

**Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2014**

**Present:**

Prof G Hogg, Deputy Principal (External Relations) (Chair)  
Prof R J M Craik, Vice-Principal (Malaysia) (by skype)  
Ms A-M Dalton, Secretary of the University  
Prof G Gibson, Act. Head, Mathematical & Comp Sci (MACS)  
Mr A Kitchin, Joint Head, Edinburgh Business School (EBS)  
Prof R MacIntosh, Head, Management & Languages (SML)  
Prof S McLaughlin, Head, Eng. & Physical Sciences (EPS)

Mr A Menzies, Director of Finance  
Prof A Miller, Deputy Principal (Research & KT)  
Prof P Morris, Act. Head, Life Sciences (SLS)  
Prof G Pender, Head, The Built Environment (SBE)  
Prof J W Sawkins, Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching)  
Prof F Waldron, Head, Textiles and Design (TEX)

**Present also:**

Mr R McGookin, Director of Planning

Ms L Kirkwood-Smith, (Clerk to the UE)

**Apologies:**

Prof S K Chapman, Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
Prof J Jones, Vice-Principal

Prof A Kaka, Vice-Principal (Dubai)

**M14/164 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The UE approved the minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2014.

**M14/165 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION LOG**

**65.1 Action Log:**

The UE received and noted the Action Log report relating to the meeting held on 28 August 2014.

**65.2 Matters Arising:**

**Confucius Institute**

The Deputy Principal (External Relations) agreed to distribute programme details of the 'Confucius Week' event taking place in the University from 29 September to 3 October 2014 to UE members. It was noted that some colleagues appeared not to have received these previously.

**M14/66 BUSINESS REPORTED BY THE CHAIR**

No other business was reported by the Chair, besides that covered elsewhere in the agenda for the meeting.

## **M14/67 CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS LOG**

The UE received and noted a Consultations and Publications Log which reported on current consultations with a deadline date for responses up until September 2014 and recently released external publications.

## **M14/68 REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (RESEARCH & KT)**

The UE received and discussed a report which was presented by the Deputy Principal (Research & KT).

### **68.1 Research Grants and Contracts: Proposals and Awards**

The UE received and noted a report on Research Grants and Contracts: Proposals and Awards for the period to 31 August 2014 (period 1).

### **68.2 RMAS: Small Grants**

The UE approved a recommendation, presented by the Deputy Principal (Research & KT), in relation to Research Management and Administration System (RMAS) small grants workflow.

It was noted that, as part of the operational procedures for use of the RMAS, the 'small grant' approval workflow had been considered, with the proposal that Schools would have authorisation to approve small grants without the necessity for further authorisation by Research & Enterprise Services (RES), as currently required within agreed University procedures. With School approval, small grants would be submitted directly to the relevant funding body for consideration. The proposal had been considered by RKEB and the Board had endorsed the proposed change as a positive step forward; it had also formed part of the recommendations emerging from the review of RES.

The UE noted the intention to discount Research Councils UK (RCUK) and Technology Strategy Board (TSB) applications from the definition of 'small grants'.

The UE approved the proposed change including the proposed threshold values to apply in each School, noting that this would have the effect of reducing by around 19%, the number of proposals that will require RES authorisation.

The UE agreed also that the changed procedures should be reviewed after one year of operation.

### **68.3 RMAS: Use of median versus actual salaries in research costing**

The UE received and discussed a proposal, presented by the Deputy Principal (Research & KT), for a change to the methodology of costing staff time in research grant applications such that data based on actual rather than median salaries will be captured in the RMAS (Research Management and Administration System) due to be launched in spring 2015. It was noted that this change in approach, to apply to some staff categories which remain costed on the basis of a median salary methodology, would bring Heriot-Watt into alignment with the University of Edinburgh and other research intensive higher education institutions, as well as standardising the University's approach. It was noted that, currently, a mixture of actual and median salary information is used in grant applications, mainly determined by the role of the individual whose time is being costed.

It was noted that the proposed change was supported by RKEB, the TRAC Steering Group and the RMAS Project Board. On UE approval of the proposal, the RMAS would be configured to accept actual salary information from the outset of its development in this area.

