

COURT

Minutes

In the Chair:	Dame Frances Cairncross	Date of Meeting: 4 March 2016
Present also:	Ms Tracey Ashworth-Davies (from item M16/60) Ms Pamela Calabrese Ms Lucy Conan Professor Patrick Corbett Ms Hannah Frances Ms Trish Gray Mr Amos Haniff Professor Phillip John Ms Miranda Matoshi Ms Morag McNeill	Mr Andrew Milligan Professor Isabelle Perez Ms Jane Queenan Ms Dorothy Shepherd Mr Tom Stenhouse Ms Jandy Stevenson (until item M16/66) Mr Tony Strachan Professor Ian Wall Mr Graham Watson Ms Rio Watt Professor Richard Williams
Officer in attendance:	Professor Bob Craik (via Skype) (until item M16/63) Ms Sue Collier Ms Ann Marie Dalton	Professor Duncan Hand Professor John Sawkins
Others in attendance:	Ms Lorna Kirkwood-Smith (minutes)	

M16/54 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the following member: Professor Julian Jones, and from the following individuals who had been invited to sit in attendance: Professor Gill Hogg, Professor Ammar Kaka and Mr Andrew Menzies.

M16/55 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Professor Bob Craik, who joined the meeting via Skype.

M16/56 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COURT HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2015

The Court approved the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2015.

M16/57 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made. (Ms Jandy Stevenson left the meeting briefly during discussion under M67.2 due to conflicted interest in relation to that item of business.)

M16/58 MATTERS ARISING

58.1 Queen's Anniversary Prize: Institute of Petroleum Engineering

The attention of Court members was drawn to the display in the Carnegie Room of the Queen's Anniversary Prize medal and scroll, which had been awarded to the University at a ceremony held in Buckingham Palace on 25 February 2016.

58.2 50th Anniversary celebrations

The Principal reminded the Court that a number of forthcoming events in the University calendar would serve to mark the University's 50th Anniversary celebrations. These would include a

summer party to be held on 4 June 2016. Court members would receive invitations to key events and should mark these in their diaries.

The Court noted that 4 March 2016 was a key date in the University's Anniversary, as it was on this date 50 years ago that Her Majesty The Queen signed the University's Royal Charter.

58.3 Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill

The Chair of Court reported that the Stage 3 debate on the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill would take place on Tuesday 8 March 2016.

The Deputy Chair of Court reported that some amendments made at Stage 2 of the Parliamentary process had changed the Bill in a favourable direction; however, there had been no movement on the matter of the election of Chairs and the associated issue of the definition of students and staff who would form the electorate. It remained possible that regulations made by the Scottish Government might serve to provide clarification on the electorate, but there was currently no provision in the Bill for this.

58.4 West London College

The Principal provided a brief oral update on West London College.

Reserved section (Ref: Section 30, FOI(S)A).

58.5 Governance and Nominations Committee

The Secretary of the University updated the Court on agenda plans for the forthcoming meeting of the Governance and Nominations Committee on 20 April 2016.

Key topics for discussion would include the outcomes of the Senate Effectiveness Review, the Higher Education Governance Bill (as enacted), and Court succession planning in the light of the changes to the maximum term of membership permissible under the new Charter and Statutes.

The Chair of Court reminded Court members of arrangements under way to fill two vacancies on the Court. As part of that process, the Secretary of the University would contact members of the Court encouraging them to consider suitable candidates who may be interested to apply.

58.6 University 'personality' statement and logo

The Secretary of the University drew the attention of the Court to a tabled paper which included the agreed University 'personality' statement as well as brief guidelines for use of the new style logo which would be rolled out across the University over coming months.

58.7 Report from the Deputy Chair of Court

The Deputy Chair of Court provided an oral update on his recent overseas campus visits and management of the 2015 Court Effectiveness Review process.

