THE FOLLOWING PAPERS HAVE BEEN REMOVED ON THE GROUNDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

Item 3.1  Budgets 2017/18 to 2019/20
Item 4.1  School Budgets 2017/18-2019/20
Item 4.4  Student Recruitment: Challenges and Opportunities
Item 5  Fundraising Campaign Planning
Item 6.2  Institutional 10 Year Capital Programme Update
Item 8  Report on Progress of Transnational Education Projects
Item 13  Non-Executive Members Meeting
Item 16.1  Strategic Plan Financial Forecasts
Item 16.7  Development Trust Activity
Item 16.10  Management Report

THE FOLLOWING PAPERS HAVE BEEN REDACTED ON THE GROUNDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

Item 14.2  Audit Committee
There will be a meeting of the UNIVERSITY COURT on Tuesday 27 June 2017 at 9am in the Linklater Rooms, Elphinstone Hall.

Mr B Purdon
Secretary’s Office
Tel: (01224) 273949
Email: b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk

BUSINESS

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:
Any member or individual in attendance (including officers) who has a clear interest in a matter on the agenda must declare that interest at the meeting.

BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND CONSIDERATION OF FORMAL BUSINESS

2 9.00am MINUTES
   Note: An Action Log is enclosed with the minutes.

3 9.05am FINANCIAL PLANNING
   3.1 Budgets 2017/18 to 2019/20

4 9.30am STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RISK
   4.1 School Budgets 2017/18-2019/20
   4.2 KPI Performance Monitoring Update: Quarter 2, 2016/17
   4.3 Strategic Risk Register: Six Monthly Report
   4.4 Student Recruitment: Challenges and Opportunities
   4.5 Online Education Update
   4.6 Report on League Tables

5 10.30am FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN PLANNING

6 10.45am Coffee

6 11.00am ESTATES AND CAPITAL PLANNING
   6.1 Vision for the Estate: A World Class Campus Experience
   6.2 Institutional 10 Year Capital Programme Update

7 11.30am STANDING REPORTS
   7.1 Report from the Rector
   7.2 Report from the Senior Governor
   7.3 Report from the Principal
   7.4 Report from the President of the Students’ Association
8  11.45am  REPORT ON PROGRESS OF TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECTS

9  12.00pm  GOVERNANCE

  9.1 Effectiveness Review: Role of Court and Operating Board
  9.2 Report on Transition to New Composition of Court

10  12.30pm  PEOPLE

  10.1 Remuneration Committee Report

11  12.40pm  HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

13  12.45pm  BUSINESS FOR STRATEGY MEETING AND YEAR AHEAD

13  12.50pm  NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS MEETING

BUSINESS NOT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY CAN RAISE THESE ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND TO DO SO BY ADVISING THE CLERK ONE CLEAR WORKING DAY IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

14  OPERATING BOARD REPORT

15  COMPOSITE REPORT FROM COURT COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES OF COURT AND SENATE

16  ROUTINE BUSINESS NOT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION

17  DATE OF MEETINGS FOR 2017/18: Wednesday 4 October 2017 9am to 5pm, preceded by Dinner on Tuesday 3 October 2017, at 7pm.

   Tuesday, 12 December 2017         9.00 – 1.00 pm
   Tuesday, 27 March 2018            9.00 – 1.00 pm
   Tuesday, 26 June 2018             9.00 – 1.00 pm

   Court Lunches 1.00 – 2.00 pm 12 December 2017, 27 March 2018 and 26 June 2018
DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND CONSIDERATION OF FORMAL BUSINESS

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Any member or individual in attendance (including officers) who has a clear interest in a matter on the agenda must declare that interest at the meeting.

BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION:

Items 2-13 are items of business proposed for discussion.

BUSINESS NOT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION:

Items 14 onward are be considered as routine business for approval or for information without discussion. Members are reminded that they can raise these items for discussion and to do so by advising the clerk one clear working day in advance of the meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Supplementary information and unconfirmed minutes of sub-committee meetings are available at the foot of today's agenda in Meeting Squared.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT

Minutes of meeting held on 28 March 2017

Present: Ms M Chapman (in the Chair), Principal, Professor A Akisanya, Mr C Anucha, Professor N Booth (for minutes 145 to 181), Mr C Duncan, Professor M Delibegovic, Mr M Gilbert, Mr J Hall, Professor P Hannaford, Professor N Hutchison, Professor J Kilburn, Mr D MacFarlane, Professor P McGeorge, Cllr R McKail, Mrs K McPhail, Ms A Minto (by video-conference for minutes 145 to 177), Dr N Oren (for minutes 145 to 177 and 185 to 214), Mr B Paterson, Mrs J Shirreffs and Mr D Steyn.

In attendance: Mr D Beattie, Mrs E Bowie (for minutes 174 to 177), Mrs D Dyker (for minutes 190 to 193), Mrs C Inglis, Professor B MacGregor (for minutes 185 to 189), Ms T Merrick (for minutes 174 to 177), Professor J Paterson (for minutes 161 to 173), Very Rev Professor I Torrance, and Mr B Purdon (Clerk).

