Welcome to the second edition of the Secretary’s Board bulletin, the monthly communication from the Secretary’s Board.

The Secretary’s Board is the forum for the central and school Professional Services to meet and work together to ensure we are delivering integrated services across the University to support teaching, research and the student experience.

The Board met at the beginning of March and the main outcomes of that meeting are reported in this bulletin.

We welcome your feedback on these bulletins. Contact Review2012@hw.ac.uk with your comments or suggestions.

Minutes of the Secretary’s Board meetings can be found at: www.hw.ac.uk/committees/secretarys-board/
1. CAMPUS SERVICES

**Hospitality Services**
The Conference and Hospitality Team is supporting the National Fair Trade Fortnight with additions to our existing ranges of fair trade products.

The Healthy Working Lives committee organised the successful Wellbeing Week (13 - 17 February) in partnership with the Centre for Sport and Exercise, the Student Union and Conference and Hospitality services.

**Centre for Sport and Exercise**
In partnership with the Sports Union, the Centre for Sport and Exercise (CSE) devised and organised a series of sporting events to encourage students and staff to improve their health and fitness. The programme was awarded an Inspire Mark by the London Olympic Organising Committee which recognises exceptional and innovative projects inspired by the 2012 games.

The CSE is entering a partnership with King’s Camps which will provide a comprehensive summer programme for young people.

A meeting was held with SportScotland to present a case for Heriot-Watt becoming the first tertiary education institution to become a Community Sports Hub. Further information will be available in due course.

**Estate Services**
Proposals for an enlarged Dental Surgery have been received, with a proposed expansion into the existing Health Centre building.

Estate Services are managing and advancing many projects, including the construction of new student residences in Edinburgh and acceptances at this early stage in the cycle. International non-EU applications have increased by 18% and 44% by acceptances. Home/EU applications have declined by 22%, which can be explained by the Scottish Government PSAS scheme moving to loan-based funding from grant-based awards.

2. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Colin Thomson has joined the University as Communications Manager for the Converge team.

The consultation process for the University’s Strategic Plan has been launched. External Affairs are supporting the Planning Office in order to build a greater understanding and gain the commitment of all the University’s different stakeholders as we develop the University’s strategic priorities for 2013-2018.

The design and delivery of a number of publications is underway, including the 2013 Undergraduate and Chinese prospectuses and the new design and content for the online and paper version of the Postgraduate prospectus 2013.

Open meetings with the Principal took place across all Campuses throughout the beginning of 2012.

The Development and Alumni telephone fundraising campaign for the Annual Fund raised £180,000 and recruited 704 new donors. This is the most successful telethon campaign in the University’s history.

The student recruitment cycle is progressing smoothly. Some highlights of the latest Recruitment and Admissions report include:

- The overall trend for undergraduate applications remains very positive.
- Postgraduate admissions show an overall 13% increase in applications and 38% increase in

3. REGISTRY SERVICES

**Chaplaincy**
More than 750 guests attended the annual Chaplaincy Lecture on Monday 6 February. The ‘Interfaith Question Time’ chaired by the Principal took place on the evening of Tuesday 6 March.

**Student Support and Accommodation (SSA)**
A total of £13k has been awarded by the Scottish Government to support projects to improve services for welcoming international students. This includes the development of a Smartphone application to help international students arriving in Edinburgh to orientate themselves.

**Student Systems Unit**
Developments to streamline statutory processes for the UK Borders Agency have been released ahead of schedule. Colleagues in Schools, Recruitment and Admissions and Academic Registry will benefit from better integration with the UKBA Sponsor Management System (for efficient production of Certificates of Acceptance for Studies) and attendance tracking functionality.

**Student Union**
Heriot-Watt University Student Union (HWUSA) has been named as Students’ Union of the year at the National Union of Students (NUS) Scotland Awards 2012.
The HWUSA has published its strategic plan (http://www.hwunion.com/documents/governance/Heriot_Watt_Strategic_Plan.pdf). The plan sets out the vision for the future across seven key themes. The accompanying Operational Plan is being developed; the process will include consultation with students.

Mike Ross was re-elected as President.

**Academic Registry**
The submission of the first batch of programme accreditation documentation (MEng Civil Engineering) to the Malaysian Qualifications Authority has been completed; the MBA documentation is nearing completion.

Preparations are underway to support four Internal Reviews (Mechanical Engineering; Business Management; Sport & Exercise Science; Edinburgh Business School).

The final examinations timetable for undergraduate (honours) and postgraduate students have been published.

A number of reviews are being prepared by Academic Registry:

- Assessment Procedures for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to include guidance for Schools on decisions for progression, submission deadlines and new processes relating to online results.
- Enrolment guidance and enrolment/induction timetables for September 2012.
- Annual Monitoring and Review process for Quality and Standards Committee with a revised system being piloted.

