

SECRETARY'S BOARD

Minutes: 3 March 2015

In the Chair:	Ms Ann Marie Dalton, Secretary of the University	
Present also:	Mr Mark Adderley, Director of Human Resource Development	Mr Andrew Menzies, Director of Finance
	Mr Mike Bates, Director of Student Recruitment	Mr Derek Penman, Director of Administration (EPS)
	Ms Sue Collier, Director of Governance & Legal Services	Mr Campbell Powrie, Director of Administration (SML)
	Mr Darren Cunningham, Director of Administration (MACS)	Mr Mike Roch, Director of Information Services
	Ms Maggie Dunn, Director of Administration (SLS)	Mr Martyn Spence, Director of Marketing & Communications
	Dr Liz Fellman, Director of Research & Enterprise Services	Mr Paul Travill (Academic Registrar)
	Ms Linsey Fender, Assistant to the Secretary	Ms Vivienne White, Director of Administration (TEX)
	Ms Morag Heggie, Director of Administration (EBS)	Ms Janice Yew, Chief Operating Officer (Malaysia)
	In Attendance:	Ms Tina Donnelly, Athena SWAN Officer (for item 3.1)
Ms Lisa Herlihy, Assistant to the Secretariat (Clerk)		
Apologies:	Ms Philippa Burrell, Director of Administration (EGIS)	Ms Sheelagh Wallace, Director of Administration & Registrar (Dubai)
	Mr Malcolm Deans, Director of Campus Services	

MINUTE REF
M15/16

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3 FEBRUARY 2015

The Board received and approved the minutes of the meeting of 3 February 2015.

M15/17

MATTERS ARISING REPORT FROM THE MEETING OF 3 FEBRUARY 2015

The Board received and noted the Matters Arising report from the meeting of 3 February 2015.

M15/18

POLICIES UNDER DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Board received and noted the Policies under Development Report up to 3 March 2015.

A query was raised regarding the status of the Long Service Policy, which had been discussed at the May 2013 meeting of the Board. The Director of HRD confirmed that the Policy was now in place and that colleagues who were due long service awards from 1 January 2015 onwards would soon be contacted by HRD. The Board agreed that the Director of HRD would liaise with the Director of Marketing & Communications regarding communication with colleagues and would progress matters as soon as possible.

M15/19 SECRETARY'S BOARD PROJECTS REGISTER (SB/15/21)

The Board received and noted the Projects Register, as at 24 February 2015.

The Board noted that a Projects Dashboard was now included with the Register and that the Projects Support Office would welcome feedback regarding this Dashboard outwith the meeting.

The Chair advised colleagues of the importance of ensuring that the project model was applied at the earliest stages of a project's life. The Board noted that both a business case and a project plan were required for any project which would require approval by the University Executive.

M15/20 BUSINESS REPORTED BY THE CHAIR

There was no business reported by the Chair.

M15/21 REVISED HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (HRD) STRUCTURE AND OPERATION (PRESENTATION)

The Board received and noted a presentation from the Director of HRD on the revised HRD structure and operation.

The Board noted that the introduction of the iHR system had required changes in the way that HRD operated. These included assigning case management to one HRD partner, linking reward and engagement, and providing a clearer career path for colleagues in HRD.

The Board noted that feedback from colleagues had highlighted good practice in HRD and also noted areas for improvement. Themes had been developed to guide change, which would be managed carefully and include a gradual increases in iHR capability. The main themes included:

1. aligning structure to strategy;
2. a desire for a more strategic HRD Partner model; and
3. introducing slicker processes.

The Board noted that reward would be extended to cover a wider variety of events and methods of engaging colleagues, including the Spirit of Heriot-Watt awards. HRD Partners would manage School, Professional Service and International HR matters and designated teams would manage HR Services and Recruitment/Talent Management. Academic Leadership and Development would continue in the pre-iHR structure.

The Chair highlighted the review of the Centre for Academic Leadership and Development which was to be undertaken by the Deputy Principal (External Relations). This review would consider whether the resource available was correct for the work to be undertaken and the Board agreed that the results would be presented to the Secretary's Board when the review was complete.