The Deputy Chair reported that he had brought together recommendations emerging from his recent visits to the Dubai, Malaysia, Scottish Borders and Orkney campuses and the outputs and recommendations emerging from the Court Effectiveness Review under a broad governance themed report. It was expected that the report would be provided to the Court for discussion at the May Strategy Day.

The Deputy Chair reported that no major problems had been identified in the course of the Effectiveness Review, but a range of suggestions for improvements had emerged. These included, inter alia, recommendations for enhanced informal gatherings and recommendations which built on the work of the Communications Focus Group. A proposal which related to the timing and format of the 2016 Court Effectiveness Review had been drawn out for early Court approval and was presented via the report from the Governance and Nominations Committee report (ref M67.1, below), together with a recommendation that the report of the 2015

Effectiveness Review should form the discussion topic at the Court dinner meeting to be held on 5 May 2016.

The Chair of Court conveyed her thanks and appreciation to the Deputy Chair for his continuing valuable work in support of the Court.

The Chair of Court encouraged Court members to ensure that they had the May Court dinner date marked in their diaries. Any member unable to attend should make an arrangement to speak separately to the Deputy Chair in advance of the dinner meeting. The Chair also asked that any member who has an interest in attending the Dubai graduation ceremony in summer 2016 should tell the Secretary of the University. (Addendum: following the meeting it was decided not to hold summer graduation ceremonies in Dubai until 2017. These will proceed as usual in the autumn of 2016.

M16/59 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF COURT (Oral report)

The Chair of Court reported on the following: the change of name of Court Away Days to Court Strategy Days; the Chair's recent interview with Magnus Linklater, which was published in The Times in early February 2016; and the Chair's attendance at an event on 2 March to launch the report 'Women Count: Leaders in Higher Education 2016'. She had been pleased to note that a league table in the report of (166) UK higher education institutions, by percentage of female representation on governing bodies in 2016, placed Heriot-Watt University 4th.

M16/60 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL (Paper Ct4/16/69)

The Court received and discussed a report presented by the Principal.

60.1 Sector overview

The Principal drew particular attention to the UK Government Green Paper on Higher Education, highlighting the uncertainty surrounding the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) proposals and how these might impact on the Scottish sector.

The Principal drew attention also to the Outcome Agreement 2016/17 indicative funding allocations for Scottish universities from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the comparatively favourable outcome for Heriot-Watt; nevertheless, the University's allocation represented a funding cut. The Principal highlighted the SFC expectation that recently increased levels of wider access student recruitment will be sustained; however, there were no continuing funds to support this measure, which would involve a financial commitment for the University of an amount equivalent to approximately £0.8 million per annum. The Court affirmed that it was appropriate for the University to endeavour to remain committed to meeting its widening access targets but would certainly review this position during 2016/7 in further dialogue with the SFC. A member of the Court emphasised the view that this area had been part of the University's strategy for a long time and it remained an important area of focus. The Court noted that the allocation of 'Strategic Fund' funding remained to be announced.

The Principal confirmed that there will be an opportunity at the Court Strategy Day in May to consider the impact of these and other financial challenges in the 2016 Five-Year Financial Plan.

60.2 Overseas campus visits

The Principal reported on his recent visits to the Dubai and Malaysia campuses.
Reserved section: ref Section 30, FOI(S)A.

60.3 Major regional funding initiatives

Reserved section: ref Section 30, FOI(S)A.

60.4 Staff and other related institutional news

In addition to the news presented in his report, the Principal reported that Professor Keith Lumsden had retired from the position of Joint Head of Edinburgh Business School on 29 February 2016 and from 1 March had taken up the appointment of Master of Panmure House, in which role he would report directly to the Principal. The University was taking steps to arrange for the title of Professor Emeritus be conferred on Professor Keith Lumsden.

The Court noted that an executive search firm had been instructed to undertake work in support of plans to appoint a new Head of the School. In the meantime Mr Alick Kitchin would continue in the role of Acting Head of the School.

The Court conveyed its thanks and appreciation to Professor Keith Lumsden for his exceptional contribution to the establishment and success of the Edinburgh Business School.

