In the Chair: Professor G Hogg  
Date: 11 February 2015

Present also:  
Dr D Ball  
Dr K Brown  
Dr G Buckingham  
Professor P Corbett  
Dr A Cuthbertson  
Dr L Galbrun  
Professor L Galloway  
Dr A Gardiner  
Dr L Georgieva  
Professor G Gibson  
Dr M Gul  
Professor D Hand  
Mr A Haniff  
Dr H Hastie  
Dr S Houston  
Professor J Howie  
Dr W Jackson  
Ms B Jamieson  
Professor P John  
Dr S Keith  
Dr M Lawson  
Dr J Ma  
Professor A Macdonald  
Professor R MacIntosh  
Ms M Matoshi  
Dr P Morris  
Dr A Paterson  
Professor J Ritchie  
Dr B Roberts  
Dr N Robertson  
Professor A Scott  
Dr H Smith  
Dr G Streftaris  
Professor G Stylos  
Dr D Sun  
Dr R Van Dijke  
Professor F Waldron  
Dr R Westacott  
Ms C Wilson

In attendance:  
Ms A M Dalton, Secretary of the University; Ms S Collier, Director, Governance and Legal Services; Mr R W McGookin, Director of Planning; Mr M Roch, Director of Information Services; Mr P Travill, Academic Registrar; Mr J McDermott, Clerk

Apologies:  
Professor S Chapman  
Professor R Aylett  
Dr A Bell  
Professor R Craik  
Professor S Dewar  
Professor S Geiger  
Professor N Gilbert  
Dr D Jamieson  
Professor J Jones  
Professor A Kaka  
Professor O Laghrouche  
Dr T Lansdown  
Professor K Lumsden  
Professor K McCullough  
Professor K McKendrick  
Dr G Medero  
Professor J Jones  
Professor A Kaka  
Professor O Laghrouche  
Dr T Lansdown  
Professor K Lumsden  
Professor K McCullough  
Professor K McKendrick  
Dr G Medero

Note: Dr C Annabi had attempted to join the meeting via skype, but a connection had not been made

1. WELCOME

The Deputy Principal (External Relations) offered apologies for absence from the Principal and the Vice Principal. The Senate confirmed that the Deputy Principal (External Relations) would act as Chair on this occasion.

The Chair reported the sad news that a dear friend to many and long serving former member of staff, Norman (Norrie) Loch, had died recently after a long illness. The Senate recorded its condolences to Norrie’s family and friends.

The Chair welcomed all those attending the meeting, making particular mention of Professor Duncan Hand, who had recently become Interim Deputy Principal (Research & Knowledge Exchange). It was noted that as part of his duties, Professor Hand would chair the Research and Knowledge Exchange Board as well as continuing to chair the Information Services Committee. It was further noted that Professor Hand would be assisted by Professor Máiréad Nic Craith, who would act as Interim Deputy Chair of RKEB; and who would also join certain committees pro tem.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Senate approved the minutes of the meetings of 3 December 2014 and 10 December 2014.
3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Review of the Charter and Statutes (minute 70.1)

The University Secretary reported that the Privy Council had yet to approve the revised Charter & Statutes. It was noted that some further information had been provided to the Scottish Government and to the Privy Council Office to aid the process. It was hoped that approval would be granted soon.

3.2 Appointment of the new Principal & Vice-Chancellor (minute 87)

The University Secretary provided the Senate with a verbal report on the process to appoint a new Principal & Vice-Chancellor to succeed Professor Steve Chapman. It was noted that the process had been relaunched and that meetings had been held between the executive search consultants and the appointment committee. The search criteria had been redefined and the search was underway. There would be no formal advertisement on this occasion. It was anticipated that short-listing would take place in March 2015, with interviews to be held in April.

It was noted that the appointment committee would consider its membership to take into account the impending interim change of status of the Vice Principal. Senate would be informed accordingly.

4. REPORT FROM THE SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE: BUSINESS TRANSACTED TO 29 JANUARY 2014 (SP/15/01)

The Senate received and considered a report on items considered by the Senate Business Committee by correspondence. The Senate noted the following items that had been dealt with by SBC:

- Approval of the composition of a professorial selection committee;
- Approval of the division of schools and disciplines at the June 2015 Graduations;
- Approval of a number of intermediate awards in the Edinburgh Business School.

