress made following the reopening of the campus. Particular attention was drawn to the following:

- Additional Scottish Funding Council funding for Universities in the current financial year had been announced and it had also been confirmed that the University would retain 100% of the funded places associated with EU undergraduate students in 2021/22 to support the additional recruitment of Scottish students in light of the changes to examination system for secondary schools;
- It was reported that the financial performance of the University remained strong, with February forecast £38m ahead of budget;
- Planning for a gradual increase in numbers on campus was continuing. The Comms group met every morning and weekly meetings of the Covid-19 planning group involved representatives from across the institution to ensure that the University kept in close contact with each other and anticipated new challenges. Key staff were also meeting weekly with Scottish Government officials;
- A project had been set up to look at the planning of admissions and teaching for the next academic year. The new project, Aurora, was chaired by Professor Frank Coton, it

augmented the existing mechanisms in place for the planning of teaching to ensure that the University was responsive to changes in external constraints such as international travel and social distancing;

- A Working from Home Short Life Working Group was established in late January 2021. It was co-chaired by Prof Neal Juster, Senior Vice-Principal and Elise Gallagher, Deputy Director of Human Resources and the main focus of the work was on gathering information in relation to how hybrid working can be introduced to the University in a manner that helps deliver the University Strategy whilst increasing employee satisfaction;
- A short-life planning and mitigation group on research was formed in December 2020. It was tasked with considering how research activities might be altered by the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, and with proposing ways of preparing for these changes and mitigating risks to research. It was noted that research outputs had fallen by 25% during the lockdown period, grant applications had decreased markedly during the last quarter and research income was down significantly.

During discussion it was noted that SMG would urgently consider a range of initiatives to ensure research competitiveness, within the following broad areas: develop a structured plan to manage the return to full research capacity; consider how disrupted research projects can be adapted; look to international partnerships to strengthen and adapt collaborations; actively design or pilot new estates solutions/communications solutions to address the needs of the post-lockdown workplace. A query was raised about the impact of Covid-19 on research outputs/grant applications and if there were any patterns in terms of College or a demographic that had been worst effected and if any steps would be taken to support staff. It was agreed that this would be included in the Research Annual update at the next Court meeting.

Court welcomed Professor Iain McInnes (Vice Principal & Head of College MVLS) and Professor Massimo Palmarini (Director of Centre for Virus Research) to the meeting. Professor McInnes updated Court on the work currently being undertaken by the College of MVLS. During the discussion the following was noted:

- Glasgow Lighthouse Lab was currently the largest Covid Testing lab, with around 650 staff;
- There was a daily capacity for 85,000 tests and around 11million samples had been tested to date;
- A new study would be undertaken to look at Long Covid and the impact on Scotland;
- The amount of data being collected was unprecedented and tools were being created to identify emerging trends and the most at risk;
- The Institute of Health and Wellbeing was also undertaking a key role.

Court thanked staff and students for their continued efforts and recognised all the hard work that had been undertaken during the pandemic to keep the University running especially during the recent lockdown.

### **CRT/2020/43. University Strategy – KPI update**

Following the presentation at the Court in November, Professor Neal Juster (Senior Vice Principal), outlined Paper 5 which presented an update on the development of KPIs to monitor progress on the implementation of the University's strategy to 2025: *World Changers Together*.

It was noted that there had been significant discussion at SMG since Court agreed the strategy

in November 2020 with a significant number of KPIs and targets agreed. However, five KPI definitions remained subject to discussion and a further two subject to having targets set. It was reported that some of the KPIs were intended to encourage and track progress in areas of performance that had not previously been explicitly highlighted by SMG, nor indeed by other universities. This was making the definition of some KPIs more time consuming than originally anticipated.

