

- In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor
- Present Also: Professor Julian Jones, Vice-Principal
Professor Robert Craik, Vice-Principal (Malaysia)*
Professor Gill Hogg, Deputy Principal (External Relations)
Professor Gavin Gibson, Interim Head (Mathematics and Computer Sciences)
Professor Robert MacIntosh, Head (Management and Languages)
Professor Stephen McLaughlin, Head (Engineering and Physical Sciences)
Professor Gareth Pender, Head (Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure, and Society)
Professor Fiona Waldron, Head (Textiles and Design)
Ms Ann Marie Dalton, Secretary of the University
Mr Andrew Menzies, Director of Finance
- In Attendance: Mr Richard McGookin, Director of Planning
Ms Nuala Boyle, Assistant Principal (Development)
Ms Julie Dickson, Head (Organisational Development)
Mr Brett Dodgson, Clerk
- Apologies: Professor Ammar Kaka, Vice-Principal (Dubai)
Professor Duncan Hand, Interim Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
Professor John Sawkins, Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)
Mr Alick Kitchin, Acting Head, (Edinburgh Business School)
Dr Peter Morris, Interim Head (Life Sciences)
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* Indicates member participating remotely

MINUTE REF
M15/235

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed to the meeting the members of the UE and those colleagues who were in attendance.

The UE noted those members who had submitted to the Clerk their apologies for the meeting.

The Chair noted that there had been a late change to the agenda: a presentation on preparations for the 2016 version of the five year plan had been added to the agenda while the papers on support for Research Council capital equipment bids [UEP/15/185] and on the interim report of the Commission on Widening Access [UEP/15/187] would be considered in January 2016.

M15/236

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING [Paper UEP/15/181]

The UE considered the minutes of the meeting held 10 November 2015.

The UE noted a question with respect to minute 15/208 and whether this was consistent with the wording of the published advice on the Go Global programme. The UE agreed that the Clerk should seek clarification on this point and that, subject to this, the minutes should be approved as a correct record.

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15/237 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AND ACTIONS LOG [Paper UEP/15/182]

The UE noted that there were no matters arising from the minutes that were not already on the agenda as circulated.

The UE noted the actions log and noted that the Clerk was seeking advice from members on the status of outstanding items on the actions log. The UE noted that the action arising from minute 14/108 was now closed. The actions arising from minutes 15/187 and 15/212 regarding the University's taught programme offer would be considered by the UE early in 2016. The UE noted that a more concise summary of actions arising from meetings would be used from January 2016.

15/238 BUSINESS REPORTED BY THE CHAIR

The UE received a verbal report from the Principal and noted that:

1. In November 2015 the Principal had participated in graduation ceremonies in Dubai, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong as well as celebratory dinners to mark the 3rd and 10th anniversaries of the Malaysia and Dubai campuses. The Principal thanked all of those involved in organising the graduation ceremonies and noted that the Academic Registrar had asked for any feedback or suggestions for future ceremonies.
2. In November 2015 the University and the Universiti Malaysia Terengganu had signed a memorandum of understanding on collaborations relating to marine science and technology. The Principal noted that with this agreement, the Orkney campus, and the Sir Charles Lyell Centre, the University was developing its networks and impact in these fields.
3. In November 2015 the United Arab Emirates government had announced that it would be investing Dhs300 billion in new technology transfers and innovation focusing on clean energy, aviation, and other priority sectors. The investment was part of a wider strategy to diversify the country's economy and provided opportunities for higher education institutions. The Principal requested that the Vice-Principal (Dubai) provide a report on the initiative at a future meeting of the UE.
4. On 2 December 2015 the Edinburgh campus had hosted "IllumiNations", the closing ceremony of the United Nations' Year of Light in Scotland. The event had been a great success and had featured a lecture by Professor Jim Al-Khalili of the University of Surrey. The Principal thanked the Acting Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange) and the University's Engage Team for their work in delivering such a successful event.
5. Professor Gibson would from December 2015 take up a new role relating to the University's preparations for the next Research Excellence Framework exercise. A readiness plan for the exercise would be presented to the UE early in 2016. It was noted that the position of Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange) would be re-advertised early in 2016.
6. **[Reserved Section – Ref. FOI(S)A, s.30 and s.33]**
7. A schedule of various activities in 2016 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the University receiving its Charter was being developed. Related to this there would be opportunities to celebrate other achievements such as the establishment of the Edinburgh Business School and the University's success in November 2015 in being awarded one of the Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education for innovation in the oil and gas sector. The Principal noted that the Edinburgh campus would be the focus of the anniversary celebrations and that it was intended that this would include a summer lawn party for staff and partners. The Principal invited suggestions for ways in which the anniversary could be marked at the other campuses.

15/239 DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS: COURT PRESENTATION

The UE considered a presentation on development and alumni relations.

The UE noted that the presentation would be received by the Court in December 2015 and that the UE was invited to provide feedback and suggestions that could be used to prepare a final version for the Court. The UE noted that the presentation addressed the nature of development and alumni relations and the value of these activities to universities, the University's performance in these areas relative to other universities, operational and capacity matters, and opportunities to develop a more integrated and strategic approach to development and alumni relations.