The UE approved the proposed amended research grant and contract costing methodology subject to the Deputy Principal (Research & KT) consulting with the Director of HRD with the aim that the Director of HRD will inform the relevant Trade Union of the agreed changed procedures and advising as appropriate on perceived confidentiality matters.

## **M14/69 REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE BOARD**

The UE received and noted a report, presented by the Deputy Principal (Research & KT) on behalf of the Research & Knowledge Exchange Board, which related to the meeting of the Board held on 8 September 2014. The UE approved the report for onward presentation to the Senate at its next meeting.

### **69.1 Research & Knowledge Exchange Board Terms of Reference**

The UE received and approved, for immediate implementation, amendments to the Research & Knowledge Exchange Board Terms of Reference which were recommended by the Board as part of the annual process of review of Terms of Reference.

## **M14/70 APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR**

The UE received and noted an oral update, provided by the Secretary of the University, on the process towards the appointment of a new Principal & Vice-Chancellor in 2015. The Secretary distributed copies of the published information document for the role.

It was noted that the search phase of the process would be complete in early October, with shortlisting due to take place in November and interviews scheduled to be scheduled in early December 2014.

It was noted, in relation to information materials in support of the recruitment process, that a professional quality DVD will be made available to candidates. It was highlighted in the course of discussion that any photographs used should be as current as possible and of high quality.

In response to a point raised in terms of the key criteria associated with the role, in particular research leadership credentials, the Secretary of the University confirmed that delivery of the 2013-18 Strategic Plan, which was built around research intensification as a key aim, will remain central to expectations of the role of Principal & Vice-Chancellor.

The UE noted the plan in candidate visit days to provide the opportunity for wide engagement with senior colleagues which will include dialogue with School colleagues. Feedback from the programme of discussions would be fed into the selection process.

The UE discussed the composition of the joint Senate and Court appointment committee, noting that the Senate Business Committee (SBC) would be invited to consider the Senate member appointees to this committee at its meeting on 1 October 2014. The UE requested that the Vice-Principal and a Head of School are included in the recommendations presented for consideration by the SBC and that the SBC should be invited to consider nominations for the remaining two Senate appointed committee members.

## **M14/71 PRINCIPAL'S REVIEW REPORT**

**Reserved Section. Section 30, FOI(S)A.**

## **M14/72 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: REPORTING LINE AND UE MEMBERSHIP**

The UE considered and approved the following recommendations, presented by the Principal:

- the management reporting line of the Director of Finance should change from 1 October 2014 so that the post-holder will report directly to the Vice-Principal; and
- the Director of Finance should become a member of the University Executive with immediate effect.

It was noted that two of the key recommendations emerging from the Principal's Review commissioned from Ranmore consulting group in 2014 were that the Planning and Finance functions of the University should be more integrated, both sharing a reporting line through the Vice-Principal, and that the Director of Finance should join the membership of the University Executive.

## **M14/73 REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (EXTERNAL RELATIONS)**

### **73.1 University Deans**

The Deputy Principal (External Relations) advised the UE that a review of the responsibilities of University Deans was almost complete and a report on the outcomes of the review would be presented to the UE in the near future.

### **73.2 Directors of International: membership of the International Strategy Board**

The Deputy Principal (External Relations) encouraged the relevant Heads of School to provide confirmation of the individual within their School who will be designated Director of International and will therefore join the membership of the International Strategy Board.

## **M14/74 HWUM: REPORT FROM THE PROJECT BOARD**

The UE received and noted a report from the HWU Malaysia Project Board which was presented by the Deputy Principal (External Relations).

It was noted that the HWUM Project Board and Malaysia Oversight Board were overseeing the transition from project phase to fully operational status. At its meeting on 24 September 2014, the Project Board had considered the 'Project Scope' which sets out the transition across all aspects of the HWUM operation with the intention that a final document will be presented to the UE at its meeting in November 2014 and, subsequently, the Court.

The Deputy Principal (External Relations) highlighted that attention was being given by the Project Board to a proposal to manage the further development and implementation of the Malaysia Campus student accommodation strategy through a formal project. It was intended that, following consideration by the Board in October 2014, a proposal will be presented to the UE at its meeting in November 2014.