It was noted that development work would continue on the five identified KPIs currently without associated data/indicators and Court would receive a further update in June. In the meantime, the agreed KPIs would be added to the strategy web pages launched on 6 April: [www.glasgow.ac.uk/strategy](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/strategy)

During the discussion Court noted a number of suggested areas for inclusion/improvement/clarification: these included: Social/global impact; infrastructure improvements – IT/Buildings; financial sustainability and long-term planning; commercialisation/spin out companies; diversity; and student and staff engagement. Professor Juster agreed to look at the suggestions in more detail and incorporate where possible.

Court thanked all those involved with the preparation of the KPIs and looked forward to a further update at the next meeting.

## **CRT/2020/44. Report from the Principal**

### *CRT/2020/44.1 Higher education developments*

The Principal updated Court on recent developments in higher education and noted:

- Official Development Assistance (ODA) Funded Research – UKRI confirmed a significant reduction in its ODA allocation from BEIS. In FY 2021/22 the overall UKRI ODA budget would be reduced to £125 million, creating a £120 million gap between allocations and commitments. The University had taken two immediate actions in response: firstly direct dialogue with colleagues whose projects were set to be impacted by the funding cuts and secondly work with Russell Group, UUK and concerned voices to lobby for a change to this decision;
- Brexit, Turing Scheme and Welsh International Exchange Programme – guidance had been published on the Turing Scheme. Universities would be able to apply for funding from April, with projects commencing in September. The Turing Scheme would provide education and training opportunities which emphasised ‘a global reach for the UK’. The guidance confirmed that living cost support under Turing would be lower than that provided by Erasmus +. It was noted that on the 21 March the Welsh Government announced plans for its own International Exchange Programme. £65 million had been earmarked for the initiative which was designed to bridge the gap between the Turing Scheme provisions and those the UK enjoyed as a member of Erasmus+;
- Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) – in March the UK Government had introduced a Bill to create ARIA, an independent research body with a remit to fund high-risk, high-reward scientific research. ARIA was based on the US Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) model and had been welcomed across the sector. The aim was for the agency to be fully operational by 2022;
- The Minister for Science, Research & Innovation had launched an independent review into UK research bureaucracy, intended to identify ways to free up researchers to pursue their research. The University Partnerships Programme Foundation had also announced an independent Student Futures Commission to investigate, in light of the disruption

sparked by the pandemic, what further action universities could take to support new and returning students.

Court also noted that the SFC has published a progress update on its review into coherent provision and the sustainability of the sector. The work had grouped the Review's priorities under three broad headings: emergency years (areas linked to the pandemic phase and its repercussions for the sector); ongoing policy development (areas of policy development and improvement identified in Phase 1 which are already in train); and developing future frameworks (high impact reforms that the SFC plans to bring forward as recommendations for Ministers). With Phase 3 set to begin shortly, the University was committed to ongoing engagement with the SFC around the review. Final recommendations were due to be submitted to Ministers this summer.

The Principal also reported that following the publication of the University's 'Understanding Racism, Transforming University Cultures', the University had been invited to speak with the SFC and senior Government officials. The report was seen as sector leading and had met with a positive reaction. It was agreed that Court would be given an update at its next meeting on the progress with the action plan.

#### *CRT/2020/44.2 SFC Grants 2021/22*

Court noted that the SFC's key points in indicative funding announcement were:

- SFC's Revenue budget for AY 2021/22 has increased by 5.9% (£61.6 million) with Teaching funding increased by 7.7% (£52.7 million) and Research and Innovation budgets increased of 1.5% (£4.4 million);
- Other programme funding had increased by 7.2% (£3.9 million) and Capital maintenance funding had been broadly maintained, in cash terms, at the same level as last year.

The main points to note for the University of Glasgow were:

- Core teaching and research funding had increased from last year, with an overall increase of 4.6% for Teaching, Research and Innovation;
- Main Teaching Grant had increased by 6.3% – mainly due to an increase by 288 FTE for 'SQA places', anticipating that changes to 2021 exam arrangements would lead to another enlarged Scots intake;
- Additional Teaching grants (not included in the Main Teaching Grant): Upskilling: UofG had increased by 2% (£879k to £897k) and continued to hold the largest share of this funding;
- Research Excellence Grant was slightly higher, showing an increase of 1.8%, while sector funding increased by only 1.1%;
- University Innovation Fund funding had increased by 10.2% as part of an overall uplift to research and innovation. This uplift had been spread evenly across the sector, with Glasgow receiving the largest UIF allocation, just ahead of the University of Edinburgh.