Apologies for absence were received from Professor C Black, Professor C Brittain, Ms J Killin, Cllr J Laing, Mr K Murray, Mr B Pack, and Mr I Percival.

SENIOR GOVERNOR

145 The Court welcomed Mr Gilbert to his first meeting as Senior Governor. Mr Gilbert expressed his thanks to Court and noted how honoured he was to have been appointed to the role and his commitment to supporting the University.

RETIRING MEMBERS

146 The Court noted that it would be Councillor McKail’s final meeting of Court prior to the local government elections in May. The Court thanked Councillor McKail for his committed service to Court and to the University.

MINUTES

147 The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 were approved, subject to minute 82 being amended to state that the Court had agreed that its future composition would not include elected General Council Assessors.

148 The Court noted the updated Action Log (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

149 Mr B Paterson declared an interest as an Officer of the University of Aberdeen Branch of Unite the Union.

GOVERNANCE

PRESENTATION BY THE GOOD GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE: REPORT ON EXTERNALLY FACILITATED EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW OF COURT

150 The Court received the Good Governance Institute’s report on the effectiveness review of Court together with a commentary from the Executive which provided further information on the implications of the recommendations within the report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

151 Mr Cockayne and Mr Butler from the Good Governance Institute were in attendance and introduced the report. In their introduction, it was emphasised that the Court and governance
at Aberdeen had many strengths, was compliant with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and, subject to Privy Council approval of the proposed new composition of Court would be compliant with the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. The recommendations within the report were, therefore, intended to anticipate some of the future demands of governance over the next decade arising from a changing external environment and to enable Court to adapt and meet those challenges.

152 The Court discussed the report and its recommendations which covered: Governance & Leadership, the constitution of Court, the role of Court committees, Court Business, Standards & Culture, Governor Development, Visibility & Engagement, and the Impact and Performance of Court.

153 In discussion, the following main points were noted:

- A number of members noted that the report’s recommendations regarding the respective roles of the Court and the Operating Board appeared to contradict the respective roles of the two bodies with respect to strategy and that of scrutiny and consideration of operational business. The need to avoid any changes which resulted in duplication of functions was noted.
- It was noted that the proposal to introduce an additional meeting of Court would represent an additional time commitment for members. It was suggested that should Court consider additional time for business to be necessary, an alternative might be to extend the duration of current meetings.
- With regard to a recommendation to introduce Strategic Advisory Groups, some members were unclear as to the added value these would bring to the work of the Court given the existing committee structure. It was noted that, as was the case with a number of the recommendations, these would require an additional time commitment from members.
- With regard to the impact and performance of Court and members of Court, it was noted that, at present, members were in effect volunteers and that several of the recommendations in this regard would represent a significant change to the basis on which members currently served.

154 The Court agreed that the Governance and Nominations Committee should consider the report and its recommendations in more depth and report back to a future meeting of Court. It was agreed that the Operating Board be invited to consider the recommendations relevant to its role and that other committees of Court be invited to comment where relevant and for these to be considered by the Governance & Nominations Committee. In addition, members were invited to provide any comments they had on the report’s recommendations to the Clerk.

REPORT FROM GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: TRANSITION TO NEW COMPOSITION OF COURT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMITTEES

155 The Court received a paper from the Governance and Nominations Committee which considered the transition to a new composition of Court and implications of the new composition for the operation of the Court’s sub-committees (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The paper had been compiled prior to the conclusion of External Effectiveness Review of Court and, therefore, did not take into account that review’s recommendations regarding the operation of committees of Court, in particular, the Operating Board.

156 The paper set out two potential approaches to transition from the current to the new composition of Court. The first option was for there to be a ‘Day Zero’ when the current composition of Court would cease and the new composition and membership would commence immediately. The second option, recommended by the Committee, was that there be a phased transition where current categories of Court member end and new categories commence at different times under a timetable that the Court could determine.

157 The Court noted that the Committee had proposed that the transition of Senate Assessors to the new composition be effected through a new set of elections for all four positions. In discussion, a Senate Assessor noted that this could result in the loss of continuity of experience and suggested an alternative approach to achieve the reduction to four Assessors by 1 October 2017. This proposed that a pending election of one of the two current Senate Assessor...
positions for the College of Life Sciences and Medicine would not be taken forward and that the two Assessors from the College of Physical Sciences should agree on which of them would continue as the single Assessor from that College. In addition, as one of the two Senate Assessors from the College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) was from the Business School he would be deemed to be the Assessor from the Business School and a pending election for the remaining Assessor from CASS would be undertaken as usual. The Court agreed that this approach should be taken forward.

The Court noted that the model of transition proposed would be one where the periods of office of continuing independent members would continue rather than their existing periods of office being ‘zeroed’. This meant that a member who had served two periods of three years, would only be eligible to serve for a further period of three years. It was further noted that with regard to the local Council Assessors, the Court would continue to seek a nomination from the Council under the existing composition until such time as the Privy Council had approved the new composition.