5. REPORT FROM THE SENATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE: MEETING OF 5 FEBRUARY 2015 (SP/15/02)

The Senate received and considered a report on a meeting of the Senate Business Committee held on 5 February 2015. It was noted that the following items had been discussed:

- Senate Business:
  - Ordinances & Regulations Committee – SBC had suggested a slight change to the proposal that would be discussed as paper SP/15/10;
  - Quality & Standards Committee – SBC agreed with the proposed change to the Terms of Reference, that would be discussed as paper SP/15/05;
  - University Executive Report – some very good news regarding Teaching Grant Allocation;
  - Learning & Teaching Board Report – SBC noted that the issue of additional entry points would be subject to further work and would not, therefore, be discussed at Senate at this stage.
- Proposed Revised Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning;
  - This issue has been subject of some discussion at SBC as well as other committees of Senate. SBC has asked for further work to be undertaken before it is brought back to the SBC next month and then to Senate on 25 March.
- Senate Appointed Representative on JEUMEC: Call for Nominations – Senate was requested to give thought to a suitable candidate for the University’s representative on the Joint Edinburgh Universities Military Education Committee;
- Report on Student Academic Appeals 2013-14;
- Conferment of Honorary Awards;
- Conferment of Honorary Titles;
- Report from the Nominating Working Group (Senate).

6. REPORT FROM THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE (SP/15/03)

The Senate received and noted a report, presented by the Chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, on a meeting held on 7 January 2015. The Senate noted that the following items had been discussed:

- Proposed Revised Policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning;
- Revised Student Attendance Policy;

Approved Minutes of Meeting of the Senate: 11 February 2015
• Revised Compulsory withdrawal procedures: Unsatisfactory Attendance;
• Amendment to Registrations and Student Appeals to the Undergraduate Studies Committee;
• Programme Proposals.

It was noted that approval had been given to the introduction – for one year only – of a January intake to certain programmes at the Dubai Campus and Approved Learning Partners.

7. REPORT FROM THE POSTGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE (SP/15/04)

The Senate received and noted a report, presented by the Chair of the Postgraduate Studies Committee, on meetings held on 9 December 2014 and 20 January 2015. The Senate noted that the following items had been discussed:

• Approval of Paternity Leave for Postgraduate Research Students;
• Revised Student Attendance Policy;
• Approval of Thesis Titles and Appointment of Examiners;
• Amendments to Registration;
• Approval of Supervisors for Postgraduate Research Students;
• Appointment of Approved Supervisors for Postgraduate Research Students;
• Approval of Supervisor Nominations for Postgraduate Research Students;
• Report from Examiners for Research Degrees.
• Programme Approvals;
• Revised Compulsory Withdrawal Procedures;

8. REPORT FROM THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE (SP/15/05)

The Senate received and considered a report, presented by the Chair of the Quality and Standards Committee, on a meeting held on 17 December 2014.

8.1 Review of Quality & Standards Committee Terms of Reference

The Senate approved the revised Terms of Reference of the Quality and Standards Committee as given in Appendix 1 to paper SP/15/05. It was noted that this brought the Committee’s Terms of Reference in line with the Athena SWAN Charter. It was reported that the Clerk of Senate would write to the Clerks of all the other Committees of Senate to invite those Committees to adopt similar revisions to their Terms of Reference. This was important as part of the efforts of the University to meet its obligations under the Charter.

8.2 Items Presented for Information

The Senate noted the following items presented for information in SP/15/05:

• Mapping to Quality Assurance Agency’s UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Maintenance of Chapters;
• Mapping to Quality Assurance Agency’s UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B7: External Examining;
• Learning and Teaching Board: Annual Strategic Review, 2013/2014;
• Academic Review of MSc in International Business Management with Marketing, Malaysia;
• QAA Transnational Educational Review of HWU Dubai Campus: Report and Action Plan;
• Sharing External Examiner Reports with Students: Guidelines;
• Annual Monitoring and Review, 2013/14: The School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society;
• Conduct of Examination Boards 2013: Feedback from the Learning and Teaching Administrators’ Forum;
• Guidance to Students on Examination Conduct;
• External Partnership Closures;
• Exchange Agreement Approvals;
• Participation in meetings by Telecommunication Methods.

9. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL (WEST LONDON COLLEGE) (SP/15/06)

It was noted that this paper was not yet available and that the Clerk would ensure that the Report is available for the next meeting.
10. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL (MALAYSIA) (SP/15/07)

It was noted that this paper was not yet available and that the Clerk would ensure that the Report is available for the next meeting.

11. REPORT FROM THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL (DUBAI) (SP/15/08)

The Senate noted the following items presented for information in SP/15/08:
- TEX Policy on School Attendance;
- January Examination Boards for MSc Programmes;
- Memorandum of Understanding (Sharjah University);
- Calculators in Exams;
- Evening Taught Honours Year;
- Student Recruitment for September 2015;
- University Response to Student Feedback;
- KHDA Research Steering Committee.

It was noted that the Senior Dean had suggested that the presentations to Senate from Schools could usefully be shared with the Academic Councils.