The Board discussed the presence of HR colleagues at interviews and the potential for increasing HR involvement in interviews University-wide. The Board agreed that the Director of HRD would undertake a mapping exercise for a three-month period, noting the number of vacancies within the University and how often HR colleagues had been present at interviews. The review would also consider the length of the recruitment process and whether this needed to be streamlined. The Board agreed that an Action Plan would then be developed, based on the results of the review, and would be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

The Board agreed that a report on flexible working arrangements, previously discussed at the August 2014 meeting of the Board, would be presented at a future meeting. The Director of HRD would consult with the Directors of Administration in developing this report.

The Board also discussed the complexity of the current Vacancy Management Group form and how this could be refined.

The Board had an extensive discussion on the difficulties caused by Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA), which had to be undertaken for any new role. The Board concluded that similar roles should be matched, rather than undertaking HERA each time, and noted that a new, simpler HERA form was being piloted.

The Board also noted the need to continue benchmarking roles internally. Job titles had recently been standardised across the University and this work could be continued by providing clarity around paths for career progression. The Board agreed that a Working Group would be formed to consider grading of roles across the University and would develop a proposal for addressing any discrepancies.

M15/22

REPORTS FROM THE SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (SB/15/22 – SB/15/33)

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

The following items were noted by the Board:

Campus Services:

- that the Estates Masterplan had been extended to include space optimisation planning for the Dubai and Malaysia campuses;

Edinburgh Schools:

- that Mathematical and Computer Sciences (MACS) had made a Global Platform appointment;
- that two computer labs in MACS were to be fitted with new air conditioning systems in order to improve the study environment. The Board agreed that the Director of Marketing & Communications would liaise with Campus Services to draw up a strategy for the communication of physical improvements to students and colleagues when these were in progress. Communication regarding completed works which had improved the work and study environment would also be considered;
- the extensive nature of the report, which was welcomed by the Board;

Governance and Legal Services:

- that an Information Governance Toolkit pilot was now available on the University intranet and Governance and Legal Services would welcome feedback on the Toolkit;
- that the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act had now been passed and the section relating to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was not yet in force. Amendments had been made relating to freedom of expression in HEIs. The Home Secretary would produce guidance for HEIs which would be presented to both the House of Commons and the House of Lords;

HRD:

- that PDR details would need to be entered into iHR so that a record of PDR meetings was available;

Information Services:

- that internet for the Orkney campus had now been upgraded and would be managed centrally;

Malaysia:

- that Malaysia was currently suffering a nationwide problem with dengue fever and

some students in Malaysia had been effected. Malaysia colleagues were providing advice to students and had had instituted measures to try and limit the number of cases;

Marketing and Communications:

- that a marketing impact report had been initiated and would be refined during the process. A media impact report was also being planned;

Registry Services:

- that the QAA were undertaking an audit on campus and would be reviewing the University's academic oversight at West London College later in the year;

Research and Enterprise Services (RES):

- that the Converge Challenge had been launched on 26 February and the University had put entries forward;
- that the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) had introduced a cap on the number of funding applications it would accept and RES were seeking clarification regarding this cap;
- that a business case for the Robotarium (part of the Edinburgh Centre for Robotics) would need to be developed as the plans for this project moved on; and

Student Recruitment:

- that applications for the Dubai campus had been impacted by tuition fees changes and changes in the instalment plan available to students. Student Recruitment were keep the situation under review.

M15/23

ACTION PLANS FROM THE DIRECTORATES AND SCHOOLS FOLLOWING THE STUDENT BAROMETER SURVEY (SB/15/34 – SB/15/44)

The Board received and noted the Student Barometer Survey Action Plans, presented by the relevant Directors of Administration and Directors of Professional Services.

The Chair highlighted the important role that the Secretary's Board had in monitoring the student experience and encouraged colleagues to continue reviewing the actions to be taken and the progress which had been made. The Board agreed that it would be helpful to add a 'Progress to date' column to the Action Plan template.

