

Heriot-Watt University

SECRETARY'S BOARD

Minutes: 2 August 2016

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

The Chair welcomed Mr Chris Larkins, Environment and Energy Manager, to the meeting to present M16/118 *Carbon Management Plan*.

MINUTE REF

M16/108

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5 JULY 2016

The Board received and approved the minutes of the meeting of 5 July 2016.

M16/109

MATTERS ARISING REPORT FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF 5 JULY 2016

The Board received and noted the matters arising report following the meeting of 5 July 2016.

Payslip Distribution

The Board discussed the progress towards electronic payslips, which the University planned to implement for colleagues at all campuses. The Director of Finance highlighted that the offer from the University's current payroll supplier was being explored. Further investigation would be undertaken and a communication released to colleagues once a decision had been made and details had been confirmed. A timeline was not currently available and this would also be confirmed as soon as possible.

The Director of Finance highlighted that the advantage of electronic payslips was 24/7 access to both current and historic pay information, as well as a guarantee that colleagues' payslips would be available on the day that they were paid. The Board queried whether P60s would also be made available electronically and the Director of Finance agreed that he would discuss this with the supplier. A member of the Board questioned whether payslips would still be available online after a colleague had left the University. The Director of Finance noted that this was not usually the case and this would also be investigated and a process identified for colleagues leaving the University.

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M16/110 POLICIES UNDER DEVELOPMENT REPORT (SB/16/138)

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

M16/111 PROJECTS REGISTER (SB/16/139)

The Board received and noted the Projects Register, presented by the Chair. The Board noted that, since the July 2016 meeting, the Counter-Terrorism Compliance Project had been closed.

M16/112 BUSINESS REPORTED BY THE CHAIR (ORAL)

The Chair highlighted the following to the Board:

- **Reserved section (Ref: Sections 30, 33 FOI(S) A 2002);** and
- that the results of the NSS survey had recently been released. The University had received an overall satisfaction score of 89%.

The Board noted the retiral of Ms Maggie Dunn, Director of Administration (SLS) from the Secretary's Board following the disestablishment of the School of Life Sciences (SLS). On behalf of the Board, the Chair offered sincere thanks to Maggie for all of her hard work and for her contributions to the business of the Secretary's Board during her membership.

M16/113 REPORTS FROM THE SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (ORAL)

The Board received and noted oral updates 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 key points were noted:

Campus Services

- that the Oriam Project was due to complete on 8 August 2016, with Oriam due to open at the end of August 2016. The New Residences Project remained behind schedule, however the contractor believed that the Residences would be ready for the commencement of the academic year. The Director of Campus Services was monitoring progress against the deadline;

Edinburgh Schools

- that colleagues from SLS were now being incorporated into their destination Schools and the infrastructure for supporting these colleagues was being developed. The three Schools who were receiving colleagues from SLS were working closely and flexibly to ensure a smooth transition;

Governance and Legal Services

- that the Confirmations of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) allocations for HEIs were coming up for renewal. Heriot-Watt had reduced its request, as the University no longer sponsors students at West London College, and had been asked by the United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI) team to reduce this further. The University's Home Office team continued to monitor the situation. The Director of Governance and Legal Services emphasised the importance of only allocating CAS where the student clearly met the UKVI requirements for sponsorship;

Human Resource Development

- that the names of any colleagues being nominated for involvement in the iHR Phase 3 Project (as discussed at the July 2016 meeting) should be passed to the Director of HRD;

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- that UCU continued to undertake Action Short of Strike in respect of the national pay dispute. Other Trade Unions were currently consulting with members regarding potential action;
- that the HRD Partners were currently considering patterns of sickness absence and whether there were any trends which could be identified;

Malaysia Campus

- that the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar (Malaysia) would liaise with the Academic Registrar and the relevant Directors of Administration regarding January intakes and how these could best be administered at the Malaysia Campus;

Registry Services

- that the Academic Registrar was investigating alternative venues for 2016/17 graduations at the Edinburgh Campus, as the usual venue would be closed for refurbishment. Currently this was in the very early stages and on-campus venues were being explored. In October 2016, the Academic Registrar would set up a Working Group to take this forward;

Research and Enterprise Services (RES)

- that the Research Excellence Framework Review had now been published. The Director of RES would present the highlights of the report to the Secretary's Board at a future meeting; and

Student Recruitment

- that the Clearing period would commence shortly, and those colleagues who had volunteered to assist were undertaking training.