In discussion of the composition of the Operating Board, a member suggested that it could benefit from the inclusion of a non-academic staff member of Court within its membership.

The Court agreed:

1) To approve the Committee’s recommendation for a phased transition to the new composition of Court and that the University should develop the internal appointment processes required with a view to potentially commencing new categories of membership from the 1 October 2017 onwards, subject to approval being received by the Privy Council.
2) To approve the Committee’s recommendation that the four current General Council Assessors be appointed to positions in the new composition within the twelve positions for independent members with their respective periods of office being equivalent to their remaining period of office as a General Council Assessor.
3) That the transition of Senate Assessors from six members to four (one from each College and one from the Business School), should not be through a process of fresh elections for all positions but instead through: the vacancy arising on 1 October 2017 for one of the two positions of Senate Assessor for College of Life Sciences and Medicine not being filled; the position of one of the current Senate Assessors from the College of Arts and Social Sciences who was a member of the Business School being deemed to be the Assessor from that School; the scheduled election for a Senate Assessor for the College of Arts and Social Sciences falling due on 1 October 2017 being taken forward as usual; and the two current Senate Assessors from the College of Physical Sciences agreeing on which of them would continue as the Senate Assessor for that College.
4) To agree that consideration should also be given as to how to encourage and achieve gender balance in the positions nominated by the Students’ Association and Trade Unions.
5) To note that the Governance and Nominations Committee will consider the skills mix of Court and forthcoming vacancies for independent members with a view to commencing recruitment processes thereafter.
6) To approve the recommended changes to the composition and remit of the Operating Board, to the composition of the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Student Experience Committee.
7) To note that the Committee had invited the Remuneration Committee to consider potential amendments to its remit and composition. See Minutes 190-193)

TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

STRATEGY FOR TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

Professor Paterson introduced a paper on the University’s Strategy for Transnational Education which had previously been considered by the Governance and Nominations committee and the Operating Board (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).
The Court noted that the Strategy set out the context for pursuing transnational educational opportunities together with the criteria against which the University would evaluate potential projects and manage capacity considerations. In discussion, a number of members suggested that the Strategy should give more emphasis to the evaluation of risk (both financial and reputational) in transnational education projects and to the due diligence process to be followed in deciding whether to take forward a particular project. It was also noted, however, that a degree of risk would always exist and that the need for the University to internationalise its activities and its brand, particularly given the pressures on traditional international student recruitment routes, was clear.

The Court also considered the Strategy in the context of the two specific potential projects in Africa and Qatar under consideration and the Korea Campus project. The Court discussed the capacity of the University to deliver three projects simultaneously and the commercial skills needed to realise their potential. The Court was assured that the staff necessary to deliver the projects would be available together with the necessary capacity.

The Court agreed that the Strategy should be updated to address the points that had been raised regarding the evaluation of risk and due diligence procedures.

\**PARTNERSHIP IN QATAR\*

Professor Paterson introduced a paper proposing the establishment from September 2017 of a branch campus in Doha in partnership with an in-country commercial partner (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

The Court noted that the proposal had previously been considered by the Operating Board, Senate and the Governance and Nominations Committee. It was proposed that, initially, Business School programmes would be delivered prior to a second phase whereby further programmes from a wider range of Schools would be added. The paper outlined the business plan, the quality assurance process, and the due diligence on the partner organisation and consideration of ethical issues that had been undertaken.

In discussion, the Court noted that the Aberdeen University Students’ Association (AUSA) Student Council had expressed concerns regarding the ethical and cultural issues of operating in Qatar. It was noted that some of these issues had also been raised in Senate but that the partner organisation involved was committed to the project as a means of increasing opportunities for women in Qatar and for those students who could not afford to undertake education in Europe. It was argued that the project, was therefore, a progressive initiative and an attempt to positively influence the issues that were being highlighted. A number of members welcomed the proposal and noted that it had significant potential. The Senior Governor emphasised, however, the need for further due diligence on the partner organisation to be undertaken. The Court agreed this further due diligence was required and, noting that it was proposed that the campus be operational by September 2017, further agreed that this be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

The Court approved the proposal and that the detailed preparations and operationalisation of the initiative progress, subject to further due diligence on the partner organisation being undertaken as a matter of urgency and considered on behalf of Court by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

\**PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY IN RWANDA/EAST AFRICA\*

Professor Paterson introduced two papers on progress with the proposal to establish a University of Aberdeen campus in Rwanda in partnership with a private delivery partner (copies filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

The Court noted that following consideration of the proposal at its meeting in December 2016, further due diligence and discussions regarding the proposal had been undertaken and considered at meetings of the Operating Board, the Senate and the Governance and
Nominations Committee. The paper set out the detail of that further work and the issues that had been considered in advance of the meeting of Court. The Court was also advised that potential concerns around the commitment of the Rwandan Government which had been reported in a further update paper to Court had now been clarified and the University was satisfied with the position and continued to recommend approval of the project to Court.

