Heriot-Watt University

SECRETARY'S BOARD

In the Chair:	Ms Ann Marie Dalton, Secretary of the University	
Present also:	Ms Candace Albornoz, Assistant to the Secretary	Mr Derek Penman, Director of Administration (EPS)
	Mr Mark Adderley, Director of Human Resource Development	Mr Campbell Powrie, Director of Administration (SML)
	Mr Mike Bates, Director of Student Recruitment	Mr Mike Roch, Director of Information Services
	Ms Philippa Burrell, Director of Administration (EGIS)	Mr Martyn Spence, Director of Marketing and Communications
	Ms Sue Collier, Director of Governance and Legal Services	Mr Paul Travill, Academic Registrar
	Ms Maggie Dunn, Director of Administration (SLS)	Ms Sheelagh Wallace, Director of Administration and Registrar (Dubai)
	Dr Alicia Greated, Director of Research and Enterprise Services	Ms Vivienne White, Director of Administration (TEX)
	Ms Morag Heggie, Director of Administration (EBS)	Ms Janice Yew, Chief Operating Officer (Malaysia)
	Mr Andrew Menzies, Director of Finance	
In Attendance:	Mr Andy Downie, Group Financial Controller	Mr Tony Newjem, Chief Procurement Officer
	Ms Lisa Herlihy, Clerk	Mr Steve Watson, Scholarships Manager
	Mr Frank Lopez, Information Governance Coordinator	
Apologies:	Mr Darren Cunningham, Director of Administration (MACS)	Mr Malcolm Deans, Director of Campus Services

The Chair welcomed the following to the meeting:

- Ms Candace Albornoz, Assistant to the Secretary, to her first meeting as a member of the Board;
- Mr Andy Downie, Group Financial Controller, to present item M16/33 *Travel and Expenses Policy*;
- Mr Frank Lopez, Information Governance Coordinator, to present item M16/37 *Annual Report on Freedom of Information*;
- Mr Tony Newjem, Chief Procurement Officer, to present item M16/35 *Changes to Procurement Legislation*; and
- Mr Steve Watson, Scholarships Manager, to present item M16/36 *Scholarships, Bursaries and Fee Abatements*.

MINUTE REF

M16/24   MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2 FEBRUARY 2016

The Board received and approved the minutes of the meeting of 2 February 2016.

M16/25   MATTERS ARISING REPORT FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF 2 FEBRUARY 2016

The Board received and noted the matters arising report following the meeting of 2 February 2016.

M16/05 – The Board noted that the Face-to-face team briefing process had been relaunched at the University Leadership Forum in January 2016. A model of the timeline for the monthly process had been developed and the Board agreed that the Director of

Marketing and Communications would circulate this to members. The Board agreed that the Face-to-face process would begin in March 2016.

M15/154 – The Board noted that dates for the Career Progression workshops had been agreed and that these would be provided to the Assistant to the Secretary outwith the meeting.

M15/96 – The Board noted that a presentation on *Prevent* agenda would be held for students' information on 2 March 2016. Online training for all colleagues, linked to Equality and Diversity training, would be available from mid-March 2016. Bespoke training would also be provided for groups of colleagues where appropriate.

M16/26   POLICIES UNDER DEVELOPMENT REPORT (SB/16/24)

The Board received and noted the Policies Under Development Report, as presented by the Chair.

M16/27   BUSINESS REPORTED BY THE CHAIR

The Chair highlighted the following items to the Board:

- that Applicant Visit Days would be taking place at the Edinburgh Campus on several upcoming Fridays and this might cause some congestion. It was noted that Campus Services colleagues would be marshalling car parks on these days. The Board agreed that the Director of Marketing and Communications would draft a message for the newsletter to update colleagues on arrangements;

- that exams would continue as normal during Ramadan, as advised following an Equality Impact Assessment. Recent discussions had taken place at the Inter-Faith Forum to consider whether there were any steps which could reasonably be taken to assist affected students. The Muslim Society had suggested that those exams which were considered more difficult could be held in morning slots. Further discussions would take place with the Inter-Faith Forum to investigate this suggestion fully; and

- that the Board would receive an update on the Flexible Working arrangements audit at a forthcoming meeting. Arrangements would be considered against business needs, and their original purpose, to ascertain whether they remained appropriate.