Clarification was given on the practice of some final year honours students joining some Masters-level classes. It was noted that this would not entitle those students to any additional credit.

12. REPORT FROM INFORMATION SERVICES COMMITTEE (SP/15/09)

The Senate received and considered a report, presented by the Chair of the Information Services Committee, on a meeting held on 15 December 2014. The Senate noted the following items presented for information in SP/15/09:
- Information Services Report;
- IS National Student Survey 2014/Student Barometer Response;
- Future for Edinburgh Campus Library Building and other Learning Spaces;
- Edinburgh Stock reconfiguration.

It was noted that the Committee recognised the increasing pressure on the study space available on the Edinburgh Campus and was investigating ways of improving this. One action was to reconfigure the physical stock held on site to free up more space for student use.

13. ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE (SP/15/10)

The Senate received and considered a proposal to revise Regulation 31: Authority of Heads of Schools and Examiners in Exceptional Circumstances. The Senate had approved the Regulation in principle in October 2014 and invited the Ordinances and Regulations Committee to review it.

The Chair of the Ordinances and Regulations Committee introduced the proposal, which sought:
- to amend paragraph 6 to permit nominees of the Heads of School to be approved for the purpose of Regulation 31 by the SBC instead of having to be appointed by the Court under Ordinance 26; and
- to amend paragraph 10 to bring Regulation 31 into line with the most recent revision to the Student Appeals procedures.

It was noted that the change to paragraph 6 would still provide rigour in the process, whilst being less heavyweight.

It was agreed to be important to ensure that any students affected by the circumstances in which Regulation 31 would come into effect would have recourse to a two-stage Appeals Process. It was therefore agreed that the revised wording of paragraph 10 would now be: “A candidate who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Examiners shall be entitled to appeal under the terms of Regulation 36: Student Appeals.”

The Senate approved the revised version of Regulation 31: Authority of Heads of Schools and Examiners in Exceptional Circumstances, and noted that it would be put to Court for endorsement.
14. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

14.1 REF Outcome 2014

The Interim Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange) gave a presentation on the outcome of the REF for the University. The presentation included the following:

- A reminder of the focus and scope of REF, and of the detailed submission that had been required, involving a tremendous effort from many colleagues;
- A reminder of the REF profiles, and that that only 4* and 3* would attract government funding;
- The very positive overall outcome for the University, showing a significant improvement over the previous outcome in 2008 – with the Grade Point Average increasing from 2.48 to 3.06;
- The position with regard to other universities had also improved and Heriot-Watt was now the 33rd highest ranked in the UK and 4th in Scotland;
- The University had attained particularly high outcomes in the ‘Impact’ measure, ranking highest in Scotland in that measure;
- The joint submissions with the University of Edinburgh had scored highly in the ‘Power’ indicator, with the General Engineering attaining the highest rank in the UK;
- An outline description was given of the outcomes for each Unit of Assessment, and it was noted that detailed consideration would be given to the lessons to drawn from each of these;
- Additional feedback had been provided to universities, with the key messages for Heriot-Watt being:
  o To continue to develop the joint submissions with the University of Edinburgh, perhaps expanding these to include further disciplines;
  o To continue to build upon the equality and diversity work, particularly with regard to the Athena SWAN charter;
  o To continue to enhance support for early career researchers and to increase the numbers of PhDs.
- It was noted that the funding model was changing – and that the overall ‘pot’ was reducing – and thus it was difficult to anticipate what the funding implications would be;
- It was emphasised that the next REF assessment period had already begun and that the publishing requirements would shortly change in favour of greater open access;
- A chart was displayed that correlated the REF outcome for every UK university with the 2014 National Student Survey scores. Heriot-Watt showed very favourably, having scored highly in both the NSS and the REF.

In discussion it was noted that around 82% of the staff eligible to participate in the REF had done so. Plans were being made to increase the number of staff next time. It was questioned whether it was possible to see the effect of the earlier Global Platform appointments in the REF result. It was noted that REF cannot be correlated to individuals and that all staff were expected to continue to contribute strongly to the University’s high performance. It was questioned whether the internal REF selection criteria could be assessed against the outcome to better inform decisions in the next exercise regarding staff to be included or excluded. It was agreed that this issue would certainly be reviewed for the next REF in order to gain a better correlation between internal predictions and actual outcomes.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange) for his presentation.