M16/114 FACE-TO-FACE BRIEFING FEEDBACK (SB/16/140)

The Board received and noted feedback from the Face-to-Face Briefings, presented by the Director of Marketing & Communications.

The Board noted that Brexit had been the sole topic for July 2016 and feedback was focused on this item. The Board noted that the University would consider how it managed the risk of major political events, such as a referendum, in the future.

M16/115 GROUP FINANCIAL DASHBOARD (SB/16/141)

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

The Director of Finance highlighted that:

- **Reserved section (Ref: Sections 30, 33 FOI(S) A 2002)**

M16/116 STUDENT RETENTION: ACTIONS UPDATE (SB/16/142)

The Board received and noted an actions update on student retention, presented by the Academic Registrar.

The Board noted the actions currently being undertaken to improve student retention. This included improving visibility and understanding of the personal tutoring programme, as well as ensuring that additional support was in place for students arriving late, who had a higher chance of not completing their studies.

The Academic Registrar highlighted that the Learning and Teaching Board had approved the Retention Strategy and Operational Plan. Work was now taking place to develop a

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formal reporting structure for retention. A quarterly report from Registry Services would form part of this reporting.

The Board agreed that the Academic Registrar would consider how to manage and coordinate retention and would present proposals to the Secretary's Board at a future meeting.

M16/117 GLOBAL MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT WORKSHOP UPDATE (SB/16/143)

The Board received and noted an update on actions from the Global Recruitment and Marketing Workshop in January 2016, presented by the Director of Student Recruitment.

The Director of Student Recruitment highlighted that good progress had been made in most of the ten areas identified at the Global Marketing and Recruitment Workshop. This included the successful launch of the Go Global programme and a full review of the University's scholarship provision. Further work was now planned on use of online resources, and an agenda for the January 2017 Workshop was being developed. The Director of Student Recruitment would welcome all feedback regarding agenda items for this meeting.

The Board discussed the work of the Conversion Group, which had arisen out of discussions at the Global Marketing and Recruitment Workshop, and agreed that a review of the success of this Group would be undertaken following the Clearing period. The review would be led by the Director of Student Recruitment and the Director of Marketing & Communications.

M16/118 CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN (SB/16/144)

The Board received and noted a report on the Carbon Management Plan, presented by the Environment and Energy Manager.

The Board noted that the Carbon Management Plan was designed to cut the University's greenhouse gas emissions between 2015/16 and 2019/20. It allowed the University to comply with its commitments and Scottish legislative requirements, including the Climate Change (Scotland) Act. The Environment and Energy Manager highlighted that Scotland had already met the target for reducing emissions by 42% by 2020 and the Scottish Government were now considering increasing the target to at least 50%.

The Board discussed next steps for the Carbon Management Plan, which included plans to increase awareness and engagement amongst colleagues in 2016/17. The Environment and Energy Manager highlighted that there would be a formal review of the Carbon Management Plan during October and November 2016 and this would assist in completing the annual mandatory return for the Public Bodies Climate Change Duties. The frequency and timing of internal reporting would be considered as part of this process.

The Board discussed a number of ideas for improving energy efficiency in the long-term and queried how engagement with colleagues would be accomplished. The Environment and Energy Manager clarified that there would be joint working with the Schools and Services on a number of new projects and that there were several mechanisms currently in place to promote collaboration on these projects. There were also plans to identify key stakeholders for consultation, including the student Sustainability Society. The Director of Campus Services confirmed that there were a number of initiatives (such as the Healthy Working Lives scheme and Transition Heriot-Watt) which could feed into the Carbon Management Plan and that representation on these groups was in place. The Board agreed that the various strands of the engagement strategy would be linked up and that this would then be communicated to colleagues.

The Board agreed that the Plan would make mention of the energy efficiency measures in place at the Malaysia Campus, which were an example of good practice for the University.

The Board also agreed that the Director of Campus Services would consider the level of sign off needed for the annual report, to ensure that the appropriate reporting lines were followed.

M16/119 FIVE-YEAR PLAN UPDATE (SB/16/145)

The Board received and noted an update on the Five-Year Financial Plan, presented by the Director of Finance.

