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- In the Chair: Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor
- Present Also: Professor Julian Jones, Vice-Principal
Professor Ammar Kaka, Vice-Principal (Dubai)*
Professor Robert Craik, Vice-Principal (Malaysia)*
Professor Gill Hogg, Deputy Principal (Engagement and Staff Development)
Dr Gillian Murray, Deputy Principal (Enterprise and Business)
Professor Gareth Pender, Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation)
Professor John Sawkins, Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)
Professor Malcolm Chrisp, Head (Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure, and Society)
Professor Stephen McLaughlin, Head (Engineering and Physical Sciences)
Professor Beatrice Pelloni, Head (Mathematics and Computer Science)
Professor Fiona Waldron, Head (Textiles and Design)
Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi, Senior Deputy Vice-Principal (Malaysia)*
Ms Ann Marie Dalton-Pillay, Secretary of the University
Mr Andrew Menzies, Director of Finance
Mr Richard McGookin, Director of Planning
Mr Mark Adderley, Director of Human Resource Development
- In Attendance: Mr Joe Pacitti, Assistant Principal (Strategic Projects and Policy)
Mr Paul Travill, Academic Registrar
Mr Martyn Spence, Director of Marketing and Communication
Ms Rebecca Whittingham-Boothe, Head of Marketing
Mr Brett Dodgson, Clerk
- Apologies: Professor Robert MacIntosh, Head (Social Sciences)
Professor Heather McGregor, Executive Dean (Edinburgh Business School)

* Indicates member participating remotely

MINUTE REF
M16/332

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

M16/333

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The UE noted that the minutes of the meeting held 6 December 2016 would be circulated for approval by correspondence.

M16/334

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

In a verbal report the Chair noted that there was a standing invitation to members of the UE to nominate persons for the granting of an honorary degree. It was noted that the Honorary Degrees Group was keen to receive a steady flow of nominations though not to necessarily approve the granting of more honorary degrees each year. Heads of Schools were encouraged to consider possible nominees through the School Management Boards and it was noted that nominees should demonstrate both an appropriate level of distinction as well as a connection with the University. It was noted that the Honorary Degrees Group would also welcome

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nominations in respect of the UK national honours schemes. Members were invited to discuss possible nominees for UK honours with the Principal in the first instance.

It was noted that a template would be circulated shortly which members could use to identify their objectives for the year ahead. The template was intended to support alignment of targets as well as consistency in format.

M16/335 DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITY WEBSITE

The UE considered a report on the completion of the first phase of a project to revitalise the University website.

It was noted that the website had been given a simpler structure to aid navigation and, in particular, to improve the user experience for prospective students. It was noted that there had been a number of enhancements in the organisation and presentation of programme descriptions and the quality of advice for applicants. A second phase of the project, starting in 2017, would involve the development of other sections of the website and the development of content to improve its visibility in search engine results.

It was noted that the Edinburgh Business School would continue to have a standalone website but that information regarding its programmes could be accessed through the main University website. It was agreed that there was a need to ensure that news stories and other content relating to the Edinburgh Business School could also be accessed through the main University website. It was further agreed that, as not all users would start from the home page of the website, news stories and other messages of particular significance might need to be promoted across other pages.

It was agreed that further work should be undertaken to ensure that programmes were presented as a single offer rather than as different programmes distinguished by the campus at which they were presented.

M16/336 UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS HUB [Paper: UE/16/256]

The UE considered initial proposals for the creation of central hub for admissions services for programmes at the Scottish campuses.

It was noted that, at its meeting held 6 December 2016, the UE had agreed that it should consider the benefits of centralising admissions services for the Scottish campuses [minute 16/323]. The University's current model, with a small central team but with devolved decision-making in the Schools, had been a common model at many universities. However, in recent years most UK universities had instituted a centralised model to provide better use of resources, standardise procedures, and ensure a consistent experience.

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

It was agreed that the Academic Registrar should work with the School Directors of Administration and Admissions Tutors to develop the proposals and agree ways to address School-specific issues. It was further agreed that the Academic Registrar should work with the Director of Campus Services to identify location options for the Admissions Hub. It was agreed that final proposals should be presented to the UE for approval in April 2017.

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M16/337 QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

The UE considered a report on the academic and employer surveys that would underpin the 2017 QS World University Rankings.

It was noted that the Director of Planning, the Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation), and the Senior Deputy Vice-Principal (Malaysia) were coordinating activities in relation to these surveys. It was agreed that the Director of Planning should consult with the Vice-Principal (Dubai) and Vice-Principal (Malaysia) as to information on employers in Dubai and Malaysia who might be contacted as part of the survey.

M16/338 MANUFACTURING IN SCOTLAND [Paper: UE/16/253]

The UE considered a review of the Scottish manufacturing sector.

Over the course of an open discussion the UE considered the political context for Scottish manufacturing; the University's historic and current links with design, manufacturing, and technology; and opportunities to expand the University's role and profile within the manufacturing sector.

It was agreed that the Principal and the Assistant Principal (Strategic Projects and Policy) should consider how the findings of the review might be taken forward within the University.

M16/339 STRATEGIC PROJECTS REGISTER [Paper: UE/16/254]

The UE received and noted the Strategic Projects Register at November 2016.

M16/340 SEVERANCE PAYMENTS POLICY [Paper: UE/16/255]

The UE considered a new Severance Payments Policy for UK-based staff.

It was noted that the Policy brought together two policies which previously separately detailed severance payment arrangements for voluntary and compulsory redundancy. The consolidated Policy had also been updated so as to reflect the University's reporting obligations to the Scottish Funding Council and adherence to new rules on early access to pensions. It was noted that there had been no change in the underpinning principles or entitlements with respect to severance payments.

The UE approved the new Severance Payments Policy and agreed that, although there was no obligation to consult with the recognised trades unions, the Policy should be presented to the Combined Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee for consideration.

M16/341 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The UE noted that its next meeting would be a business meeting and would be held 10 January 2017.

Signed by Chair

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Date