M16/28   REPORTS FROM THE SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (SB/16/25 – SB/16/36)

The Board received and noted reports from the Schools and Professional Services, presented by the Directors of Administration and Directors of Professional Services.

During the course of this item the following points were raised:

Borders Campus
- that the creation of a Student Services Centre at the Borders and of social space for students, would be discussed by the Chair, with the Director of Administration (TEX), the Academic Registrar and the Director of Campus Services;

Dubai Campus
- that Study World had recently advertised for a Manager for the Student Services Centre at the Dubai Campus and it was hoped that this Centre would be open by September 2016;

Governance and Legal Services
- that the Home Office had recently focused its Tier 4 audits on international students' employment. Students were allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours a week. There had been instances across the sector of students working more than their allotted hours, and the University was tightening up processes to ensure that this could not happen at Heriot-Watt;
- Schools and Services would soon be asked to provide information about Tier 4 casual workers to aid recording in iHR. A central timesheet would be produced and issued to students by Registry Services, would be completed by Schools and Services and would be used by Payroll when arranging payment. The Chair advised that the University website highlighted the regulations and the need to comply with Visa conditions;

Human Resources
- that the National Pay Negotiations had begun, with the Trade Unions putting in a claim for a 5% increase. UCU had balloted for a potential strike and the University was putting a contingency plan in place for action during examinations;

Information Services
- that the Director of Information Services would liaise with the Director of Finance and the Director of Research and Enterprise Services regarding the Research Capital Grant, and the potential to use this for research information systems projects which would improve research capability;

Marketing and Communications
- that the Study Space campaign would be run again in 2016 to remind students of the various spaces available to them. The Director of Marketing and Communications would contact the James Watt Centre team to ensure that use of space was planned appropriately;

Registry Services
- that the first Annual Student Survey had been opened, aimed at all undergraduate students on all campuses. The Survey would be tailored for students according to their year and place of study, and would mirror the National Student Survey (NSS) questions. This would allow the University to address issues in particular areas prior to cohorts entering their final year and completing the NSS;

Research and Enterprise Services
- that the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council had been agreed and the University had seen a positive outcome, particularly with regards to the Research Park;
- that Professor David Lane had successfully bid to host the 2017 European Robotics Forum. The Director of Research and Enterprise Services suggested that this would provide Heriot-Watt with the opportunity to use robotics as a theme for wider activities in 2017;

Student Recruitment
- that the Conversion Group was focusing on a number of aspects to maximise recruitment to the UK campuses. This included monitoring application conversion, preparing for the 2016 Clearing Campaign, and improving the University's digital presence; and
- that application acceptances were higher than last year due to improved turnaround times.

M16/29   GROUP FINANCIAL DASHBOARD (SB/16/37)

The Board received and noted the Group Financial Dashboard, presented by the Director of Finance.

The Board noted that the overall position remained similar to that in month 5. Awards and proposals were both in a good position, continuing the trend of recent years.

M16/30   **SARP (STUDENT ADMINISTRATION REVITALISATION PROJECT) UPDATE (SB/16/38)**

The Board received and noted an update on the SARP, presented by the Academic Registrar.

The Board noted the following highlights:

- that the Client Relationship Management (CRM) system tender was underway and a tight turnaround was planned. It was hoped that a contract would be awarded in May 2016;
- that the Student Administration project was focusing on developing online graduation processes; and
- that the Programme Approvals Management System (PAMS) would be going live in two stages. A schedule for making programme and course portfolio information available from the online prospectus was being developed.

The Chair highlighted that the Conversion Group had identified an issue where colleagues who administered exam activity were also responsible for conversion activities. The Directors of Administration confirmed that this issue had been noted and some Schools had separated the two responsibilities.

The Board agreed that the SARP would fit well with the 'One Heriot-Watt' projects which the Principal was currently introducing. The Chair would discuss bringing the SARP under this banner with the Principal.