The Principal reported that recruitment was continuing for the planned new Deputy Principal positions in the areas of 'Research and Innovation' and 'Enterprise and Business Engagement', as well as for Deputy posts at the Dubai and Malaysia campus and a new Strategic Projects and Policy Adviser (Assistant Principal) post.

Congratulations were conveyed to Professor Bob Craik and staff at the Malaysia Campus which hosted the recent very successful launch of the UK Government 'Education is GREAT' campaign. It was noted that the event had attracted a good deal of media coverage and publicity, and a large number of visitors to the campus, including many senior representatives from government and education. The event had also been marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the University and Shell Malaysia, under Shell's scholarship programme.

60.5 Report on the work of the Malaysia Campus Development Group

The Principal drew the attention of the Court to the "task and finish" approach to the work of the Malaysia Campus Development Group and to six key initiatives that were being implemented with a view to achieving a positive impact on performance against the Heriot-Watt Malaysia business plan. A further major initiative which would increase recruited student numbers was currently being explored. However, because of the scale of the recession in the Malaysian economy, coupled with adverse changes in currency exchange rates, the current measures were unlikely to mitigate the short-fall against the business plan, in spite of the substantial effort of all concerned. A revised and more realistic business plan will be presented to the Court in due course.

The Vice-Principal (Malaysia) reported that this was a peak time for the Malaysia Campus as it was geared towards the next key student intake point. The Campus was operating seven days a week and aimed to turn round student applications within 24 hours. The Vice-Principal (Malaysia) also highlighted Heriot-Watt's comparatively successful position as a private higher education provider in Malaysia, in terms of overall reputation, rate of growth and ability to attract students from English speaking nations as well as from the local region.

The Court discussed student transfer opportunities between the Malaysia and Edinburgh campuses. The Vice-Principal (Malaysia) reported that the number of students from the Malaysia Campus transferring to complete part of their course in Edinburgh was expected to double next year. Thus far, students had been performing well in their Edinburgh-based study year and, overall, had been impressed by their learning and teaching experience here. The Secretary of the University drew attention to the University's network of dedicated support for overseas students.

The Court noted a report that privately educated Malaysian students arriving at the Malaysia Campus came from educational environments which were significantly more advanced in terms of electronic teaching methods and associated supporting technology than they would find at Heriot-Watt. The University will need to focus some attention on this aspect of the student learning experience.

60.6 Report from the University Executive

The Principal reported that he was encouraged by the engagement and work of the new University Leadership Forum which is developing the 'One Heriot-Watt' initiative. The initiative will be underpinned by a number of key change management projects of which a key area will be development of the 'One Heriot-Watt' vision. This will be a discussion topic for both the Senate and the Court in the period ahead.

The Interim Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee expressed support on behalf of the Audit and Risk Committee for the 'One Heriot-Watt' initiative which would address the need, expressed by the Committee in its recent annual report, to improve consistency of approach in all systems and processes.

M16/61 REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENT UNION (Oral report)

The Court received and noted an oral update on the recent activities of the Student Union which was provided by the President of the Student Union. The Court noted:

- car parking remained an issue of concern to students, and continued to be the issue attracting most complaints in the 'Change One Thing' campaign. The Student Union continued to work with the relevant departments to ensure that any student feedback is taken on board in a timely manner;
- the Student Union had held its Annual General Meeting on 18 February 2016. While a quorate number was not achieved, the turnout had been the largest for a number of years. Two motions had been put forward, one about working with the University to insert an exam study period in semester 1, and the second about increasing the international food offering across campus (both matters which had been flagged in 'Change One Thing' feedback). At the close of the AGM, nominations were opened for the 2016 Elections. A good turnout of just under 30 candidate nominations had been achieved. The Union had candidates for all Sabbatical and Executive positions; however, there were no candidates for Halls Officer or International Students Officer and steps would be taken to elect to these positions at the first available opportunity. The Union will know the election results on Friday 11 March, with the results being posted online on the following Monday;
- at the Scottish Borders Campus (SBC), more structured visits from staff and sabbaticals from the Edinburgh Campus had helped spread some of the workload of the SBC and had highlighted a number of issues. Work was continuing to resolve these;
- both Refreshers and Charities Week had been extremely successful, with Charities Week raising over £1,000 for the Union's chosen charities. Work was under way to organise the next Freshers' Ball, which had been a sell-out event last year;
- the annual Volunteer Awards would be hosted by the Student Union in the coming week. around 100 nominations had been received, highlighting the volunteering efforts of students;
- in the current semester there had been a huge boost in halls participation, with a series of very successful "halls parties" at the Student Union, as well as good engagement with hall representatives;
- Diversity Week had gone extremely well, with lots of engagement from all the Union's liberation groups;
- the Union was in the process of planning 'Global Day' on 22 March in the Student Union at which around 30 nations will be represented;
- following the presentation on 'Prevent', hosted by the University on 2 March, the Student Union was working with students to gather feedback on the approach they would wish to see in opposition to the implementation of the strategy. The President reported on the Union's continued opposition to the 'Prevent' strategy; and
- the President of the Student Union had been working on the revitalisation of all pre-election promotional materials, to help boost visibility and engagement, and working on a presentation on Independent Distance Learning and Approved Learning Partner student representation, and how these groups of students might be better supported.

The Court discussed the 'Prevent' event, which had been planned for students and had taken place on 2 March 2016. It noted observations made by one member of the Court who had been present. The event had been attended by around 40 students and the Secretary of the University confirmed that the date and timing of the event had been requested by students, taking place on

a Wednesday afternoon which is non-teaching time. The Court noted that a programme of training for staff was under way; this was focused on safeguarding and on Equality and Diversity as well as the 'Prevent' strategy. It was noted also that the 'Prevent' strategy in Scotland was generally being implemented with a lighter touch than south of the border.

The Court noted the following observations made by individual members:

- further consideration should be given to the opportunity for joint staff and student open discussions on the legislation and its implementation; some other universities were taking this approach. The Chair suggested that separate programmes of staff training events and open meetings for students should be established;
- a key issue to be addressed is the establishment of mechanisms to support open discussion and constructive dialogue between staff and student bodies on the issue;
- 'Prevent' should remain on the agenda of Court as a matter of continuing interest and involvement;
- the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee reported on the responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee in relation to oversight of implementation of the legislation and national guidance. The Committee perceived areas of difficulty surrounding what is variously contained in the legislation and in the national guidance. This meant careful treading of a difficult line, as reflected in the Committee's report.

The Court agreed that a copy of the presentation provided at the 2 March 2016 meeting should be distributed for information to Court members. This presentation was based on the one provided to the Court in September 2015. The Chair of Court advised that any member with concerns should contact her to discuss these further.

M16/62 REPORT FROM THE SENATE: MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2016 (Paper Ct4/16/70)

The Court received and discussed a report from the Senate relating to discussion at its meeting held on 27 January 2016.

62.1 School of Life Sciences

The Court noted, discussed and approved recommendations in relation to the School of Life Sciences, which were presented by the Senate in accordance with Statute 4 (para 2a(i)).

The Court approved recommendations that: the School be disestablished with effect from 31 July 2016; the School's psychology department should be reorganised within the School of Management and Languages; and the School's biological sciences activities should be reorganised within the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences and the School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society.

The Court noted and discussed the supporting detail in the report which included the background to the review of the School and restructuring recommendations, the consultation and communications processes undertaken, and proposed next steps.