14.2 Update on ELIR (Part 1 visit):

The Head of Academic Quality gave an update on the ELIR, subsequent to the Part 1 Visit of the ELIR team. The presentation included the following items:

- A reminder of the focus and scope of ELIR, noting its enhancement and assurance components;
- A reminder of the importance of ELIR, particularly with regard to the University’s reputation across all of its stakeholders;
- A number of staff and students had been involved in the Part 1 visit; and that there had been enthusiastic engagement;
- There had been no feedback received at the end of the Part 1 visit (as is normal), but the review team would give some initial verbal feedback at the conclusion of the Part 2 visit;
- Part 2 would take place in the week commencing 16 March 2015 and would likely be for 5 days (to be confirmed);
- Conversations would be held with a further range of students and staff, including in Dubai and Malaysia;
- In due course, a formal outcome would be communicated to the Principal and this would include an overarching judgement on the current and likely future effectiveness of the institution’s
arrangements for managing academic standards and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience;
• Areas of positive practice would also be highlighted, as would areas for development;
• A one-year follow-on report would be required in 2015-16.

Following the presentation, members of the Senate were invited to raise comments and questions.

The Chair thanked the Head of Academic Quality for her presentation. Thanks were also expressed to all students and staff (professional and academic) involved to date in the ELIR process.

15. BRIEFING FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND THE UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE (SP/15/11)

The Senate received a report from the Principal and the University Executive on a range of topics of current interest. The Senate noted the following items presented for information in SP/15/11:
• Indicative Teaching Grant Announcement 2015/16;
• Outcome Agreement 2015/16;
• Research Grants and Contracts: Proposals and Awards;
• Student Recruitment 2015/16 Entry;
• Malaysia Campus;
• National Performance Centre for Sport (NPCS);
• Strategic Project Register;
• Additional Entry Points in the Academic Year;
• Draft Risk Policy and Appetite Statement;
• New Subject Provision – Dubai Campus;
• HWU Positioning in REF2014 and NSS 2014;
• REF2014 – HRD Lessons Learned;
• Athena SWAN Update;
• Staff Engagement Survey;
• Museum and Archive Development Policy;
• Meeting of the Court held on 15 December 2014;
• Extra Meeting of the Court held on 4 February 2015;
• External News and Publications;
• Obituary – Norrie Loch.

The Senate discussed in particular the positive Scottish Funding Council (SFC) announcement of initial decisions on funding Outcome Agreements for academic year 2015-16. Heriot-Watt had been awarded one of the largest percentage increases in the sector, which was a testament to the excellent work being done across the University. Those involved in preparing the submission on the Outcome Agreement, signed off annually by Court, were commended. Also commended was the overall positivity with which the University as a whole had approached engagement with the objectives of the Outcome Agreement, which broadly accorded with the University’s Strategic Plan.

The Senate welcomed the opening of the new campus in Malaysia, at which the Principal, the Chair of Court and a number of senior colleagues were officiating.

An oral update was given on the National Performance Centre for Sport, and it was noted that the construction contracts would be let soon, with building works due to commence in mid-March. The facility would be due to open in autumn 2016.

16. REPORT FROM THE LEARNING AND TEACHING BOARD (SP/15/12)

The Senate received and considered a report, presented by the Head of Academic Quality, on the meetings of the Board of 10 December 2014 and 21 January 2015. The Senate noted the following items presented for information in SP/15/12:
• Learning and Teaching Strategy: Summary Report;
• Learning and Teaching Strategy: Next Stages;
• ELIR and the Learning and Teaching Strategy;
• Terms of Reference and Membership of the Learning Spaces Management Group and the VLE Management Group;
• ELIR Review Visit: Progress towards the Learning and Teaching Strategy, Academic Management Structures and the Multi Code;
• Postgraduate Taught Student Learning Experience: Representation;
• QAA ELIR3: Update Report;
• Revised Academic Policy Process (Equality Impact Assessment);
• QAA Enhancement Themes Funding: Projects;
• Report from the International Strategy Board and Revised Terms of Reference;
• Report from the Student Learning Experience Committee;
• Grades Descriptors;
• Additional Entry Points;
• SFC-HWU Outcome Agreement;
• Cross-School Collaboration;
• Progress Towards ELIR2 Action Plan;
• Updated Heriot-Watt Assessment and Progression System.

17. REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE BOARD (SP/15/13)

The Senate received and noted a report, presented by the Interim Deputy Principal (Research and Knowledge Exchange), on the meeting of the Board of 9 January 2015. The Senate noted the following items presented for information in SP/15/13:
• Training for Research Student Supervisors;
• EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account;
• Implications of the REF Outcome;
• Open Access spending.

18. CLOSING REMARKS

It was again noted that the Principal, Professor Steve Chapman, had attended his final meeting of Senate. It was noted that a concert would be held in honour of Professor Chapman on 26 February 2015 and Senate members were invited to encourage as many colleagues as possible to attend in order to show appreciation of his considerable contribution to the University.

19. NEXT MEETING

The Chair reminded members of the details of the next meeting, which would be held on 25 March 2015 at 2.15 pm in the Carnegie Room.