171 The Court agreed that as a matter of good practice further due diligence on the partner organisation should be undertaken and considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee. Subject to that, the Court approved the project and noted that the first foundation students and the first PGT students would begin studying in Kigali, Rwanda in September 2017.

KOREA CAMPUS UPDATE

172 Professor Paterson introduced a paper which provided Court with an update regarding the status of the project to open a University campus in South Korea and the current situation regarding the signing of the legal and financial agreements to facilitate the project (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

173 The Court noted that since institutional approval for the project had been given in June 2016, significant changes in the Korean economy had taken place and had impacted on the initial market expectations for the campus. As a result, the University had been in negotiations with the Korean partners regarding preparation of legal and financial documentation for the project in a format acceptable to the University. At its meeting on 7 March 2017, the Operating Board received a further update on progress in negotiating these agreements and approved the University’s continued involvement in the project. The Court noted that those negotiations were progressing satisfactorily, alongside a parallel legal review of the agreements, and it was anticipated that the University would sign the agreements in early April 2017 and that the campus would formally open in September 2017.

UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT TRUST CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

174 The Court received a presentation from the Principal and a written report on the key themes for the University’s next fundraising Campaign (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Court also received an example of campaign documentation which illustrated how the themes referred to in the paper would be promoted and marketed externally.

175 The Court noted that the Campaign would focus on four key themes: Health, Society, Ambition and Science. The presentation and paper also highlighted the emerging campaign priorities and projects for support within these themes.

176 In discussion, it was noted that the University expected that the aim for any capital projects within the campaign would be to raise 50% of the funding requirement. It was suggested that consideration should be given to the inclusion of heart disease research within the priorities for fundraising. It was also suggested that there be sufficient flexibility within the Campaign to enable the University to seek support for international activities in the future. The Court was also assured that the role of AUSA in supporting students would continue to be an area where fundraising was sought through the annual fund appeal.

177 The Court noted that this was an interim report and that a more developed plan would be presented in June 2017, at which time it was expected the University’s capital plan and priorities would also be considered by Court.

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

178 The Court received and considered a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which provided details of ten health and safety incidents since its last meeting. The Court also received an update on recent health, wellbeing and safety initiatives.
STANDING REPORTS

REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

179 The Rector congratulated the Students’ Association on their recent Annual General Meeting and highlighted the recent election of new Sabbatical Officers. The Rector also noted the sporting achievements of a number of students and the success of the International Women’s Day Conference organised by the University.

REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

180 The Court noted a report from the Principal (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) on recent developments within the University, in particular significant events and achievements of staff and students.

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

181 The President of the Students’ Association introduced his written report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) on the recent activities of AUSA.

CURRENT CHALLENGES FOR THE UNIVERSITY

182 The Principal gave a presentation which reported on a number of challenges for the University emerging from the current political and higher education context. These included: the UK Higher Education Bill, Brexit, the Scottish Government’s Enterprise and Skills Review, the potential pressure for the traditional four year university degree in Scotland to be shortened, and the 2017-18 budget settlement for higher education in Scotland.

183 The Court noted that the University in common with most other Scottish universities had decided not to participate in the Teaching Excellence Framework and was assured that this was not expected to impact directly upon the University’s position in league tables.

184 Following discussion of the issues of Brexit, it was agreed to circulate to Court information on the number of non-UK EU staff and students at the University. It was noted that a potential response to Brexit and possible loss of access to European research funding might be through the University undertaking teaching within the remaining EU states, although further work to ascertain the legality of this would be required.

FUTURE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE BUSINESS SCHOOL

185 The Court received a presentation and written report from Professor MacGregor, Executive Dean of the Business School, (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) on the long-term vision for the School to be an internationally recognised, medium sized, business school with a distinctive identify and portfolio, and to become the Business School of choice regionally and a strong competitor nationally and internationally.

186 The Court noted that to achieve this vision the School planned to have a portfolio of attractive programmes at all levels, high quality research, extensive external engagement and a portfolio of professional accreditation. The School’s ambition was to be located in a new or refurbished building consistent with the standard being offered by leading competitors. The Court noted that to realise this ambition, the School was committed to:

- doubling income to £20m and doubling staff numbers;
- a quadrupling of international student numbers to 750;
- phased investment derived from School-generated surpluses, leading to further increases in income which would trigger further investment, and so on in a virtuous cycle;
- producing sufficient surplus to fund a new building; and
• producing a surplus for the University of around £2m and a total contribution of £7m.

187 In discussion, a number of members welcomed the vision and the Court agreed that it was vital to both the School and the University’s wider reputation that it succeed in achieving that ambition. The importance of international as well as home and European students was noted, and it was agreed that the proposal for transnational education in Qatar was of particular strategic significance for the Business School. The Court discussed whether, in the longer-term, the Business School as a ‘head office’ needed to be located in Aberdeen or whether this might be overseas.

