

THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

Minutes: 11 January 2016

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- In the Chair: Professor Julian Jones, Vice-Principal
Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor*
- Present Also: Professor Robert Craik, Vice-Principal (Malaysia)
Professor Ammar Kaka, Vice-Principal (Dubai)*
Professor Duncan Hand, Interim Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange)
Professor Gill Hogg, Deputy Principal (External Relations)
Professor John Sawkins, Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)
Professor Gavin Gibson, Interim Head (Mathematics and Computer Sciences)
Mr Alick Kitchin, Acting Head, (Edinburgh Business School)*
Professor Robert MacIntosh, Head (Management and Languages)
Professor Stephen McLaughlin, Head (Engineering and Physical Sciences)
Dr Peter Morris, Interim Head (Life 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
Mr Mark Adderley, Director of Human Resources Development
Ms Ruth Moir, Assistant Principal (International Development)
Mr Mike Roch, Director of Information Services
Mr Brett Dodgson, Clerk

* Indicates member participating remotely

MINUTE REF

M16/001

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The UE noted that the first part of the meeting would be chaired by the Vice-Principal and that the second part of the meeting would be chaired by the Principal who was in Malaysia and would be participating remotely.

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

The UE noted that there were no apologies for the meeting.

M16/002

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING [Paper UEP/16/001]

The UE considered the minutes of the meeting held 21 December 2015.

The UE noted a question with respect to minute 15/254 and the replacement of signage on The Avenue on the Edinburgh campus and agreed that the Clerk should raise this with the Chair. The UE approved the minutes as a correct record subject to clarification on this point.

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M16/003 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS LOG [Paper UEP/16/002]

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

The UE received and noted the actions log.

M16/004 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

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

1. the Scottish Funding Council had not yet confirmed the university sector's next financial settlement; discussions with the Scottish Funding Council had suggested that the settlement was likely to be better than had been expected but still adverse;
2. a "Compact" between the Scottish Government, the Scottish Funding Council, and Universities Scotland was being developed which would set out shared aims for the next five years and describe the commitments which each side would undertake to achieve those aims;
3. the Student Union would be surveying students who undertake teaching and demonstrating duties within the University; in advance of the University being asked to respond to the findings of the survey, Heads of Schools were encouraged to consider current practices with respect to pay and entitlements and the reasons for any variations in practice; and
4. the deadline for entries for the 2016 Guardian University Awards was 25 January 2016; members of the UE were encouraged to consider examples of excellent practice within the University which could form the basis for an entry.

M16/005 SCHOOL OF LIFE SCIENCES REORGANISATION: UPDATE REPORT

The UE considered a verbal report on the proposed reorganisation within other Schools of the academic activities of the School of Life Sciences.

The UE noted that it had endorsed the recommendations of the Steering Group and had agreed that these should in January 2016 be presented to the Senate for approval [minute 15/249]. It was noted that formally it was a power of the Court, on the recommendation of the Senate, to modify the organisation, constitution, and functions of a School; subject to approval from the Senate, a recommendation would be made to the Court and announcements regarding the Senate's decision would therefore note that the decision was subject to approval from the Court.

It was noted that the UE had agreed that continuity in operations would be important and that the initiation of work to manage operational issues arising from the reorganisation should not be deferred. It was noted that the School of Life Sciences would continue to manage student recruitment and applicant conversion activities until 1 August 2016; it was intended that these activities could then be taken over by other Schools as appropriate. Subject to approval from the Senate, all current applicants would be contacted by email to explain the purpose of the reorganisation and the academic opportunities arising from this. Letters would also be sent to affected members of staff with initial advice as to the implications of the reorganisation for them and who they could contact should they have any further questions.

The UE noted that arising from the review there could be a need to change the names of one or more Schools. The UE agreed that the authority to approve such changes was not a power of the Senate and rested with the UE but that the Senate could be given the opportunity to consider proposals to change the names of the Schools.

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The UE noted that the working group to consider the implications of the reorganisation with respect to professional services was still developing its recommendations and was expected to present these to the UE for approval in March 2016.

M16/006 SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH COUNCIL CAPITAL EQUIPMENT BIDS [Paper UEP/16/003]

The UE considered a report on a proposal to provide institutional cash contributions in support of capital equipment bids to the Research Councils.