### 4. INFORMATION SERVICES

A period of consultation is now underway in relation to the proposed new structure for the Information Services Directorate.

**Library**
Use of the University Libraries continues to grow. Edinburgh Campus Library reported an increase of 6.5% in visits compared with January 2011. In Dubai, the Campus Library added around 300 new books to stock.

1500 new journals are now available to support research activity.

**Information Technology**
IT continues to develop the functionality and resilience of the University’s systems and infrastructure:

- Updated Vision VLE: the initial ‘ Sandbox’ development service for the updated Vision VLE, running Blackboard Learn v9 has been delivered to 25 School Superusers.
- PURE: the servers for PURE, the new research management system, have been configured for live usage.
- Windows 7: the rollout of the new Windows 7 for PCs continues across the University. George Heriot Wing, Finance and Human Resources are complete; Academic Registry and Senior Registry started at the end of February; SML is on-going.
- SAS - the SAS functionality Official Release – Online Results is now in live use. The functionality has been well received and over 1,300 students have already had their results released online.

The Intranet Project is reporting to the new Web Strategy Group which met for the first time on 8 February. The sites will be built on the following platforms:

- SharePoint – password protected Intranet for Staff only
- Vision VLE – password protected Intranet for Students only
- OpenText CMS – open access websites for content that has also to be externally accessible

Updates regarding this project will be provided in due course.

### 5. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

**Pay and Pension conditions**
The University and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) consultation on pay has started. The financial outlook for 2012-13 continues to be challenging, with pay awards at circa 2% and inflation 3-4%, and government direction towards a 1% cap.

The public sector continues to consult over possible pension changes. The Education Institute of Scotland (EIS) trade union has issued a consultation to members on taking strike action on 28 March 2012 over pensions.

**Policy and Processes**
In response to the staff survey, reward and promotion processes across the University are being reviewed. For 2012, this will involve some standardisation, and greater clarity. A working group will work more strategically on changes for 2013.
Updates from the Professional Services Directorates
February – March 2012

Further discussion with the Trade Unions on how to avoid redundancy, through retraining, redeployment and targeted voluntary severance will continue as the University continues to manage change in the coming years.

Academic Enhancement
A review of the range of academic ‘induction’ activities will be implemented to ensure the programme supports all the University objectives, including all those provided by Heriot-Watt and possible collaboration partners (e.g. Edinburgh). A short term tactical option for some staff on PGCAP, a Temporary Suspension of Studies, has been agreed.

6. RESEARCH ENTERPRISE SERVICES (RES)

Research Excellence Framework (REF) preparations are underway and on track. A bid has been made to access the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Challenge funds to provide short term support for the collation of evidence for impact case studies. Discussions with the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences have started to confirm their preparation plans for REF.

RES in partnership with the Corporate Communications Converge team organised a very successful Industry Day on 9 February. The event attracted almost 300 attendees from academia, industry and research centres to discuss the future of advanced sensor technology.

The Converge project has been selected for a Scottish government audit in April-May 2012. The audit will also include RES and the Converge funded post in the Research Grants office in Finance. The project was routinely audited recently so no issues are anticipated.

7. FINANCE

The Finance department has completed the Q2 Forecast and their focus is now on five year plans. Information on University Finance services for students was provided to the web-team for publication.

The launch date for the OracleR12 project has been postponed until 1 May 2012. The project encountered a supplier problem, which unfortunately was outwith the University’s control. All other R12 work streams are on schedule and the project team are meeting Heads of Schools to discuss changeover plans.

8. GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Sue Collier has been appointed as the new Director of Governance and Compliance Services. She will take up her post in May 2012. Sue joins Heriot-Watt University from her current position as Head of In House Legal Services at the University of West London.

9. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTORS OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE SCHOOLS

Admissions
Schools have processed 11,157 Undergraduate, 3,398 taught postgraduate and 528 research applications to date for entry in September 2012. The Postgraduate Open Day took place on 29 February and Schools are currently preparing for UCAS visits in March and April. New uses of social media e.g. Facebook, and live chats/skype sessions with applicants are also being undertaken.

Examinations
Schools are now finalising the April – May diet examination timetables, ensuring relevant papers are made available for peer quality review by External Examiners The recent announcement of a pilot within SBE to exploit Banner’s capability for entering sub-component course marks to calculate final marks is greatly welcomed. Successful implementation of this function will start the process of Schools reducing reliance on their complementary systems.

Pursuing Service Excellence
A number of Schools are entering the second phase of the Pursuing Service Excellence training programme with ‘mystery shopper’ visits to obtain additional feedback on service quality. Schools are also undertaking a variety of initiatives to encourage final year students to participate in the NSS survey.

Please send any questions or comments to Review2012@hw.ac.uk