In response to questions or points raised by members:

- the Secretary of the University confirmed that, while the report presented to the Senate focused predominantly on academic matters, a separate Professional Services Working Group had considered Professional Service staff who would be affected by the changes. The Group had not yet reported to the University Executive. The destination of Professional Services staff members would be expected to follow the pattern of distribution of the academic activities.
- the Principal provided his view on what the changes should mean in terms of success when reviewed in three years' time. Key achievements should include: an uplift in research activity with increased opportunities for shared equipment and collaborative proposals; increased income and research outputs; effective integration of teams within the Lyell Centre; and an uplift in research performance in the area of psychology. The Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) highlighted the opportunity to achieve an uplift in (measurable) student feedback

- on their teaching and learning experience. The benefits of the new structure to the student experience were echoed by the President of the Student Union; and
- the Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) reported that it was not proposed to introduce a new set of metrics to assess the success of the restructuring plans; a rigorous academic review process was in place on a rotational five year cycle and the outcomes were reported to the Court each year. The President of the Student Union reported on the relative weakness, compared to other parts of the University, in the School's National Student Survey (NSS) scores; however, the NSS scores beyond the current year would provide a very good indicator of the success of the restructure in terms of its impact on the student experience; a positive movement was expected. In addition, the Principal emphasised the standard range of key performance indicators for research income and research outputs which will be the natural and primary metrics that will be applied when the University is considering the impact of the planned restructuring in the future.

62.2 Other items presented for information

The Court noted other items in the report from the Senate which were presented for information.

The Secretary of the University confirmed, in relation to item 7 of the report on the academic appeals process, that the Senate minute will be changed to reflect the fact that a considerable amount has already been achieved to make the University's academic appeals processes more efficient and effective, led by Professor Phillip John. The proposed changes would further enhance this.

M16/63 REPORT FROM THE COURT EMERGENCY COMMITTEE AND THE FINANCE COMMITTEE (Paper Ct4/16/71)

The Court received and noted a full report of the outcomes of a joint meeting of the Court Emergency Committee and the Finance Committee held on 21 January 2016 at which both Committees approved recommendations that the legal aspects of the proposal with Polcom to develop a hotel building at the Edinburgh Campus be concluded and the project should be enabled to proceed.

The Chair of the Campus Committee further reported that the construction period for the project will be relatively short; however, a suggested November 2016 delivery date for the project was probably overly optimistic. A replacement car park must be provided before building works start to compensate for the car parking spaces which will be lost. . A planning application for the replacement car park had already been tendered and Polcom was keen to complete the work quickly, subject to planning consent, to reduce possible delay against the start of the hotel building work.

M16/64 REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE: MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2016 (Paper Ct4/16/72)

The Court received and discussed a report from the Finance Committee which related to the meeting of the Committee held on 9 February 2016.

Reserved section (Ref section 30, FOI(S)A).

The Chair of Court reported on the useful presentation the Committee had received on the annual Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) return for 2014/15. This had highlighted, inter alia, the challenge of reduced rates of recovery against full economic costs of income from Research Councils which had reduced from approaching 80% in 2013/14 to 67% in 2014/15.

In response to a question about contingency measures to mitigate the risk that might arise from a further economic recession, the Principal reported that early action was being taken in relation to some income streams. Steps would continue to be taken with the aim of generating income through new postgraduate taught programmes and increasing student recruitment to existing programmes, as well as reviewing activities which were not generating the required income.

Nevertheless, the University remained in a stronger position than some others in the sector, including some who will have less income as a result of REF2014 results and who will suffer a more significant reduction in core SFC funding than Heriot-Watt following the recent announcement. A small number of institutions had recent announced planned staff reduction measures.

The Court noted that recruitment to postgraduate taught courses remained a key area of challenge. One of the actions being undertaken to increase student recruitment generally was to reduce the turnaround time on applications to increase the conversion rate from offers to acceptances. It was noted that information on student recruitment targets for 2016/17, as reported on page 2 of the report, was not yet available.

An observation was made that in the 'Major Capital Expenditure' section of the Financial Summary Dashboard (Appendix 1 to the report), there appeared to be two areas of spend in the year for which no budget provision was reported; these related to the iHR project and 'other minor capital projects'. The Principal and the Secretary agreed to seek further clarification on the information presented and report back to the Court.

