

## University Open Meeting and General Council Half Yearly Meeting 17 June 2019

Minute of University Open meeting and General Council Half Yearly Meeting held 17 June 2019, Senate Room, Gilbert Scott Building, University of Glasgow

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<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction and Welcome</b>
	<p>The Chancellor welcomed everyone and thanked those present for attending the meeting. Speakers were welcomed: Principal Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli, the Convener of Court Elizabeth Passey, SRC President Lauren McDougall, Clerk to the General Council (GC) Amber Higgins, and Convener of the General Council Business Committee (GCBC) Rev Stuart MacQuarrie.</p> <p>In addition to normal meetings of the governing body (Court), the University was expected to hold an annual stakeholder meeting in public, at which representatives of the governing body, including the Principal, were expected to give an account of the institution's performance and should be available to answer questions. It was therefore noted that the meeting would encompass this open meeting as well as the General Council half yearly meeting.</p>
<b>2</b>	<b>Principal's Address and Questions</b>
	<p>The Principal thanked the Chancellor for his introduction and welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Principal reported that progress was being made on a number of the Primary KPIs that were part of the University's strategic plan. A new plan was in development and would run from 2020-2025.</p> <p>Looking at the KPIs, it was noted that staff engagement had dropped between the 2010 and 2018 staff surveys. The survey had been undertaken at the time of a strike which may have contributed to this. There had been a small dip also in Undergraduate satisfaction over the same period, although the overall level remained very high, with Glasgow joint 1<sup>st</sup> in the Russell Group figures. There had also been good progress on the assessment and feedback KPI. There had been work with the SRC in this area, to change practices, and it was also a major project within the World Changing Glasgow (Transformation) Project. Work was ongoing to arrive at a single measure for Research impact; the REF 2021 exercise would assist with this. The Widening Participation KPI was highlighted as an area where the University did very well.</p> <p>The GC noted the University had gone back into the top 20 rankings in both the Complete University and Guardian league tables, published recently. The improved Undergraduate progression rates and NSS scored had helped contribute to this. In the Complete University Guide, the University had topped the tables for 7 subjects, which was better than all other institutions apart from Oxford and Cambridge.</p> <p>The GC noted a summary of financial details, including the positive financial performance, which was particularly important since it underpinned the investment in staff and in the campus, which was a key factor in attracting students over the next decades. The importance of tuition fee income was highlighted as a contributor to the University's ability to invest.</p> <p>The GC noted three key challenges facing the sector:-</p> <p>Brexit, where there could be a potential loss of talent in both the staffing and student bodies; and where potential EU grant income loss was also a danger. The sector continued to lobby the UK Government about these issues;</p> <p>The Augar review of tuition fees in England, where the recent report had recommended a cut in the headline fee from £9,250 to £7,500, with some top up funding from the public purse. It</p>