The Director of Finance highlighted that the Five-Year Plan had been approved by the Court on 27 June 2016 and had then been presented to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as required. The Five-Year Plan was designed to support the Strategic Plan, whilst reflecting current risks and operational concerns.

The Board noted the key features of the plan, which included alterations to the targets for the Malaysia Campus, as well as the use of contingencies to ensure robust risk management. The Director of Finance highlighted that provision had been made for the Capital Plan projects, which would help to provide a high-quality student experience. A portion of the funding for these works would need to come from long-term borrowing, and the Finance team were currently exploring the options available to the University. Once a clear picture had been developed, proposals would be presented to the Finance Committee and the Court for their approval.

A member of the Board queried whether the staff costs within the Plan were likely to be met in coming years. The Director of Finance clarified that these costs were based upon the University making the Global Platform appointments which had been budgeted for and filling staff vacancies as these arose. In previous years, the Global Platform budget had not been used fully and so had been released as contingency.

The Board briefly discussed the impact of the Brexit vote, noting that this remained unclear in many areas. Short-term effects had included the fall in the value of the pound, which had worked in the University's favour thus far, and some concern in international markets about whether they would be welcome in Britain. The University was working closely with international students to reinforce that there had been no change in this area.

M16/120 SARP UPDATE (SB/16/146)

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

The Academic Registrar highlighted the following points:

- that the SARP Roadmap had now been published online for all Banner users and had been released to key stakeholders such as the Directors of Administration;
- that Malaysia's priorities had now been embedded in the CRM Recruit system and colleagues in Malaysia and Edinburgh were working to develop and test the system;
- that Registry Services were aiming to have a Student Portal developed by September 2017, with a replacement for the Project Approval Management System (PAMS) in place for September 2018; and
- that all of the work within the SARP was built on the principle that systems would need to be flexible to cope with continuous change.

The Board discussed the issues with the current PAMS, noting that course information was now contained in the system. The Academic Registrar highlighted that a communication plan would be required for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students and that the Academic Registrar would create a Group to develop this plan. The Director of Marketing & Communications emphasised that course data which was posted on the University website

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would need to be completely up-to-date and it was confirmed that checks would be in place to provide assurance.

M16/121 REVISED MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES: STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS (PRESENTATION)

The Board received and noted a presentation on the revised Management Structures for Student Recruitment and Marketing & Communications, presented by the Directors.

The Directors of Student Recruitment and Marketing & Communications highlighted that reorganisation had allowed a more global, joined up way of working, particularly around web content and market research. The Board discussed the importance of developing market research expertise within the University rather than purchasing it on an ad-hoc basis from external suppliers.

The Board noted the changes which had been made to the two Directorates, along with a summary of the responsibilities and activities of their teams. Both Directorates were working to develop their links with Dubai and Malaysia colleagues, providing ideas for different ways of working and gaining in-country expertise from those at the international campuses. The Chair highlighted that there was further work to do on creating global teams and the Board agreed that proposals for developing this way of working would be presented at a future meeting.

The Board also agreed that Student Recruitment and Marketing & Communications Strategies would be developed to ensure that the University was effectively attracting students.

The Board discussed how links between the Marketing teams within different Schools could be strengthened, to allow for joint working and sharing of knowledge across the University. A number of possibilities were considered, and it was agreed that further discussion regarding holistic working across the University, for both Schools and Professional Services, was required. The Board agreed that the Assistant to the Secretary would organise an initial lunch meeting for Board members, to allow for further informal discussion on this topic and specifically to identify the threats and opportunities associated with more joined up working across the University. Another topic for discussion would be the personal development opportunities which would be made available to colleagues to develop a broader range of skills and expertise across the various administrative functions and structures of the University.

M16/122 SECRETARY'S BOARD MEETING DATES: 2016/17 AND 2017/18 (SB/16/147)

The Board received and approved the meeting dates for 2016/17 and 2017/17, presented by the Chair.

The Chair advised that the Clerk would circulate meeting invitations to members shortly. The majority of meetings would now be held on a Thursday morning, to avoid clashes with meetings of the University Executive.

M16/123 SECRETARY'S BOARD FORWARD AGENDA (SB/16/148)

The Board received and noted the Secretary's Board Forward Agenda, presented by the Chair.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6 September 2016