M16/31   **BRAND REFINEMENT IMPLEMENTATION (PRESENTATION)**

The Board received and noted a presentation on the implementation of the refined brand, presented by the Director of Marketing and Communications.

The Board noted the following points:

- that roll out of the refined brand would commence from 29 February 2016, through a phased approach. The new simplified logo would sit alongside the previous logo as it was phased out and resources would be replaced as needed, to use up existing stocks. It was intended that changes to the digital environment would be in place by August 2016; and
- that members would audit their work environments in the coming weeks and ensure that material was up-to-date and relevant. This included both branded material and other resources.

M16/32   **NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNISATION (ORAL UPDATE)**

The Board received and noted an update on the University of Sheffield's National Centre for Technical Development and Modernisation, presented by the Director of Administration (EPS).

The Board discussed the new Centre, which would provide a national framework for standardised job titles, grading and career pathways across the technical workforce. The Board noted that the Centre would also examine and signpost best practice in areas of technical training and development. The Univeristy, which was in the process of standardising role descriptions across Heriot-Watt, was keen to engage with this new

initiative and would hold discussions with the University of Sheffield in March 2016. The Board agreed that the Director of Administration (EPS) would distribute further information following these discussions.

M16/33   **ETHICAL BUSINESS: GIFTS & HOSPITALITY POLICY (SB/16/39) AND TRAVEL & EXPENSES POLICY (SB/16/40)**

The Board received the Ethical Business: Gifts & Hospitality Policy and the Travel & Expenses Policy, presented by the Director of Governance and Legal Services and the Group Financial Controller. The policies were approved for onward transmission to the University Executive

The Board noted that the two policies were inter-related and were presented together for approval. The Gifts & Hospitality Policy had previously been approved by the Secretary's Board in May 2015, subject to minor changes. The Chair highlighted that Governors were specifically referenced a number of times in the Gifts & Hospitality Policy and advised that these references should be revisited.

The Board discussed the Travel & Expenses Policy in detail. The Group Financial Controller highlighted that the last iteration of the Policy had been approved in 2010 and a review was needed. The University was also looking to move the submission of expenses online and a clear framework, timeline and project plan was required to facilitate this move.

During the course of the discussion the following areas were highlighted for further discussion by the University Executive:

- how the University would determine the use of Business Class travel; and
- whether reimbursement would be made for alcohol purchases and under what conditions (i.e. would alcohol be reimbursed where claimed under hospitality and not where claimed under subsistence).

The following amendments were also suggested:

Section 4.1.1 – The Secretary of the University would be added to those who could authorise Business Class travel.

Section 7 – Reference to the NHS Surcharge which applies to new employees entering the UK would be made under 'Relocation'.

Section 3 – Provision would be made for collective claims made by colleagues.

Section 3.5 – A form of words would be provided by the Director of Administration (TEX), in liaison with the Director of HRD, and inserted to specify arrangements which might be made for Time off in Lieu (TOIL).

The Board highlighted that all colleagues and students must notify the University when they were planning to travel on business, even if they were not planning to claim expenses, to fulfil insurance requirements. Travel on business must also be authorised by the University. This would be added to the wording of the Travel & Expenses Policy.

The Board noted that separate Travel & Expenses policies would be developed for Dubai and Malaysia, to take account of local legislation.

M16/34   **SMOKE FREE POLICY (SB/16/41)**

The Board received and approved the updated Smoke Free Policy, presented by the Director of HRD. Minor amendments to the Policy had been made as part of the review cycle.

M16/35   **CHANGES TO PROCUREMENT LEGISLATION (PRESENTATION)**

The Board received and noted a presentation on changes to procurement legislation, presented by the Chief Procurement Officer.

The Board noted that a number of new pieces of procurement legislation came into effect in April 2016, introducing an increased burden upon procuring bodies. These included:

- Procurement Reform Act 2014;
- Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015;
- Concession Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2016;
- Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016;
- EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2016/7 (ESPD); and
- Various 'statutory guidance' notices.