#### *CRT/2020/44.3 SFC Outcome Agreement*

The annual SFC Outcome Agreement sets out what the University plans to deliver in return for SFC funding and reflects upon what had delivered to date. In a normal year, the University would soon be sending its finalised Outcome Agreement to SFC, describing how it would contribute towards SFC and Scottish Government priorities between 2021/22 and 2023/24. However, the most recent Outcome Agreement (approved by Court at the February meeting) was an interim document with a narrow scope reflecting upon only 2020/21, with a particular emphasis on the Covid response.

Court noted that work on the original Outcome Agreement for 2020/21 to 2022/23 was suspended in March 2020, as SFC acknowledged that the pandemic would have had an impact on the sector's plans. The interim document ensured that a line of accountability for the funding remained in place for 2020/21. SFC intended to confirm the timescales for the next, forward looking, Outcome Agreement in due course.

In the meantime, SFC had requested an additional section for the University's interim Outcome Agreement – a short description of the activity in Dumfries, as it related to SFC's key priorities. Court approved the SFC Outcome Agreement submission.

#### *CRT/2020/44.4 SMG Changes*

The Principal informed Court that Uzma Khan, Deputy Secretary and Director of Planning would be joining the Senior Management Group.

### **CRT/2020/45. Report from the University Secretary**

Court noted the report from the University Secretary – Paper 7. Court discussed the following areas in further detail.

#### *CRT 2020.45.1 Convener appraisal*

The Convener left the meeting for this item, with the Vice-Convener Graeme Bissett chairing instead. As part of the good practice set out in the Code of Good HE Governance, Ronnie Mercer had undertaken an appraisal of the Convener's performance. Court members had been provided with a report, which Mr Mercer now summarised. Although a number of suggestions made in the report were being considered by the Convener, the report overall on the Convener's performance was positive. It was noted that the appraisal would continue to be undertaken annually.

#### *CRT 2020.45.2 Public Sector Equality Duty – Equality Outcome 2021-2021*

Court noted the Equality Outcomes Report which had been considered by Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee (EDSC) in March 2021. The report outlined the progress on the 2017-2021 Equality Outcomes, the internal and external factors influencing the proposed set of Equality Outcomes, and the consultation process conducted to involve and engage staff and students in setting our new Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025.

Court noted the report.

#### *CRT 2020.45.3 Gender Representation Objective*

Court noted the report made in compliance with Section 8 of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. At present 46% of the non-excluded lay Court members are female.

#### *CRT 2020.45.4 Court Co-opted Members*

Court noted that Gavin Stewart's term on Court had ended on 31 March 2021. Gavin had currently served for 4 years and was therefore eligible to continue for a further four years.

The Nominations Committee had recommended that Gavin be reappointed for a further four years from 1 April 2021. Court approved the nomination.

*CRT 2020.45.5 Organisational Change*

Court noted the summary of the Organisational Change Governance Group's business over the last year. A member raised concerns about the lack of union involvement and the ability to be able to object formally to proposed structural changes. Court noted that the JNCC could formally object at any point and that staff and students were represented on the group.

*CRT 2020.45.6 Rectorial Election*

Court noted that the Rectorial elections would take place on 20 and 21 April 2021. Three candidates had been nominated: Junaid Ashraf (SNP Councillor for Cumbernauld South), John Nicolson (SNP MP for Ochil and South Perthshire) and Rita Rae QC (solicitor, advocate and Senator of the Court of Justice).

*CRT 2020.45.7 Directors of Research Institutes and Heads of School Appointments*

Court noted the following change:

College of Science and Engineering

*School of Geographical and Earth Sciences*

Professor Martin Lee had been reappointed as Head of the School for a further year until August 2022.