## **M14/75 WEST LONDON COLLEGE: ASSOCIATE CAMPUS AGREEMENT**

The UE discussed and approved a recommendation that steps be taken towards renewal of the Associate Campus Agreement with West London College.

It was agreed that the Director of Governance & Legal Services be invited to progress development of the agreement and to confirm this intent with West London College.

The UE noted that the agreement is due for renewal in 2015 and that UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) had confirmed that their approval will be required for renewal of the agreement. As this process is likely to take six months, it will be necessary to embark on the process within the coming month. The UE noted that the College was taking steps actively to manage the risks associated with changes in the UKVI threshold permissible visa refusal rate, therefore, the University could proceed with plans for renewal of the Agreement with some confidence in the future security of the College's recruitment arrangements.

## **M14/76 REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (LEARNING & TEACHING)**

The UE received and discussed a report from the Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching). The report provided updated information to the UE in relation to the UE planned QAA Review of Transnational Education in the West Indies to take place in November 2014, continuing ELIR preparations; and the introduction of 24/7 Edinburgh Campus Library opening hours during semesters 1 and 2.

In relation to the Edinburgh Library, the UE noted ongoing planning and assessment of required refurbishment work in order that this will be scheduled at a time which will cause minimum disruption to student users. A May 2015 timescale had been assessed as the most probable option.

## **M14/77 REPORT FROM THE LEARNING AND TEACHING BOARD**

The UE received and discussed reports, presented by the Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) on behalf of the Learning & Teaching Board, which related to meetings of the Board held on 17 September 2014. The UE approved the reports for onward presentation to the Senate at its next

meeting.

The University Executive was invited to give particular consideration to two matters presented in the report. These are recorded below:

#### **77.1 Progression and retention**

The UE noted work that had been undertaken, in conjunction with Schools, to develop a University Retention Strategy. This followed the matter of retention and progression being raised as matters of importance for more detailed review by the Senate and the UE at meetings held earlier in the year. It was noted that the final draft document would be informed by the outcomes the Board's discussions at its meeting on 17 September 2014 and by comments from the planned consultation with Schools.

The Board's report highlighted, in summary, the key points that had emerged from reports on progression and retention received from each of the University's undergraduate Schools, and the key points raised in the course of the Board's wider discussion on progression and retention.

The UE noted planned next stages in consideration of progression and retention: a summary report will be provided to the Senate at its meeting in October 2014; the Board will consider 2013/14 progression and retention data (and underpinning methodology and definitions) at its scheduled meeting in October 2014; following consideration of the newly released data, a series of recommendations will be made to the Senate and to the University Executive. The Director of Planning confirmed that the Planning Office could meet the indicated deadline for preparation of the data sets.

The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) agreed that the 2013/14 progression and retention data provided to the Board in October 2014 should be provided also to the Vice-Principals (Dubai and Malaysia).

The Secretary of the University proposed that it would be helpful to the Court if the presentation provided at the November 2014 Court Away Day focusing on performance gave emphasis to retention. It was suggested in this regard that it will be important to provide sufficient information such that it can be determined whether the previous year's recovery is being maintained and campus-by-campus and programme-by-programme variations understood. It was noted that the UE Away Day in October 2014, will afford an opportunity for preparation for the Court Away Day.

#### **77.2 Additional entry points in the academic year**

The UE noted the report from the Board on review work and deliberations in relation to additional entry points in the academic year, besides the normal September entry date. The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) relayed that the Board had formed the view that there should continue to be a single formal entry point in the academic year and exceptional cases could be made for an additional entry point for good reason, such as when programmes are in start-up mode. The Board had further concluded that, as part of any proposal for an additional entry point, the full cost of this should be specified in the business case (full staff costs in Schools, and systems and process costs within the Academic Registry) with the relevant Professional Service costs reimbursed by the relevant School or Campus. The paper provided to the Board by the Academic Registrar & Deputy Secretary on the systems and process issues, provided guidance on the matters that should be considered.

The UE noted that, while the vast majority of programmes fitted comfortably into the single point September start model, there were a small number which did not. A September start date for PhD study was highlighted as an example which may not fit well for some.