During the course of this item the Board discussed the points below:

Borders Campus:

- that work on improving feedback to students continued and academics were reviewing course feedback as an ongoing process;
- that the Careers Service had organised a number of events and talks for semester 1 and 2 of 2014/15, in collaboration with academic colleagues. Skills and awareness raising workshops had also been organised and the Careers Service continued to develop an ongoing programme;

Campus Services:

- the process in place for welcoming students who arrived out of hours during induction. The Board agreed that clarification regarding this process would be sought from the Director of Campus Services and the update circulated to members outwith the meeting;

Dubai Campus:

- the transport in place for students attending the Health Centre in Dubai International Academic City, which is off-campus. The Board agreed to seek clarification on this issue from the Director of Administration and Registrar (Dubai);
- the accreditation of degrees offered at the Dubai Campus. The Student Union President noted concern from some students that their degrees were not accredited

by the Ministry of Higher Education for the United Arab Emirates. The Board noted that degrees were accredited by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) in Dubai and the Chair highlighted that Dubai's accreditation was to be reviewed by the University Executive in coming months;

School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS):

- that a discussion of teaching opportunities for PhD students had taken place and the outcomes had been reported to the Research Education Committee in January 2015. It was noted that a balance between teaching and PhD research was key and that not all specialisms linked closely to teaching areas;
- that induction programmes for new students were being revised by Directors of Studies following a discussion at the Learning and Teaching Committee regarding support for students with English as a foreign language;

School of Life Sciences (SLS):

- that issues with course feedback had been addressed through a review of the SLS policy on feedback and this had also been raised at the Learning and Teaching Board;

School of Management and Languages (SML):

- that induction and welcome week arrangements are being discussed to improve the experience for 2015/16;
- that plans to aid students interested in inter-campus transfers were currently being developed in SML. Recent funding within SML had been assigned to provide some bursaries for student transfers. SML were also looking to clarify the transfer process. The Board discussed the current process and the need for early decisions by Schools to enable transfers to take place. The Board noted that the University was promoting transfers in a number of ways and interest from students was increasing. This would increase further once information regarding fees and applications was clarified;

School of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS):

- the provision made for long-term upkeep of buildings on the Edinburgh campus. The Board discussed whether this was accounted for in the Campus Strategy and agreed that the Director of Finance and Director of Campus Services would ensure that such planning was in place;

School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences (MACS):

- that a number of issues for MACS appeared to be caused by insufficient communication with students. The Board agreed that the Director of Administration (MACS) would undertake a deeper analysis of the data to develop a clearer view of the issue;

Information Services:

- the progress towards improving the environment in the Library on the Edinburgh campus. Environmental controls had now been improved and new lighting was to be installed in summer 2015. It was proposed that the upgrade of the ventilation system should be part of the medium-term plan for the Library, due to an increase in the scale of the work that would be required;
- that Library colleagues were working with colleagues in the Schools to review the stock in the Library and retire out of date books and journals. This would allow for more study space for students;

Registry Services:

- the service provided by the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) on campus, which had been a key issue in the Student Barometer Survey. The Board noted that an agreement regarding better service from RBS had been reached and the Board agreed that the Academic Registrar would liaise with RBS prior to the beginning of the new academic year (2015-16) to ensure that service was of a higher standard;

Student Recruitment:

- that a new Scholarship Manager post was being developed and would be based in Registry Services. The Scholarship Manager would coordinate a Scholarships strategy which would aid in promoting the financial assistance available to students, a key factor in encouraging students to attend the University; and
- that a new reporting process to monitor Postgraduate Research applications and turnaround times was being developed. Discussion was taking place with the Planning Office regarding bespoke reporting which could be included in future student recruitment reports. The issue had also been discussed with the Director of Research and Enterprise Services with a view to being included on the Research and Knowledge Exchange Board (RKEB) agenda.

M15/24**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SELF-ASSESSMENT TEAM (SAT) (PRESENTATION)**

The Board received and noted a presentation from the Director of Governance and Legal Services and the Director of HRD regarding the Professional Services Self-Assessment Team for Athena SWAN.