The UE welcomed the presentation and its messages that the University needed to be ambitious with respect to development and alumni relations, that there needed to be alignment between these activities and the University's broader strategic objectives, and that there needed to be a compelling vision to underpin these things. The UE noted the importance in these respects of senior managers and key members of the academic community being engaged with these activities as well as the role of the UE in deciding what the University's development priorities should be. The UE agreed that staff engaged in development activities would need to receive appropriate support and guidance in order to maximise the value of this approach. The UE welcomed as well the recognition of the need for a more professional and systematic approach to development and noted in this respect the importance of effective systems for sharing and recording intelligence.

The UE agreed that it should in 2016 receive an initial action plan for achieving improved performance in relation to development and alumni relations. The UE noted that draft policies on stewardship of donors and the acceptance of large gifts were being developed and would be presented to the UE for consideration in spring 2016.

15/240 SUPPORTING FAMILY LIFE POLICIES [Paper UEP/15/183]

The UE considered the draft Supporting Family Life overarching policy which specified the entitlements of UK-based staff with respect to Maternity/Paternity Leave; Adoption Leave; Parental/Shared Parental Leave; Leave to Attend Antenatal Appointments; Carer's Leave; Emergency Dependants Leave; and Compassionate Leave.

The UE noted the consultation process that had been followed in developing the policy and noted that an Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

The UE noted that the entitlements specified in the proposed policy reflected changes in UK legislation and that they were comparable with those offered by other UK universities. The UE noted that, subject to approval, the launch of the new policy would be supported by a full communications plan and that managers would be provided with training on applying the new policy.

The UE noted that the University would incur additional costs of around £30,000 each year as a result of enhanced staff entitlements. These costs would be met from existing School/professional services budgets on the basis that it was assumed that the costs would fall equally across these units and that top-slicing of budgets to create a central budget for these costs would use additional administrative resource. The UE agreed that the budgetary impact should be kept under review.

The UE approved the policy for immediate adoption subject to amendments to make clearer its application to UK-based staff only – namely, that the policy should be described as an “overarching policy for UK-based staff” and that it should include supplementary guidance for staff based outside the UK.

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15/241 FIVE YEAR PLAN: 2016 PREPARATIONS

The UE considered a presentation on preparations for agreeing the 2016 version of the five year plan. The purpose of the presentation was to provide an update on the appraisal of financial risks which the UE had considered in November 2015 [minute 15/212], present the draft first quarter forecast, and to initiate discussions on suitable income and expenditure envelopes for the 2016 version of the five year plan.

[Reserved Section – Ref. FOI(S)A, s.30 and s.33]

15/242 THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE: MEETING ADMINISTRATION [Paper UEP/15/184]

The UE considered and approved a proposed framework for administrative and other matters relating to its meetings from December 2015.

The UE noted that meetings would be held on Mondays from 08:30 to 10:30 and that members were expected to attend all meetings except by prior agreement with the Principal – notice of apologies to the Clerk would no longer be accepted.

The UE noted that one meeting each month would be devoted to strategy matters; one meeting each month would be devoted to performance matters; and the remaining meetings (one or two each month) would be for regular business. Agendas would be agreed one week in advance of each meeting. Members and other colleagues with papers for presentation to the UE would be required to submit these to the Clerk no later than 16:00 on the Tuesday preceding the meeting; papers would be reviewed by the Chair before being accepted and the final agenda and associated papers would then be circulated electronically on the morning of the Friday preceding the meeting. The UE noted that the minutes of the meetings would be as concise as possible and would focus on the actions and decisions arising from the meeting. Members were reminded of the need to be proactive in reporting progress in completion of agreed actions.

The UE agreed that the effectiveness of the new framework should be kept under review and, in particular, whether the delineation of meeting types was operating as intended.

15/243 AWARDS AND PROPOSALS ANALYSES: OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2015 [Papers UEP/15/188 and UEP/15/189]

The UE noted the analyses of research awards and proposals as at October 2015 and November 2015.

15/244 SCHOOL OF LIFE SCIENCES REORGANISATION: UPDATE REPORT

The UE noted that the working groups had developed outline recommendations for the reorganisation of the School of Life Science's academic activities within other Schools. The UE noted that a meeting of the steering group would be held 8 December 2015 to consider the initial recommendations.

The UE agreed that an additional meeting of the UE should be convened before the Christmas break to consider the steering group's response to the initial recommendations.

15/245 JAMES WATT PHD STUDENTSHIPS: PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS [Paper UEP/15/186]

The UE noted and approved the proposed allocation of studentships for the 2016-17 academic year and noted the provisional allocation of studentships for subsequent years.

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15/246 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND STATEMENT 2015-16 [Paper UEP/15/190]

The UE noted and endorsed the institutional health and safety policy and policy statement as updated for the current academic year. The UE agreed that these should be recommended to the Court for approval.

15/247 SECRETARY'S BOARD BULLETIN: NOVEMBER 2015 [Paper UEP/15/191]

The UE noted the Secretary's Board Bulletin for November 2015.

15/248 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The UE noted that its next meeting would be held 21 December 2015.

Signed by Chair

Date