The Chair of Court reported that it would be helpful in the forthcoming Court Strategy Day to learn more about opportunities for increased income and opportunities that might be realised through institutional development activities led by the Assistant Principal (Development).

M16/65 REPORT FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE: MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2016 (Paper Ct4/16/73)

The Court received and discussed a report from the Audit and Risk Committee which related to the meeting of the Committee held on 4 February 2016.

The Interim Chair of the Committee drew attention to the key items of business that the Audit and Risk Committee had considered at its meeting.

In response to the report of the paper received by the Committee on the inaugural meeting of the University's Prevent Group, a member of the Court drew attention to the suggestion that advice on the draft University External Speakers Policy should be sought from counsel rather than from the University's own solicitor's firm, which could offer more practical advice.

The proposal by the Audit and Risk Committee that legal advice should be sought on the External Speakers Policy was supported; however, it was suggested that this advice should be sought from the University's own solicitor.

M16/66 REPORT FROM THE STAFF COMMITTEE: MEETING HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2016 (Paper Ct4/16/74)

The Court received and discussed a report from the Staff Committee which related to the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2016.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to the key items of business that the Staff Committee had considered at its meeting.

A member of the Court asked about arrangements in relation to pensions and advice provided to staff relating to the lifetime allowance cap. The Secretary of the University confirmed that a number of workshops had already been run for staff as one vehicle for the University to meet its responsibility to provide general information to staff; however, the University was not in a position to offer individual advice, nor did it have the relevant knowledge of individual staff members' circumstances in relation to their full income earnings.

66.1 Remuneration Committee update

The Court noted that a meeting of the Remuneration Committee had taken place on 3 March 2016. Among the items considered was a report which confirmed the University's compliance with the guidance notes on the operation of remuneration committees in Scottish higher education produced by the Committee of Scottish Chairs. The University was already largely compliant and making progress, or actively considering areas where compliance had yet to be achieved.

The Committee had also reviewed senior salary review procedures (relating to grade 10 staff and above), and had considered the matter of senior salary disclosure including reaching agreement on the defined group of staff for whom salaries information should be published in the Annual Accounts and Financial Statements. The Court noted that a mock-up of the page which will appear in the 2015/16 Annual Accounts publication would be provided to the Court at its June meeting.

M16/67 REPORT FROM THE GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2016 (Paper Ct4/16/75)

The Court received and discussed a report from the Governance and Nominations Committee which related to the meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 2016.

67.1 Court Effectiveness Review 2015

The Court approved the following recommendations from the Committee:

- the outcomes of the Court Effectiveness Review should form the topic of conversation at the Court Dinner meeting to be held on 5 May 2016; and
- the 2016 Court Effectiveness Review should be conducted around May 2016 using a shorter form of questionnaire. It was noted that this timing each year, rather than an autumn timing, will enable newer members of the Court to gain some experience before being asked to participate in the review process.

67.2 Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee

Ms Jandy Stevenson was absent from the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Court approved the recommendation of the Committee that Ms Jandy Stevenson be invited to take up the position of Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee for as long as she remains a member of the Court, up until 31 July 2017. It was noted that Ms Stevenson has confirmed her willingness to accept such an invitation. It was noted also that she will be eligible after 31 July 2017 to be considered for an extension to her Court membership and membership/Chairship of the Audit and Risk Committee.

67.3 Appointment to the Court

The Court approved the recommendation of the Committee that Mr Grant Innes be appointed to the independent lay membership of the Court with immediate effect, subject to the selection panel being satisfied to make such a recommendation, following an interview that would be held with Mr Innes on 4 March 2016. The Court received a copy of Mr Innes's CV and noted that he currently served as the co-opted lay member included in the membership of the Remuneration Committee.

It was agreed that Mr Innes's skills and experience were ideal in relation to the vacancy which the Court had recently agreed should be filled by an individual with appropriate international experience.

