

# GLOBAL STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE

## Terms of Reference

### 1 Constitution and Purpose

- 1.1 The Court has established a Global Student Life Committee of the Court with the primary purpose of advancing excellence in the student experience at Heriot-Watt University. The Global Student Life Committee reports to the Court.
- 1.2 The Global Student Life Committee provides a means for the Court to consider the effectiveness of the University's global mechanisms and processes in place to:
- review, monitor and continually enhance the student experience (Charter Article 4.6.4) and monitor the implementation of the **Student Partnership Agreement**;
  - review and enhance the student experience in line with the University's Strategy 2025 and to ensure that the University's provision for the student experience reflects the diversity of needs for specific groups of students;
  - ensure that appropriate levels of student feedback and representation are enabled and encouraged within the University in accordance with best practice.
- 1.3 The Global Student Life Committee encourages joint working and partnership with Heriot-Watt University's Student Union (HWUSU), Sports Union (SU), Dubai Student Council (HWUD Council) and Malaysia Student Association (HWUMSA).

### 2 Remit

- 2.1 The remit of the Global Student Life Committee applies to the student experience and student liaison and representation at all campuses and partnerships of the University.
- 2.2 The Committee shall provide regular reports to the Court alongside the reports of the Student Union, Sports Union, Dubai Student Council and Malaysia Student Association that are presented annually in May.

#### The Student Partnership Agreement

- 2.3 The Student Partnership Agreement provides a framework on which the Committee can conduct its business, subject to year-on-year prioritisation of matters under the current following high-level areas:
- Academic
  - Community
  - Wellbeing
  - Sports

#### Heriot-Watt Strategy:

- 2.4 The Committee shall, in the conduct of its business, honour and promote the agreed values and ambitions of the University's Strategy.

### **The Student Experience:**

- 2.6 To receive, consider and provide advice on regular reports from all Campuses on the student experience;
- 2.7 to receive, discuss and provide advice on updates on the Student Partnership Agreement and on the current progress of its associated action plan in relation to the agreed high-level priority areas.
- 2.8 to receive, discuss and provide advice on an annual report which sets out the processes by which the University has monitored and reviewed issues arising from the student experience. Reporting should include, inter alia, advice on measures aimed at monitoring, reviewing and enhancement of the student experience in response to internal and external student survey results in the year and the outcomes of those measures;
- 2.9 to receive, discuss and provide advice on for onward reporting to the Court, an annual report from the University's Student Complaints Office;

### **Student Liaison and Representation:**

- 2.10 to receive discuss and provide advice on reports from the University on the mechanisms by which staff/student liaison and student feedback are enabled and made effective within the University, and the means by which student representation is taken into account as part of the University's decision-making;
- 2.11 to receive and discuss reports on changes to the Student Association Constitutions for the Student Union, Student Council and Student Association for all Campuses.
- 2.12 to consider emerging external best practice guidance in relation to staff/student engagement and systems of student representation;

### **HWU Student Union:**

- 2.13 to advise the Court of the Court's statutory obligations in relation to Student Union compliance with all relevant legislation (current or to be enacted), principally, the Education Act 1994;
- 2.14 to receive and review, for onward presentation to the Court, an annual report on Student Union activities. The report shall include, as appropriate, reporting on matters which fall within Section 22 of the Education Act: '*Requirements to be observed in relation to students' unions*', and will be presented to the Committee via the University Executive which will have an opportunity to note and comment on the contents of the report; and
- 2.15 to receive, review and report on the Student Union Code of Practice setting out the manner in which all the requirements of Section 22 of the Act are carried into effect. The Code of Practice will be reviewed every five years by the University Secretary or earlier in accordance with any required revisions that might arise from time to time.

## **3 Composition and Membership**

- 3.1 The composition of the Global Student Life Committee shall not normally include more than 14 members. The current composition is:
- an independent (lay) member of the Court (as Chair)
  - at least two co-opted lay members appointed by the Court
  - the Chair of Court (Ex Officio)
  - the Principal and Vice-Chancellor (Ex Officio)

- the President of the HWU Student Union (Ex Officio)
- another Vice-President of the HWU Student Union (nominated by the HWSU) (Ex Officio)
- the President of the HWU Dubai Student Council (Ex Officio)
- the President of the HWU Malaysia Student Association (Ex Officio)
- the Sports Union President
- a further student representative nominated by the Council of the HWU Student Union
- a postgraduate student representative nominated by the Student Union

3.2 The Global Student Life Committee's current membership is as follows:

- Ms Marta Phillips (Chair)
- Mr Bruce Pritchard, Chair of Court
- Professor Richard A Williams, Principal and Vice-Chancellor
- VACANCY, Court Committee Member
- Dr Brian Henderson, Court Member
- Mr Cameron Fields, Student Union President, Scottish Campuses
- Ms Holly McAdams, Student Union Academic Vice-President, Scottish Campuses
- Ms Ridhima Shivkumar, Student Council President, Dubai Campus
- Ms Pearlyn Tee, Student Association President, Malaysia Campus
- Ms Alex Chan, Sports Union President
- Ms Celia Silva, Postgraduate Research Officer for the Student Union, Scottish Campuses

3.3 The term of office of a Court member who is a member of the Committee shall be concurrent with their term of office on the Court.

3.4 The maximum term of office of a co-opted member appointed by the Court is nine years. The initial appointment will be for three years with eligibility to serve for up to two further periods of up to three years, respectively.