188 The Court was assured that while recruitment to Professorial level was a highly competitive market, the University was confident that it would be able to recruit high calibre staff at all levels within the School. In discussion of the need for new facilities, the Court noted that discussions were underway to ensure that in the immediate term there was sufficient capacity to accommodate increased numbers of students.

189 The Court endorsed the proposed vision and strategy for the future development of the Business School.

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE: SENIOR STAFF PAY POLICY AND REMIT/COMPOSITION

190 The Court received a report from the Remuneration Committee which set out proposals for a fund of £100k to recognise, reward and incentivise senior members of staff (grade 9). The report also included a revised remit and composition of the Remuneration Committee and advised of the appointment of a new Convener (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

191 The Court noted that the process for senior staff pay would be to take forward a strategy focused on addressing gender differentials and providing an opportunity for evidence based exceptional contribution to be recognised.

192 The Court noted that following the recent introduction of a policy to offer remuneration for the role of Senior Governor, the Remuneration Committee had considered whether it was appropriate for the Senior Governor to continue as Chair of the Remuneration Committee and had agreed that it should be chaired by an independent member of Court and not the Senior Governor. Following consultation with the Governance and Nominations Committee, it had been agreed that Mr Steyn as the most experienced independent member of the Committee should be Convener. The remit had also been updated to reflect the position agreed by Court in October 2016 that the Remuneration Committee would review annually the remuneration of the Senior Governor and to address an Internal Audit recommendation that the quorum of the Committee be amended to ensure that an appropriate number of independent members were required to be present.

193 The Court approved the proposed Senior Staff Pay Policy 2017, the revised remit and composition of the Committee, and the appointment of Mr Steyn as Convener.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING UPDATE: QUARTER 1, 2016/17

194 The Court received and considered a report on progress made in the first quarter of the academic year 2016/17 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) against the School targets and KPIs underpinning the University’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

OPERATING BOARD REPORT

195 The Court received a report from the Operating Board meetings held on 10 January, 1 February and 7 March 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The principal items of the report that were noted by Court were the Board’s consideration of the following:
- Health, Wellbeing and Safety;
  - Updates on supporting activities and policies
  - Accidents and incidents
- Student Recruitment;
  - Student Admissions Update
  - Online Education
  - A report on tariff and retention
- Financial planning, including;
  - Budget Planning Assumptions 2017/18 to 2019/20
  - Universities’ Accounts Comparison Year Ended 31 July 2016
  - The Cash Management Annual Update
  - Advisory Group on Investment report
  - Strategic Business Venture Group report
  - Management reporting
  - Restructuring Exercise update
- Staffing updates

196 The Court noted that the Board had convened a special meeting on 10 January to consider proposals for partnership activity in Africa. The Board’s consideration of this project, and the following further transnational education items: Transnational Education Strategy, Partnership Activity in Qatar and the Korea Camus were reported to Court separately as part of papers earlier in the agenda:

197 The Court, on the recommendation of the Board and having previously been considered by the Partnership, Negotiating and Consultative Committee, approved the following Health and Safety policies:

- Fire Safety Policy
- Use of Drones Policy and Guidance
- Control and Management of Contractors
- Overseas Travel Policy and Guidance.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

198 The Court received a report of the principal items of business considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee at its meetings on 16 December 2016 and 1 February 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The report included two items for approval, as follows:

(i) A recommendation to approve a nomination for the ‘Benefactor to the University’ Award
(ii) A recommendation to approve a minor change to Resolution No 282 [Procedure for Removal of a Member of Court] to be consistent with the new requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act. If approved by Court, the Resolution would be subject to the further consultation required by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, including Senate and the Business Committee of the General Council.

199 The Court approved the recommendations.

PARTNERSHIP, NEGOTIATION AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

200 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Partnership, Negotiation and Consultative Committee at its meeting on 1 March 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). In addition, the Court was invited to approve a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Policy.
The Court noted that with regard to the CCTV Policy, a campus trade union had requested consideration of amendments to the Policy. It was, therefore, agreed that these should be considered and that the Policy would be brought back to a future meeting of Court.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 19 January 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the University Committee on Teaching and Learning at its meeting on 8 March 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Student Experience Committee at its meetings on 15 February 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE**

The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Research Policy Committee at its meeting on 8 March 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**ROUTINE BUSINESS**

**COMPOSITION OF SENATE ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION**

Further to proposals approved at its previous meeting, the Court received a report on the statutory consultation that had been undertaken on a draft Ordinance and Resolution required to implement recommendations arising from the Effectiveness Review of Senate (copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes). As no amendments had been proposed the Court, therefore, approved the following:

(i) Ordinance ‘Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus’ for submission to Privy Council
(ii) Resolution ‘Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus’.

**SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENT**

The Court received and approved the University’s Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING AND OUTCOMES REPORT**

The Court received and approved the University’s Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**SENATE REPORT**

The Court received and noted a report of the principal items of business considered by Senate at its meeting on 25 January 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

The Court on the recommendation of the Senate, approved the draft Resolution, ‘Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees’ which enacted changes in Degree Regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee. The Resolution would be subject to the
further consultation required by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, including the Business Committee of the General Council.

REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT TRUST ACTIVITY

211 The Court received and noted a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) providing details of the Development Trust’s performance since its last report to Court on 6 December 2016.

UNIVERSITIES’ ACCOUNTS COMPARISONS 2015/16

212 The Court noted a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which analysed university annual accounts for the year ended 31 July 2016 and compared the University’s performance with the Scottish sector and benchmark group in the UK.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

213 The Court noted the Management Accounts and Reports for the period to 31 January 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

214 The Court noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 27 June 2017 at 9.00am.
# UNIVERSITY COURT: LOG OF FOLLOW UP ACTIONS FROM COURT MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court Date</th>
<th>Minute Ref</th>
<th>Action Arising</th>
<th>Action By:</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>Gender Balance on sub-committees of Senate</td>
<td>University Secretary</td>
<td>In progress: The issues of gender balance on Senate were considered by Senate in November and further work in consultation with the Gender Equality Steering Group is ongoing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Court further agreed that the Senate should be invited to agree that a policy on gender balance also apply to joint committees of the Court and Senate and with implementation commencing as soon as practicable thereafter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>Financial and Strategic Priorities</td>
<td>Senior Vice-Principal</td>
<td>Complete: Report scheduled for June Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Court noted that final budgets, informed by the discussion at Court, would be brought to Court in June via Operating Board once SFC funding was confirmed. It was also agreed that as Operating Board had not had the opportunity to scrutinise the figures in the paper which linked to the 10 year capital investment programme, it should continue to monitor the development of the financial projections to 2020.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>10 Year Capital Investment Programme</td>
<td>Senior Vice-Principal</td>
<td>Complete: Report scheduled for June Court. An update was provided to Court in March 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The decision regarding what the University’s strategic priorities for fundraising were would be a matter for Court although there would need to be engagement with the Development Trust on these in the context of their attractiveness to donors. It was anticipated that Court would be invited by June 2017 to agree upon the strategic priorities for the next fundraising campaign.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>Good Governance Institute: Report on Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review of Court</td>
<td>University Secretary</td>
<td>In progress: Update provided in June Court papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Court agreed that the Governance and Nominations Committee should consider the report and its recommendations in more depth and report back to a future meeting of Court. It was agreed that the Operating Board be invited to consider the recommendations relevant to its role and that other committees of Court be invited to comment where relevant and for these to be considered by the Governance &amp; Nominations Committee.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>Partnership in Qatar</td>
<td>Vice-Principal</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>The Court approved the proposal and that the detailed preparations and operationalisation of the initiative progress, subject to further due diligence on the partner organisation being undertaken as a matter of urgency and considered on behalf of Court by the Governance and Nominations Committee.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>171 Partnership Activity in Rwanda/East Africa</td>
<td>The Court agreed that as a matter of good practice further due diligence on the partner organisation should be undertaken and considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee. Subject to that, the Court approved the project and noted that the first foundation students and the first PGT students would begin studying in Kigali, Rwanda in September 2017.</td>
<td><strong>In progress:</strong> Update report included to June 2017 Court in TNE Update.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Development Trust Campaign Priorities</td>
<td>The Court noted that this was an interim report and that a more developed plan would be presented in June 2017, at which time it was expected the University's capital plan and priorities would also be considered by Court.</td>
<td><strong>In progress:</strong> Report scheduled for June 2017 Court</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List of completed items available on Court Intranet or on request from the Clerk.
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is to outline to University Court progress made in the last quarter (January - March) against the institutional KPI targets underpinning the University's Strategic Plan 2015-2020. This paper is for information and discussion where appropriate.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 University Court is invited to note and discuss where appropriate the University's KPI performance at the most recent quarter in Table 1 and activities in place to support delivery of the Strategic Plan.

3. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE UPDATE

3.1 As Court will be aware, the University's planning process has been undergoing a review in an effort to make the process more agile and responsive to drive success. As part of this process, the regular KPI reports to Court will be changing. Court will receive biannual reports in June and December, moving away from the previous model of providing an aggregated score of a handful of high level KPI areas (see Appendix A in the KPI report to Court in March 2017) to providing regular updates on a set of institutional metrics to give a clearer overview of institutional academic and financial performance. As part of this review, the Planning Directorate is working with IT to develop a new Business Intelligence System which will allow automatic, real-time generation of strategic planning data in future. The Planning Directorate would welcome feedback on the new reporting style.

3.2 A number of the University's performance indicators are only published annually. To ensure that academic activity remains focused on delivery in between reporting dates, all Schools keep an 'Activity Log' which records the strategies and activities in place to deliver on the University's KPIs. The Activity Logs are reviewed regularly through discussion between Heads of School and Senior Management. From academic year 2017/18, the University Management Group will also be discussing Activity Logs at regular intervals to ensure that activity taking place across the University around performance indicators is joined up to deliver the best possible result.

