

University of Aberdeen
Senate

(5 February 2020)

Proposed Motion for Senate regretting the departure of the UK from membership of the European Union on 31 January 2020

Proposer: Scott Styles

Seconders: Irene Couzigou, Murillo da Silva Baptista, Jeff Oliver, Joachim Schaper, David Watts

1. Senate notes that the Westminster Parliament of the United Kingdom enacted the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 on 23 January 2020 and that in accordance with the provisions of that Act and the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union will end on 31 January 2020 although during the transition implementation period which will last until 31 December 2020 the United Kingdom will remain in both the EU customs union and single market and be subject generally to all EU laws.
2. Senate notes that the University of Aberdeen was established by the Papal Bull signed in Rome by Pope Alexander VI on 10 February 1495 and that the European Union was founded by the Treaty of Rome signed by the 6 founder members of the European Union in 1957.
3. Senate believes that University of Aberdeen was from its foundation a European institution, (indeed Hector Boece our first principal was a professor of philosophy at Collège de Montaigu at the University of Paris before moving to Aberdeen) in that it was always intended to be part of the wider educational and cultural community of Europe.
4. Senate believes that the UK's membership of the EU since 1973 has been of great benefit to the University of Aberdeen, to UK Higher Education in general and to the whole of Scotland and the UK and that EU membership has enhanced the University's Foundational Purpose set out by Bishop Elphinstone of being "Open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others."
5. Senate notes that thanks to the free movement of persons created by UK membership of the EU many staff and many students have come to the University from the member states of the EU to study and work here, to the mutual benefit and enrichment of staff, students and the University. Senate also notes that there have been many mutually beneficial research projects sponsored and/or facilitated under the auspices of the EU.
6. Senate notes that through the very successful Erasmus+ Programme many staff and students have benefited from exchange programmes with universities in EU member states. Senate believes this exchange has enriched the lives and knowledge of all those who participated. Senate greatly regrets the departure of the U.K. from the EU on 31 January which it believes will have a negative effect on both staff and students and on the research and teaching of the university. Senate would especially regret the withdrawal of the UK from the Erasmus+ Programme should that occur. Senate notes that the attempt that the attempt to amend the Withdrawal Bill by expressly obliging the UK Government "to secure an agreement within the framework of the future relationship

of the UK and the EU before the end of the implementation period that enables the UK to participate in all elements of the Erasmus+ programme on existing terms after the implementation period ends” was defeated in the House of Commons. Senate regrets this defeat and notes that while the UK will continue to be a member of the Erasmus+ Programme until the end of 2020 its continued membership after that date is uncertain. Senate strongly believes that continued participation in the Erasmus + Scheme is in the interests of staff and students and request that the Principal lobby the UK and Scots governments to that effect.

7. Senate expresses the solidarity it feels with all members of staff and students affected by the UK’s withdrawal from the EU who are citizens of EU member states, and affirms that the University of Aberdeen continues to welcome their participation in the life of this University as it has for the past 525 years, now and in the future.
8. Senate affirms that while United Kingdom state may be leaving the European Union of states, the community of scholars and students who together comprise the corporation that is the 525 year old University of Aberdeen reaffirms its historical role as a European University and will continue to participate in the scholarly and cultural life of Europe in the future.”