*CRT 2020.45.8 Glasgow Green – update on implementation*

Court received an update on the implementation of the Glasgow Green action plan. Members raised queries with regard to the upcoming COP26 and the plans for involvement as this was seen as a key strategic opportunity for the University. It was noted that the event was likely to take place in Glasgow in November 2021 with the main delegates attending but the associated events would likely take place online.

It was agreed that Court would receive information about the University's plans for its involvement in COP26 at its next meeting.

*CRT 2020.45.9 Draft Ordinance 211: General Council Membership and Registration*

At the Court meeting on 9 October, Court noted that the composition of, and other arrangements in relation to, the General Council were currently governed by two Ordinances, which required some modernisation and simplification. The consultation period had commenced in Feb 2020 but had been paused due to the pandemic. Court was now asked to re-enact the consultation process.

A draft Ordinance had been circulated, together with the current Ordinances for reference purposes. Court approved the draft Ordinance for consultation.

**CRT/2020/46. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update**

The SRC President noted that Court had received reports from the 16 March 2021 meeting. Key points raised included the student hardship and financial issues; hardship fund for sport;

expected conditions for the next academic session; student residences report; review of provision for students with disabilities and student bodies reports. Court also noted that turnout for the recent SRC elections had been high with a 14% increase in student engagement.

A query was raised about the lights in Kelvingrove Park during the late evening. It was confirmed that the parks were not lit up at night as they were closed but Council officers were looking at how best to deal with the issue that had been highlighted on a number of occasions.

David Duncan noted that the University continued to focus on support and wellbeing for both staff and students. It was noted that there continued to be issues with student residences which had been difficult for staff to manage during the most recent lockdown. Current discipline measures were being reviewed and any changes would be communicated to students. Court also noted that the question of smoking on campus had been raised but this would require further consultation before any decision was made.

Court noted that the plan for the next academic session remained uncertain with SMG and staff looking at different options in relation to physical distancing, blended learning vs f2f teaching approaches and additional support needs for new entrants given the disruption to their school education over the last 12 months. The SRC President also reported that it was hoped that some elements of the Freshers Fayre could be held on campus as had happened last year this would help new entrants feel more engaged.

The Convener thanked SRC President and Dr Duncan for their report.

## **CRT/2020/47. Reports of Court Committees**

### *CRT/2020/47.1 Finance Committee*

Graeme Bissett, chair of the Committee, reported that the University continued to respond strongly to the Covid-19 crisis. Court noted that the Committee members had received two presentations: one on student recruitment and numbers; and the second on the Financial Strategy. Both presentations had given a valuable insight into how the University continues to maintain a financially stable position following the pandemic. Court noted that the additional liquidity from the new Revolving Credit Facility was also now in place. Court also noted that the Committee had approved an amendment to the Counterparty Limits and additional money market funds to be set up to manage counterparty risk relating to higher than planned cash balances. Court noted that the Committee had approved 3 Capex projects as outlined in Paper 9.1.

The report was noted.

### *CRT/2020/47.2 Estates Committee*

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had approved 2 Capex projects as outlined in Paper 9.2.

The report was noted.

### *CRT/2020/47.3 IPSC*

Frank Coton, Vice Principal reported that IPSC had considered the University's information security risk management in the context of cyber threat: the Director of IT would draft the terms of reference and convene a working group to consider the issues in detail. Court noted that the Committee had approved: the Network Infrastructure Investment Program (NIIP) business case; the NIIP Phase 4 Capex application (£16.4m) for onward consideration by the Capex

and Finance Committees; and the business case for Documentum data migration to the Microsoft 365 stack (£300k).

The report was noted.