3.3 Overall, this quarter the University has met the majority of its institutional targets and is on track to achieve 2020 targets. Performance is largely the same as in the previous quarter, but with improvements in UK PGR student recruitment and in overseas UG student recruitment (likely driven by visiting study abroad students). The University is performing especially well relative to the institutional targets set against the number of PGR students per FTE and grant income per staff FTE. Good progress has also been made around Athena Swan with the University recently being awarded bronze Athena SWAN status, which is a significant step toward the goal of achieving silver status by 2020.

3.4 Performance against each target is shown in Table 1, which details performance in the previous quarter, the current quarter and the target for the current quarter. Any explanations for non-green rankings are given, along with brief detail to describe corrective actions being taken.

3.5 The University's performance in the areas of non-continuation, student satisfaction, and positive destinations has not changed since the last report as these metrics rely on data which is only made available once a year. Performance is currently near to target. NSS results for 2016/17 will be published in summer 2017; new data on non-continuation will be made available in September, and the results of the DHLE Graduate Destinations Survey becomes available in summer 2017.
3.6 As has been apparent since the start of the 2016-17 academic year, the University is slightly under-performing this year relative to the targets for PGT student recruitment, and this is once again observed for the current quarter. However, there has been growth in the Home/EU PGT market attributed to programmes with a January intake. Across the sector there have been decreases in PGT recruitment, and increased competition for students. Going forward the increased online PGT provision is anticipated to contribute towards meeting student recruitment targets at PGT level. Across all Schools, increasing the number of overseas PGT students in particular is a high priority and this continues to be the focus of increased marketing and student recruitment efforts.

3.7 Whilst the University has increased its number of UK PGR students compared to last quarter, it is still underperforming slightly relative to target. Schools are making considerable effort to utilise all possible funding sources and to advertise funding opportunities because it is recognised that the most influential factor in attracting PhD students is availability of funding. The Elphinstone Scholarships scheme is also receiving excellent levels of engagement by all Schools. The University is on target in relation to the number of PGR students per staff FTE and in its preparation for the next REF.

3.8 The University has not achieved its targets for this quarter relating to league table performance. Going forward, the University will be monitoring performance in two international league tables: the QS international league table, and the THE World University Rankings. The QS league table was published on 8 June and showed that the University has dropped 17 places and this metric has therefore been given a ‘red’ rating. This is explored further in a separate report on League Table performance on today’s agenda.

4. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

4.1 Further information is available from Professor Jeremy Kilburn, Senior Vice-Principal (j.kilburn@abdn.ac.uk) or Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk).

AW/Planning/12 June 2017 [1] [Open]
Table 1: Institutional performance over the last quarter (previous and current quarter performance compared to quarterly target)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Previous quarter</th>
<th>Current quarter</th>
<th>Target current quarter</th>
<th>Reason for rating</th>
<th>Corrective actions</th>
<th>Next update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>League table rankings: QS</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2017 league table published 8 June reporting a fall of 17 places.</td>
<td>League Table Working Group taking forward actions</td>
<td>Jun 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>League table rankings: THES</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2017 league table to be published in September</td>
<td>League Table Working Group taking forward actions</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-continuation</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Non-continuation measured at year-end.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jun 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student satisfaction: teaching</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Results for NSS 2017 to be published July/Aug.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student satisfaction: assessment and feedback</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Results for NSS 2017 to be published July/Aug.</td>
<td>NSS improvements are a key part of School Action Plans.</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive destinations</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGR students per FTE</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REF Hands</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant income per FTE</td>
<td>£14,690</td>
<td>£31,064</td>
<td>£24,622</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: UG, Home/EU</td>
<td>8046</td>
<td>8088</td>
<td>8043</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: UG, RUK</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>1132</td>
<td>1064</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: UG, % non-UK</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGT, Home/EU</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>Sector-wide decrease in PGT registrations.</td>
<td>Additional recruitment efforts. Online PGT programmes to address market demands.</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGT, RUK</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>Sector-wide decrease in PGT registrations.</td>
<td>Additional recruitment efforts. Online PGT programmes to address market demands.</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGT, % non-UK</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>Sector-wide decrease in PGT registrations. The largest decrease has been in the overseas market.</td>
<td>Additional recruitment efforts, especially for overseas PGT market. Online PGT programmes to address market demands.</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGR, UK</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>Improved student registrations. However, still under target.</td>
<td>Additional recruitment efforts. Schools focused on obtaining and maximising funding opportunities for PhD students.</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGR, % non-UK</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Surplus/(Deficit) (YTD)</td>
<td>£3.191M</td>
<td>£1.068M</td>
<td>(£1.543M)</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athena SWAN</td>
<td>On track</td>
<td>Bronze award</td>
<td>Bronze award</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides Court with an update on risk management, with a particular focus on the institutional Strategic Risk Register. This paper is for consideration and comment where appropriate.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 Court is invited to consider:

- The update provided on the Strategic Risk Register composition;
- The current net risk scores allocated to each risk (see Table 1, below);
- The additional information given on the three strategic risks which exceed the institutional tolerance threshold of 18 (see Table 2, below).