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	<p>was not yet known if this would be adopted, but it could potentially affect the Scottish HEIs. Discussions with the Scottish Government were ongoing.</p> <p>Pensions, where a valuation of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) had resulted in contributions from employers and employees needing to increase, with potential tension and industrial action arising.</p> <p>The GC received details of key highlights in University activity during 2019, in particular showing the University's strong commitment to a broad range of activity and stakeholders. These included a commitment to being a leading Research university, to being a civic university, to the quality of academic standards and to EU &amp; International partnerships. Examples across this range included: Glasgow's position as a leading centre of excellence for pancreatic cancer; the University's commitment to produce a 'Civic University Agreement' in partnership with local government and other major institutions in the city; the establishment of the European Centre for Advanced Studies (ECAS), a with Leuphana University of Luneburg (Lower Saxony, Germany); and the development of the James McCune Smith Learning &amp; Teaching Hub as the first major part of the campus development.</p> <p>Recent highlights in 2019 were noted. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the launch in partnership with Education Scotland of a range of online teaching resources tailored to the needs of Scottish Primary and secondary pupils based on University of Glasgow research. These resources, based on the latest scholarship in Arts and Humanities at the University, covered a diverse range of topics from French comics to archaeology, political songs to medieval history, Polish films to Scots language.</li> <li>- Glasgow involvement in Centres for Doctoral Training: one in Engineered Tissues for Discovery, Industry and Medicine and a second in in Future Ultrasonic Engineering.</li> <li>- The sharing of ambitious plans for a major investment in a new Clyde Waterfront Innovation Campus (CWIC) on the south bank of the river in Govan.</li> <li>- Astrophysicists at the University of Glasgow celebrating the detection of gravitational wave signals likely to be caused by the crashing of two neutron stars and what could be the first evidence of the collision of a neutron star and a black hole.</li> <li>- The University being awarded 4 research culture awards, recognising an individual or team that has acted as a role model or led initiatives to promote a positive research culture.</li> <li>- The new Research Hub, which would address 5 key themes and be a centre of excellence for over 600 staff and students, and interact with the public, in a state-of-the-art building.</li> </ul> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Principal for his update and invited any questions. A question was asked about how the graduate body might be used as a 'sales force' for the future and engage with influencers in the economy: the Principal agreed that alumni were very important as ambassadors for the University, through many means including word of mouth and as employers. The University's work with industry and its business links could benefit from help from alumni. A question was asked about the proposed Govan development. It was noted that this was dependent on funding being secured and on Court approval of business cases, but that the development would, if it went ahead, be a contributor to improving economic outturns in the area as well as affording the opportunity to expand precision medicine excellence from the QEUH location and enable co-location with collaborators and manufacturers in the areas of quantum research and nano-fabrication, which were currently not possible within the space on the main campus. A question was asked about the possible effects of Brexit. The GC noted that analysis had been undertaken about funding impact of potentially losing EU student numbers; and about future funding sources for research. As had been mentioned earlier in the meeting, the sector was continuing to lobby the government with a view to minimising the impact.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Principal for his address.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Convener of Court</b>
	<p>The Chancellor welcomed Elizabeth Passey, Convener of Court, to the meeting and invited her to address the meeting. The Convener of Court gave an overview of the role and remit of the University Court, including the legislation that governed its operations both in the past and for the future, the latter being the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. Given</p>

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	<p>Court's governance responsibility for the deployment of resources and the strategic direction for the University, its current work connected to the new strategic plan and the campus development meant it was involved in shaping the University for many years to come. In line with other types of governing 'board', Court also has a monitoring role in relation to the overall performance of the University, including KPIs, and to the University's statutory responsibilities. It also held the Principal accountable for the effective and efficient management of the University.</p> <p>Court had a number of specialist sub-committees that enabled expert consideration of key areas such as finance, estates and HR, advised also by senior management who attended these committees. The committees liaised with each other to ensure coverage of business and appropriate communications, with Court being involved in approving major items of business coming from them. The GC noted a key distinction in that Court's role was governance - ensuring the organisation is being run effectively - whereas the management's role was to run the organisation effectively. It was a skill for Court to maintain this at an appropriate level, challenging and supporting to the right degree, and not getting involved in operational detail.</p> <p>The University Court had representatives on it from staff, students and external co-opted members, as well as its membership including the Rector (elected by students), a Chancellor's Assessor and a Glasgow City Council representative. Members were guided by the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and by HE legislation. The Convener was actively involved in the sector through the Committee of Scottish Chairs and the Committee of University Chairs UK-wide.</p> <p>The GC's assistance in identifying people with, for example, relevant professional experience, who might be interested in serving on Court, would be welcomed.</p> <p>Questions were invited. A question was asked about the arrangements for audit and risk management at the University. It was confirmed that the University underwent both external and internal audit of its activities in line with any other large business; and had a risk management processes in place. The work of the Finance and Audit &amp; Risk Committees also covered these areas.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Convener of Court for her address.</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Presentation by Lauren McDougall, SRC President</b>
	<p>The SRC President outlined the four main student bodies, these being the SRC, the two unions (GUU and QMU) and GUSA, the sports association. All contributed to enhancing the student experience at Glasgow. There were three key areas that the SRC worked in: Representation across a range of areas for students; Support, including advice to students and work in the areas of equality and diversity, through representation and campaigns; and Opportunities, which included clubs and societies and the volunteering network.</p> <p>The Student Volunteer Support Service (SVSS) was provided by the SRC for all Glasgow University students, offering the chance for students to undertake a wide range of volunteering opportunities both on and off campus. It also provided a valuable link and input into the local community, as well as developing very important skills sets for students, as part of the Employability and Graduate Attributes agendas: there was volunteer recognition through transcripts and students were also empowered to understand their own skills and achievements. There were peer-to-peer training initiatives within the service. The volunteering and outreach work promoted active citizenship, an important aspect of the University's 'world changing' ambitions.</p> <p>Ms McDougall outlined the peer-led "train the trainer" models: both were sector-leading initiatives in partnership with external professional bodies, which provided students with transferable skills and raised awareness around key issues. Key examples were: 'Mind Your Mate' with c450 staff and students trained so far, the coverage being the basics of suicide prevention and crisis support; and the 'Let's Talk About Sexual Violence' initiative, with 1000 workshop participants to date in a partnership with GCU and Rape Crisis, the first of its kind in Scotland. A key focus of the work was around normalising consent.</p>