3.5 The Governance and Nominations Committee may recommend to the Court the co-optation of members who they consider have particular skills and experience to contribute to the work of the Committee and/or to serve as a co-opted member with a view to future membership of the Court.

## 4 Equality and Diversity Statement

4.1 The Committee exercises its responsibility, as far as possible, to promote the diversity of representation within its membership and the membership of any working group or committee established by the Committee. The Committee, in carrying out its business, will also act to promote equality of opportunity for all.

## 5 Quorum and Voting

5.1 In accordance with the terms of Ordinance B8, three members of the committee who are members of the Court shall constitute the quorum.

5.2 The Chair of the Committee shall have a deliberative and casting vote.

5.3 Members who are participating in a meeting by means of audio-visual conferencing or other means enabling them to communicate with all members present at the meeting simultaneously shall be deemed to be present at the meeting and to count towards the quorum.

5.4 It is intended that decisions are normally reached by consensus following a full debate. There are no occasions stipulated in the Charter and Statutes which require a formal vote. Therefore, the Chair will normally seek agreement to the proposal in question, and only call for a vote either if there is a clear expression of dissent or if the matter is of particular significance.

## **6 Committee Chair**

- 6.1 The Chair of The Global Student Life Committee shall be an appointed independent (lay) member of the Court.
- 6.2 In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the Committee shall elect from among the members of the Committee present a person to act as Chair for the meeting or until such time as the Chair of the Committee arrives.

## **7 Frequency of Meetings**

- 7.1 The Global Student Life Committee will normally meet three times per year.

## **8 Attendance at Meetings**

- 8.1 The following officers are expected to be in attendance at meetings:
- a) the University Secretary (Ex Officio)
  - b) the Deputy Principal (Education and Student Life) (Ex Officio)
  - c) the Academic Registrar (Ex Officio)
  - d) the University Chaplain (Ex Officio)
  - e) a staff representative from the Dubai Campus
  - f) a staff representative from the Malaysia Campus
  - g) Officers of the University invited to attend the meeting as appropriate to the topics under discussion
  - h) the Committee Clerk.
- 8.2 The Committee will maintain a record of attendance at each of its meetings.
- 8.3 Members are expected to maintain a pattern of regular attendance at meetings in person. When not feasible to attend in person, and with the consent of the Chair, attendance may be provided by audio-visual conferencing or other means which enables that member to communicate with each of the other members simultaneously.
- 8.4 Any member not attending three or more meetings consecutively (without good reason) may have their membership reviewed by the Chair and the University Secretary. Members are required to submit their apologies to the Clerk of the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

## **9 a) Reserved Business**

- 9.1 There may be occasions when a Court Committee's business is designated reserved and/or commercially sensitive. On such occasions, with the approval of the Chair, any persons in attendance may be asked to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of a particular reserved item of business.
- 9.2 The record of matters with which the Chair and the Committee are satisfied should be dealt with on a reserved basis and will be recorded separately.

## **9 b) Conflict of Interest**

- 9.3 Where it is identified that a member of the Committee has a conflict of interest with respect to a given matter, the Chair may, on the advice of the Secretary, request that the member in question withdraw from participation in relevant business. Depending on the nature of the business, this may allow for participation in discussions without taking part in decision-making or may require complete non-participation and/or withdrawal from that part of the meeting.

9.4 All instances of identified conflicts of interest shall be recorded in the minutes.

## **10 Reporting Procedures**

10.1 A report based on the minutes of the Global Student Life Committee will be submitted to the Court at the next available meeting.

10.2 The Chair will report to the Court on any matters requiring the approval of the Court. These matters will be highlighted in the minutes.

10.3 The Committee's records (agenda, papers and minutes) are included in the University's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Information will be readily accessible on request to members of the public under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOI(S)A) with the exception of information which is deemed to be covered by a specific exemption under the Act.

10.4 Minutes and reports of the Committee will denote those areas of reported business which are deemed to fall within the designation of information which is 'exempt' under FOI(S)A and these sections will be excluded from publication.

## **11 Forward Planning**

11.1 The Committee will annually review and revise its Terms of Reference and submit recommendations for any changes to these to the Court, for approval.

It is recommended that only fundamental changes or changes which might impact on other Court committees shall require Governance and Nominations Committee approval.

11.2 The Committee will set its meeting dates two years in advance, aligned to the schedule of meetings of the Court, and will maintain an annual workload plan for the Committee.

11.3 The Committee will maintain a forward agenda plan of its business.

## Supporting Information

<b>Groups feeding into the Global Student Life Committee</b>	
None in a structural reporting line; however, the Committee will receive reports via the Senate, the University Executive, the Global Operations Executive and the University Committee for Learning and Teaching in the course of each year and may receive reports from other bodies/groups according to the work being undertaken by the Committee.	
<b>Effectiveness and lifespan</b>	
Lifespan is ongoing. The effectiveness of the Committee will be reviewed five-yearly as part of the Court Effectiveness Review.	
The Committee will regularly monitor its own effectiveness against its core purpose and responsibilities.	
<b>Actions that may be taken by the Committee</b>	
The Global Student Life Committee may:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Note</li><li>• Consider</li><li>• Advise</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Endorse</li><li>• Recommend</li><li>• Comment</li></ul>
<b>Minuting style</b>	
Traditional/formal minutes in accordance with internal University guidance.	
<b>Resources</b>	
Secretary	Ms Ruth Moir, University Secretary
Clerk	Mr Iain Dods, Senior Governance Assistant, Policy and Governance
Meetings	Three times each year