One UE member suggested that flexibility could be enabled through a hybrid model involving start dates at the beginning of both semester 1 and semester 2. It was noted however that this model, while having some merit, would not suit Schools where pre-requisite course passes for further progression were in place.

The UE formed general agreement that, while a September start should be maintained as the general norm, sufficient flexibility should be enabled to support exceptional alternative start dates within a managed framework.

It was agreed that University-level guidelines on multiple entry points should be prepared which define accepted common practices and provide guidance on the required academic and financial (full costing) business cases that should support requests for exceptional entry points. The UE noted also the

requirement for University-level guidance to be supported by clear guidance from Schools on further criteria and particular restrictions that might apply.

The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) advised that he would progress development of University guidance in the coming months in conjunction with the Learning & Teaching Board. It was agreed also that consultation should be undertaken with the Vice-Principals (Dubai and Malaysia), and that involvement of the incoming new Academic Registrar will be essential.

### **77.3 Learning and Teaching briefing papers**

The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) drew attention to Learning and Teaching briefing papers appended to the LTB reports, including:

- Learning and teaching key principles
- Academic mentoring
- Student survey framework and process
- Academic Review (Malaysia) MQA full accreditation
- Monitoring and review processes
- Academic approval processes

### **M14/78 REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE SECRETARY'S BOARD**

The UE received and noted a report from the Secretary of the University comprising:

- the Secretary's Board Bulletin dated August 2014; and
- a report from the Secretary's Board which related to the meeting of the Board held on 2 September 2014.

Attention was drawn in particular to a current review of options to increase the occupancy rate of student residences at the Scottish Borders Campus which was trailing budgeted numbers.

The Secretary of the University also confirmed that the recruitment process had been completed in respect of the position of Director of Research and Enterprise. An announcement on the new appointment had been released on 25 September 2014.

### **M14/79 PROMOTION AND CONTRIBUTION PAY: SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES 2014**

The UE received and noted a report, presented by the Secretary of the University, which summarised the outcomes of the following promotion and contribution pay review processes in 2014:

- Academic Advancement Board;
- Senior Promotion Board (Professional Services); and
- Contribution Pay Board (Grades 1 - 9)

The Head of TEX confirmed an apparent error in the academic advancement staff numbers data for the School. It was agreed that this matter should be taken up with HRD directly by the Head.

The Deputy Principal (External Relations) highlighted plans to introduce mentor guidance into senior academic promotions procedures.

### **M14/80 STRATEGIC PROJECTS REGISTER**

The UE received and noted a Strategic Project Register report, dated mid-September 2014, and a Strategic Project Pipeline report which was presented by the Secretary of the University.

It was noted that recent material changes made to the report included: closure and removal from the report of the Oil & Gas Innovation Centre, Confucius Institute and Learning & Teaching Strategy implementation, and addition of the creation of School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society (EGIS) as a new project. The Secretary of the University confirmed that the 'red' status assigned to the iHR project, which had been associated with resource issues, had been reassessed following an update from the Director of HRD; the project had returned to being on track.

#### **M14/81 QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The UE received and noted a report, presented by the Secretary of the University, which confirmed the status of all University complaints logged for the final quarter 1 June 2014 to 31 August 2014.

The UE approved the report for onward presentation to the Court for information.

#### **M14/82 REPORT FROM THE RISK AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY GROUP**

The UE received and discussed a report presented by the Secretary of the University on behalf of the Risk and Project Management Group (RPMSG). The report related to the meeting of the Group held on 3 September 2014.

UE members made the following comments in relation to the report with requests that these be raised with the Director of Governance & Legal Services/ Head of Audit and Risk Management for resolution:

- the report appeared not to contain a reference to RPMSG discussion on the apparently increasing risk INTO2 noted in the Strategic and International Risk Registers report. Such a reference would have been expected by way of supporting explanation for the reported significant escalating risk.
- the Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) highlighted that a comment he made at the meeting of the RPMSG related to item TEX09, not TEX10. The RPMSG minutes as presented attributed his comments with both risk areas.

#### **M14/83 STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL RISK REGISTERS AND OVERVIEW**

The UE received and discussed a Strategic & International Risks Registers and Overview report which had been updated following the meeting of the Risk and Project Management Strategy Group at its meeting held on 3 September 2014.