*CRT/2020/47.4 Audit and Risk Committee*

Heather Cousin, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had received internal audit reports on reviews of: Disability Services, Supplier Contract Management and IT Project Management. The Committee had also received a report on the overall control framework in Estates which outlined the current management process and governance for all property and infrastructure projects. Ms Cousin explained how the audit findings had enhanced governance of the procedures.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2020/47.5 People and Organisational Development Committee*

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had received updates from the Executive Director of P&OD on; USS pension developments, pay negotiations for 2021-22, Performance and Development Review plans for the forthcoming year, the latest developments from a diversity and inclusion perspective, and the University's participation in the 'Developing the Young Workforce' initiative. Ms Milligan also highlighted that the Committee had received a presentation on the Lighthouse lab. Court also noted the draft minutes of the JCCN from the 7th October 2020, along with the draft minute of EDSC from the 16th November 2020 where topics included the report 'Understanding Racism, Transforming University Cultures' and the decision to adopt the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism.

A query was raised in relation to Union of Jewish Students and an anti-Semitism map on the Internet which the University was listed on. The University appeared on the map due to an incident some years ago when a member of staff signed a letter calling for more balanced journalistic reporting in relation to the former Labour leader. It was not felt that there was any reputational issue for the University.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2020/47.6 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee*

Court noted the report which included the Annual Report. Court acknowledged the hard work undertaken by all the staff involved with Health and Safety, particularly during the last year.

The report was noted.

*CRT/2020/47.7 Nominations Committee*

Elizabeth Passey, chair of the Committee reported that the Committee discussed the Skills Matrix, recruitment brochure and recruitment panel. It was noted that interview panels would include membership from Lay members, staff and student representation, along with a co-opted member of the People and Organisational Development Committee. It was also noted that there would be diversity on the recruitment panel. Court noted that the Scottish Government was currently undertaking work on non-executive appointments and it would be beneficial to investigate this further.

Following discussion Court agreed that Elizabeth Passey would step down as the Chair of the Nominations Committee and a new Chair would be sought prior to the next meeting in May.

The report was noted.

### **CRT/2020/48. Senate Matters**

The Clerk of Senate advised Court that the Code of Student Conduct had been revised. The review of the University's Code of Student Conduct was in response to a number of issues that had arisen, particularly in relation to reports of serious non-academic misconduct that had been referred under the Code over the past few years. A revised Code of Student Conduct had now been produced, which separated academic and non-academic misconduct. Although the same principles would apply, the revised Code recognised the increasing complexity of some non-academic misconduct issues and the impact on those involved. The revised Code of Student Conduct would be introduced at the beginning of 2021-22.

The Clerk of Senate also advised Court that, due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, and the associated restrictions on large gatherings, all summer 2021 graduation ceremonies had, regrettably, been cancelled. The University's Commemoration Day celebration events, that were due to take place in June 2021, were also cancelled. However, an online chapel service to commemorate the University's benefactors would take place. The University was planning to host a number of online celebratory events for students and, should the Scottish Government guidance in June 2021 allow, it was hoped that there might be an on-campus element to the graduation celebrations. All students would be offered the opportunity to return to attend an on-campus graduation ceremony in the future.

Court thanked the Clerk of Senate for the update.

### **CRT/2020/49. Annual Report on the University's Complaints Procedure 2019/20**

Court noted the annual report on complaints activity during the academic session 2019/20, noting also from Dr Duncan that the procedure's emphasis was on resolution and a 'lessons learned' approach. Court agreed that it was important that staff dealing with complaints were supported to ensure that their wellbeing was not adversely affected particularly in the case of serial complainants targeting staff.

### **CRT/2020/50. Any Other Business**

#### *CRT/2020/50.1*

Court's congratulations to the new SRC Sabbaticals were noted – President: Ella McCabe, VP Education: Mia Clarke, VP Student Support: Eva Simmons and VP Student Activities: Sam Malis.

#### *CRT/2020/50.2 Note of thanks*

The Convener thanked all members of the University community for their continued contributions, flexibility and commitment during the last year.

### **CRT/2020/51. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Court will be held on Tuesday 22 June 2021 at 2pm via Zoom.

A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm via Zoom on the Learning and Teaching Strategy.