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

The UE noted that contributions would not be restricted to bids to specific Research Councils but that, at the current time, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council was the only one to have funding calls in relation to capital equipment.

M16/007 DEVELOPING A VISION FOR TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING [Paper UEP/16/004]

The UE considered a report on a draft brief for a proposed review of the University's virtual learning platforms.

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

The UE approved the brief and noted that any immediate resource implications would need to be confirmed before the completion of the current planning round.

M16/008 FIVE YEAR PLAN REVIEW: UPDATE REPORT

The UE considered a verbal report on the development of the 2016 Five Year Plan and the principles and assumptions behind this.

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

M16/009 ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS 2016 [Paper UEP/16/005]

The UE considered a report on the proposed schedule for academic promotions processes in 2016.

The UE noted that the processes and schedule were largely unchanged from 2015 but that there would be an additional pre-meeting of the Senior-Promotions Board. This meeting would be run along the same lines as the calibration meeting of the Remuneration Committee and would facilitate detailed consideration of individual cases and supporting performance data. The UE approved the proposed schedule.

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

The UE noted that the Deputy Principal (External Relations) had presented a number of briefing sessions on the 2016 academic promotions round and that those briefings had highlighted the need to provide evidence of achievements. There would be further advice for staff by means of weekly e-newsletters starting in February 2016.

It was agreed that Heads of School had an important role within the academic promotions process and that any issues relating to that process could be raised with the Deputy Principal (External Relations). In particular, it was agreed that Heads of School should ensure that staff had a clear understanding as to the performance level they were expected to demonstrate. Similarly, the Principal's 2016 New Year message to staff had highlighted the role of Performance and Development Reviews in supporting the delivery of School plans and it was

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therefore important that Heads of School ensured that staff were clear as to the contents of their School's plan.

The UE agreed that at a future meeting it should consider other ways to support the achievement of the University's performance management objectives and the development of a more structured process by which staff could evidence their performance. It was agreed that this work should be coordinated with the development of the University's Athena SWAN action plans and with preparations for the University's application to renew its Athena SWAN accreditation from November 2016. It was agreed that the Athena SWAN leads should be involved in relevant discussions.

M16/010 CAMPUS TRANSFERS AND FORMAL PROGRESSION PATHWAYS FROM MALAYSIA TO THE UK [Paper UEP/16/006]

The UE considered a report on proposals to establish two schemes to facilitate student mobility between the Malaysia and UK campuses.

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

M16/011 ARMED FORCES COVENANT: CORPORATE COVENANT SCHEME [Paper UEP/16/007]

The UE considered a report on a proposal that the University should sign a Corporate Covenant indicating the measures that it would take in support of the UK Armed Forces Covenant.

The UE agreed that the University should sign a Corporate Covenant and that this should address the promotion of the Armed Forces Covenant as well as specific measures with respect to the employment of members of the armed forces community. The UE agreed that the Principal and the Secretary of the University, in consultation with the Director of Human Resources Development and the Director of Marketing and Communication, should develop a draft Covenant for approval by the Court.

M16/012 ONE HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY

The UE considered a verbal report on the "One Heriot-Watt University" initiative.

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

The UE agreed that the Principal should provide an outline of suggested One Heriot-Watt University projects for consideration at a future meeting.

M16/013 UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP FORUM JANUARY 2016: PROGRAMME [Paper UEP/16/008]

The UE received the proposed programme for the second University Leadership Forum.

The UE noted that the Forum would be used to launch the One Heriot-Watt University initiative and to announce some of the projects which would form part of that initiative.

M16/014 LEARNING AND TEACHING BOARD [Papers UEP/16/009 and UEP/16/010]

The UE received the minutes of the meetings held 11 November 2015 and 9 December 2015.

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M16/015 RESEARCH AWARDS AND PROPOSALS: DECEMBER 2015 [Paper UEP/16/011]

The UE received an analysis of research awards and proposals data as of December 2015.

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

M16/016 ATHENA SWAN AWARD

The UE noted that the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences had received the Athena SWAN Bronze Award. The UE congratulated the School and all of those involved in the award submission.

M16/017 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The UE noted that its next meeting would be held 18 January 2016.

Signed by Chair

Date