The Board noted that the Secretary's Board would be leading on the Professional Services Self-Assessment Team and would guide the work of a Professional Services Working Group. This would provide a joined-up approach, as the Secretary's Board was also the approving body for University policies and procedures which would be considered during the process.

The Board also noted that guidance on Athena SWAN for the Professional Services was not yet available and early indications were that the Professional Services would form part of the University-wide submission. Some Schools had also included work on Professional Services in their Athena SWAN submissions and the Self-Assessment Team would work with Schools to ensure that there was no duplication of effort. The Board also noted that Schools had produced a good practice checklist which could be used as a reference when creating a checklist for the Professional Services.

The Board considered the requirements for the Self-Assessment Team, which would include representatives from all levels and from all areas of the Professional Services. The Board discussed the possibility that the Employee Engagement Forum, which was used to discuss important issues with colleagues from across the University, could be used for Athena SWAN consultation. The Board agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Employee Engagement Forum would be presented at the April 2015 meeting of the Board and also circulated to members.

The Board agreed that the Director of Governance and Legal Services would prepare an entry for the Secretary's Board Bulletin which would inform colleagues of the role the Secretary's Board would play as the Athena SWAN SAT and provide further information.

M15/25**GROUP FINANCIAL DASHBOARD (SB/15/45)**

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

The Board noted that the University currently had a surplus of £9.5 million, with a positive variance of £2.9 million. The University had more than three months' worth of cash in the bank, some of which would be used in the second half of the financial year as part of the major capital expenditure.

The Board agreed that the Director of Finance and the Director of Research and Enterprise Services would bring a report on the financial impact of the University's REF 2014 result to the April 2015 meeting of the Board.

M15/26

EPSRC OPEN DATA PILOT (PRESENTATION)

The Board received a presentation from the Director of Information Services on the EPSRC Open Data Pilot.

The Board noted that the Research Councils in the UK had made Open Access data a requirement of their funding. For the University the main source of Research Council funding was the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). Researchers who received funding from the Research Councils would have to publish their research openly, so that it was accessible to the public, and ensure that the public were able to request access to research data.

The Board noted that journals were not always openly accessible as many required a subscription. The University was, therefore, required to publish articles online. One option was to use the University's research information system, Pure. This could provide information about the research topic, a PDF document and a link to the journal in which the research had been published. Other requirements from the EPSRC included:

- providing details in research papers of how the supporting research data could be accessed;
- considering how non-digital data could be made available;
- from May 2015, publishing metadata describing research data within 12 months of the data being generated;
- if access to data was restricted, including the reasons in published metadata;
- securely preserving research data for at least 10 years after any privileged access period expires; and
- curating research data throughout its lifecycle.

To ascertain whether Pure could be used for this purpose, a short Open Data Pilot would be undertaken by a project team including colleagues from Information Services, RES, Heritage and Information Governance and Planning. The Pilot was sponsored by the Interim Deputy Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange) and results would be reported to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Board.

The Board noted the preliminary data roadmap, which had been developed in accordance with EPSRC's expectation that all HEIs receiving its funding would align their policies and procedures to enable open publication of research data. The University was expected to be fully compliant with the Open Access data requirement by May 2015 and continuing compliance would need to be monitored.

The Board agreed that the need for research policies to ensure compliance would be added to the Strategic Risk Register. It was also agreed that the University Executive would receive information regarding the Open Access data requirement at a future meeting.

M15/27

EGIS CHANGE PROGRAMME: PROGRESS UPDATE (SB/15/48)

The Board agreed that the EGIS Change Programme progress update would be discussed at the April 2015 meeting of the Board, when the Director of Administration (EGIS) would be in attendance.

M15/28

EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT RETURN (SB/15/47)

The Board received and approved the Efficient Government Return, presented by the Director of Governance and Legal Services.

The Director of Finance highlighted that recent changes to the National Performance Centre for Sport (NPCS) Project would affect the information within the Efficient Government Return. The Board agreed that the Director of Governance and Legal Services would liaise with the Head of Sport and Exercise to ensure that the Return included the most up-to-date information.

M15/29

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business discussed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 7 April 2015