The UE approved the report for onward reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee for consideration at its meeting on 26 September 2014. However, an observation was made, for further consideration by the Director of Governance & Legal Services/Head of Audit and Risk Management in that there appeared to be a lack of consistency between the reported assessment of risks in areas associated with reputation and brand and risks appearing under 'External Affairs' in the 'Overview Report and Operational Risk Registers' report. The reported risk evaluations in the case of the latter appeared contradictory to the pattern of reported risk in the Strategic and International Risk Register.

#### **M14/84 SCHOOL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE RISK REGISTER AND OVERVIEW**

The UE received and discussed a 'School and Professional Service Risk Register and Overview' report which had been updated following the meeting of the Risk and Project Management Strategy Group at its meeting held on 3 September 2014.

In the discussion two observations were made for further consideration by the Director of Governance & Legal Services/Head of Audit and Risk Management. One is recorded under M14/83, above. The other observation related to a noted absence of dates and version numbers on the reports. This made it difficult to gauge whether the most up-to-date position had been captured. Some of the School risks appeared to be 'old' but there was insufficient information to determine this for sure.

#### **M14/85 INTERNAL AUDIT COVERAGE REPORT**

The UE received and discussed a report from the University's Internal Auditor which was presented by the Secretary of the University. The report set out the five year plan for Internal Audit Coverage including indicative review dates throughout 2014/15. The UE noted that it was intended that the Audit and Risk Committee will be invited to consider and approve the plan at its meeting to be held on 26 September 2014.

The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) highlighted that the timings of the Student experience, International Governance and associated Learning Partners reviews were not ideal in that the fieldwork period will cross over with the QAA ELIR team review work. It was requested that the proposed Internal Audit review work be delayed until April 2015. The Secretary of the University advised that the opportunity to swop around reviews in the 2014/15 schedule would be considered.

It was also proposed that the draft scope of each of the three reviews above should be considered at a meeting of the University Executive before being finalised.

#### **M14/86 STUDENT ENROLMENT REPORT: SCOTTISH CAMPUSES**

The UE received and discussed a report, presented by the Director of Planning, which provided information on the number of September/October enrolments for 2014/15 entry at the Scottish campuses.

The report highlighted:

- significant success in relation to undergraduate student enrolments with enrolments exceeding target in every category;
- overall shortfalls against significant targets in each category in the case of postgraduate taught course enrolments. While there remained potential for a challenging income shortfall, late registration of students would continue into early October and in recent days a good number of late registrations had taken place. If the rate of late registrations was sustained in the days ahead, the final numbers may be much closer to the targets set than currently reported. A high degree of variation in performance v target across Schools was noted with a few reported to be significantly short of target;
- the number of enrolments at the Dubai Campus was approaching 3,000 with the expectation that there will be no significant degree of overshoot of targets. Increased tuition fees had not appeared to have had an impact on global recruitment numbers; and
- between 400 and 500 enrolments were expected at the Malaysia Campus in its first year of full operation. This was highlighted as a significant achievement. New enrolments at the Campus were continuing.

In relation to postgraduate taught course entry numbers, the Director of Planning confirmed that over coming days he will seek advice from Heads of School on the likely outcome in the light of continuing late registrations.

#### **M14/87 ORAL UPDATES FROM HEADS OF SCHOOL AND VICE-PRINCIPALS (DUBAI) AND (MALAYSIA)**

The UE received oral updates including items of news from Heads of Schools and the Vice-Principals (Dubai and Malaysia) who were present.

##### **87.1 Railway Centre**

The Head of EGIS provided a brief oral update on the current status of partnership plans to develop a Railway Centre at Heriot-Watt with the intention that a paper will be presented at the next meeting of the University Executive.

#### **M14/88 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **88.1 Times Higher Education Best University Workplace Survey**

The UE noted the recent promotion by the Times Higher Education of the 'Best University Workplace Survey' and agreed that University staff should be encouraged to participate in the Survey.

**M14/89 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the UE (autumn UE away day) will be held on 23 October 2014.

Signed .....

Date .....