It was noted that, if appointed, Mr Innes's appointment would run for a period of three years until 31 July 2019. It was noted also that his membership of the Court would preclude him from continued membership of the Remuneration Committee in the category of co-opted lay member.

67.4 Independent Court member vacancy

The Court approved the following recommendations of the Committee:

- an individual should be sought to fill an existing vacancy on the independent lay membership of the Court with the skills and experience in the areas of research / research and teaching established outside of a university setting, but within an associated area of enterprise or funding, or within a commercial / industrial setting with established links to the higher education sector; and
- draft further particulars which were provided to the Court should be finalised for web-posting and should form the basis of advertising to fill the vacancy

It was noted that, as a minimum, the advertisement would appear in the following locations: the University's job vacancy web page; an edition of the Sunday Times (UK); an edition of the Scotsman and Scotland of Sunday; an edition of the Herald and the Sunday Herald; and the Institute of Directors web-page.

67.5 Other items presented for information

The Court noted other items in the Committee's report which were presented for information.

M15/68 GLOBAL STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE: MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2016 (Paper Ct4/16/76)

The Court received and discussed a report from the Global Student Liaison Committee which related to the meeting of the Committee held on 12 February 2016.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to the key items of business that the Global Student Liaison Committee (GSLC) had considered at its meeting and explained that, as a new committee, the GSLC was still in the process of finding its way. The Committee's Terms of Reference were undergoing continual review and the Committee was keen to ensure adequate representation of postgraduate and distance learning students, and to ensure a good balance in the membership between staff and student members. The Chair emphasised that the GSLC would maintain a strategic rather than operational focus, and wished to develop a wide view and understanding of all matters which contributed to the student experience.

The Court noted that at its first meeting the Committee had considered and given its view on proposals presented by the Student Union which had the aim on enhancing student engagement and current structures of student representation and joining these up across all campuses. The proposals remained under development.

Comments and observations which arose in the course of conversation highlighted:

- the value of the Committee's future work in terms of strengthening student representation for independent distance learners and Approved Learning Partner students;
- arrangements by which students might be able to change their course of study if they have chosen a course which turns out to be wrong for them. It was noted that subject choices and prior credits were obviously a determining factor, but certain course transfers would be possible and the University's general policy was to facilitate course transfers where feasible. In general terms the earlier the desire for transfer is signalled, the easier a transfer might be to facilitate; and
- a recommendation in the 2015 Court Effectiveness Review report for Court to give agenda space to each of the University's campuses at one of its meetings throughout the year. This would be of particular benefit to the smaller campuses. A further recommendation in the 2015 Court Effectiveness Review report involved governor visits to the University's different campuses.

It was observed that in the minute reports of the Committee, the affiliations of the members were not clear from the recorded information. It was recommended that additional information should be provided for clarity.

M16/69 RESEARCH PARK: OFFER FROM RESEARCH PARK TENANT REGARDING SURRENDER OF THEIR LEASE (Paper Ct4/16/77)

The Court considered and approved a recommendation, presented by the Chair of the Finance Committee, to accept an offer from one of the University's Research Park tenants to surrender their lease in exchange for a lump sum in lieu of future rental payments.

Reserved section (Ref: Section 30, FOI(S)A).

The Court noted that the proposal was supported by the Finance Committee whose members had been consulted by correspondence prior to the March meeting of the Court. The Committee had agreed that the recommendation should be relayed to the Court for consideration and approval.

M16/70 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

70.1 Court rolling programme of business (Paper Ct4/16/78)

The Court received and noted a summary report of the Court's rolling programme of business for 2015/16, updated as at 25 February 2016.

70.2 Court dinner discussion: June 2016

The Chair of Court made the observation that no decision had yet been taken on the topic for discussion at the June 2016 Court dinner meeting. The Chair invited members to tender any suggestions they may have for topics to add to the list already compiled.

M16/71 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Court noted that the next meeting of the Court will take place on Friday 6 May (Strategy Day).

Signed

Date