The increasing burden would arise particularly from the decrease of the EU goods and services threshold from £164,176 to £50,000, though other changes would also effect the University.

The Chief Procurement Officer outlined the following potential solutions:

- maximising the use of frameworks, though the University was already one of the highest users of these;

- devolving some purchasing authority to colleagues in the Schools. It was highlighted that this would not create a significant additional burden on Schools, as a number of procurement exercises which would previously have been undertaken by these colleagues would now be above the new goods and services threshold; and

- further training and awareness of procurement legislation, particularly through the use of HEPA e-learning.

The Board agreed that the Chief Procurement Officer would review and amend the Procurement Strategy and Procedures to make these as straightforward as possible. The Strategy and Procedures would then be presented to the Secretary's Board at a future meeting. The Chief Procurement Officer would also establish a procurement network at Heriot-Watt, to bring together the colleagues involved in procurement activity.

The Board agreed that an update on the changes to procurement legislation would be presented to the University Executive and the Court at a future meeting.

The Board discussed the 'consultancy' category on the Oracle procurement system, noting that this currently covered a wide range of different activities. The Board agreed that the Chief Procurement Officer would re-examine this category through comparison with other universities and then define clearly what was covered.

M16/36   **SCHOLARSHIPS, BURSARIES AND FEE ABATEMENTS (SB/16/23)**

The Board received and discussed an update on scholarships, presented by the Scholarships Manager and the Academic Registrar.

The Board noted that the University's current scholarship provision was problematic, with the following issues identified:

- a wide, complex range of offerings across Schools and Campuses;
- eligibility and criteria for selection not standardised;
- naming conventions inconsistent;
- terminology and definitions unclear; and

- two different models in existence: University-wide and School-specific.

The Board discussed the impact of these issues, highlighting that it was difficult to use scholarships as an effective recruitment tool when these could not be clearly articulated to students. This was in contrast to simpler arrangements at competitor universities and created disadvantages for Heriot-Watt.

The Scholarships Manager made four recommendations to the Board:

1. that a University-wide terminology was established and key concepts defined (i.e. scholarship, bursary and fee discount). The Board agreed that fee discount was preferable to fee abatement, as the concept of a discount was more readily understood by students, parents and colleagues;
2. that PGT scholarships should be standardised through simple changes;
3. that the application period and process for all scholarships, bursaries and fee discounts should be standardised; and
4. that the University should standardise eligibility and the criteria for selection where applicable.

The Board endorsed these recommendations and agreed that the Scholarships Manager would now develop a standardised undergraduate programme for 2016-17 which would be presented, alongside the PGT programme, to the University Executive in April 2016 for approval. A Scholarship Policy and Procedure Manual would be developed by September 2016 for use by colleagues. It was also planned to centralise the application facility to make it easier for students to apply.

The Board agreed that the Scholarships Manager and the Director of Administration (Dubai) would liaise with School Directors of Administration regarding the discounts currently available in Dubai, to ensure these were part of the new joined-up approach.

The Board noted the absence from the meeting of the Director of Administration (MACS) and agreed that the Scholarships Manager would discuss with him the proposals made, to ensure that these would work for all Schools.

M16/37   **ANNUAL REPORT ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SB/16/42)**

The Board received and noted the annual report on Freedom of Information, presented by the Information Governance Coordinator.

The Board noted that there had been an increase in requests relating to the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EISR) in 2015. These requests could be made orally and the University was given 20 days to answer, though it could be extended to 40 days if the request was particularly in-depth. Other than commercially sensitive data very little was exempt under EISR. The Board noted that some of the University's upcoming projects were likely to prompt further requests in 2016.

The Information Governance Coordinator highlighted that the University was preparing to publish those Court papers which were not exempted under Freedom of Information on the website. Information Governance would be producing guidance for paper authors to help in determining whether papers were appropriate for publication.

M16/38   **PROJECTS REGISTER (SB/16/43)**

The Board received and noted the Projects Register, presented by the Chair.

M16/39   **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair advised members that they would, at the April 2016 meeting, be asked to provide an update on any policies which they were reviewing or developing.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 5 April 2016