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	<p>Examples of volunteering opportunities involving partnerships with local organisations and projects included the Glasgow University Environmental Task Force, whose work included litter picking; and the Glasgow's Improvement Challenge, with students helping children in schools, particularly in deprived areas. Other volunteering opportunities included the Glasgow University Service to the Homeless (GUSH), charity shop volunteering, befriending, and Guiding and Scouts.</p> <p>Clubs and societies were very broad and there had been recent work to ensure that there was 'something to suit everyone', given the University's very broad student profile, including a wide spectrum of international students and mature students.</p> <p>Questions were invited. In the context of the wide variety of work undertaken by the SRC, a question was asked about the links to alumni and how the latter might be able to help. It was noted that there were few formal links but that the SRC would be very keen to develop these, particularly in the context of the challenge presented by such a large and diverse student community.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the SRC President for her address.</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Minutes of meeting of 24 January 2019</b>
	The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2019 were approved.
<b>6</b>	<b>Report of Convenor of the General Council Business Committee</b>
	<p>The Convenor, Rev Stuart MacQuarrie welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The Convenor reported that there had been two meetings since the last Half yearly but that a General Council Assessors on Court had chaired the May GCBC meeting as he had been unable to attend. Business had included updates on the new James McCune Smith Learning &amp; Teaching Hub, the Institute of Health and Wellbeing building project and the Development campaign. Given that some members felt that there was a lack of links to the current student body, the meeting had welcomed students from GUSA, GUU and QMU, who had spoken to GCBC members about student life and provided an understanding about how the committee's role might be focused.</p> <p>As the new Convenor, Rev MacQuarrie envisaged the GCBC as a channel for alumni to engage with the University. He would be asking its members for ideas about its role and purpose going into the future and about ways in which it might develop. The ideas would be worked up over the coming year by the committee so that it could contribute to University life and link to alumni as best as possible, in a broader way than at present.</p> <p>The Chancellor thanked the Rev MacQuarrie for his address.</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>Chancellor Announcement</b>
	<p>The Chancellor announced that he would be stepping down in 2020, after 14 years in the role. He was very proud to have been in the role and to have been part of the wonderful place that is the University of Glasgow and to have been involved in the amazing changes that are currently ongoing. There would be a process put in motion to replace the Chancellor.</p> <p>The Chancellor extended his thanks to the General Council and the GCBC for their support over the years.</p>
<b>8</b>	<b>AOCB</b>
	The Chancellor closed the meeting by thanking all present for their attendance.