3. CONSIDERATION BY OPERATING BOARD

3.1 In June, the Board received a Risk Management Update and approved the latest version of the Strategic Risk Register. The Board noted an oral update on discussions held at the Audit Committee on 1 June, when it had been agreed to review the methodology for the aggregation of scores of sub-risks under the ten headings, rather than to introduce an eleventh headline risk. It was agreed that the three highest-scoring risks were consistent across the sector and reflected the areas of most concern to the University.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE – KEY POINTS

4.1. The Strategic Risk Register Composition

4.1.1 The Strategic Risk Register was updated in May 2017 following a risk management workshop involving Risk Owners and Managers. This workshop was designed to facilitate and inform the University’s strategic risk management process. As part of that exercise, the group considered whether the composition of the Strategic Risk Register in its current form aligned with institutional strategic priorities, and the predominant risks that might affect the University’s ability to achieve its strategic objectives.

4.1.2 The group took account of external environmental developments which pose potential risks to the institution, such as Brexit or digitalisation, and whether these were adequately reflected within different risk areas. The group was generally content that with issues like these, potential impacts were identified where relevant under existing risks, and mitigating actions were in place or under development. For example, threats linked to Brexit and actions for responding were highlighted under the following risks: Financial Sustainability, Research Performance, Student Recruitment, and Staff Recruitment & Retention risk areas.

4.1.3 The group also considered whether risks already identified were given the appropriate level of coverage. Specifically, concern was raised that risks linked to Information Governance were neither adequately captured nor sufficiently addressed within the risk register in its current form; Information Governance was, and remains, referenced under Risk 3, Governance and Core Business Risks. Threats relating to Information Governance include potential cyber-attacks, and the increasing need for compliance to legislation and reporting requirements. The potential consequences, should risks linked to Information Governance materialise, include significant operational disruption, data loss, adverse reputational impacts and substantial financial damage. The group considered two possibilities: first, the option to draw Information Governance out as a stand-alone risk to reflect the
increasingly complex threats emerging from the wider IT security environment, and second; giving
Information Governance more prominence within existing risk areas like Risk 3, with risk scores
adjusted accordingly. The Group was also mindful of the importance of avoiding incremental or
unnecessary increases to the number of risks covered at strategic level; the Strategic Risk Register
was designed to be sufficiently broad and high level to allow flexible adjustment of the ten risk areas
if or where required, thereby negating potential expansion of the risk register whenever new strategic
contcerns arise.

4.1.4 Taking account of these issues, Audit Committee was invited to consider the Strategic Risk Register
composition when it met on 1 June 2017, and specifically, the possible addition of a stand-alone risk
linked to Information Governance. On reflection, Audit Committee was generally content with the
composition as it stood, though agreed that the University should consider reviewing its risk scoring
methodology, notably for more complex risk areas like Risk 3. In particular, there was concern over
the process for aggregating risk scores within risks like this, where a number of diverse issues,
including Information Governance, are covered. It was agreed that the process for aggregating risk
scores in such cases should be reviewed in advance of the next reporting round, following completion
of an internal audit on Cyber Security in September.

4.2 The Strategic Risk Register – Scoring and Amendments

4.2.1 Table 1, below, lists the University’s ten strategic risks (in alphabetical order), and shows both
previous and current net risk scores – noting, as above, that these were updated and re-scored in
May 2017. Table 1 highlights risks which have breached the institutional Tolerance Threshold of net
risk score 18 or above; specified in the Risk Management Framework as the point at which further
information is required when reporting on why the increase in score has occurred, and what mitigating
actions have been taken in response. This currently applies to three risks: Financial Sustainability,
Internationalisation and Student Recruitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Risk Area</th>
<th>April 2016 Net Score</th>
<th>Oct 2016 Net Score</th>
<th>May 2017 Net Score</th>
<th>Significant Score Increase / Threshold Breach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equality and diversity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial sustainability</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Yes (increase from 18 to 24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and Core Business Risks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Sustainability</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes (stable but over tolerance threshold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Performance and Impact</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Recruitment and Retention</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Experience</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Recruitment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes (stable but over tolerance threshold)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2, below, provides additional information for the three risks which exceed the institutional
tolerance threshold of 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Area</th>
<th>Reason for High or Increased Score</th>
<th>Mitigating actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Sustainability</td>
<td>The increase in net score from 18 to 24 is due to:</td>
<td>• Continue to appraise the potential impacts of Brexit and to develop mitigating actions;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Internationalisation

The retained net score of 25 is attributed to:

- Concern over our ability to achieve international student recruitment targets;
- Concern over international staff recruitment and subsequent impacts on other areas, including (for example), research funding;
- Uncertainty over ability to deliver TNE projects successfully and to achieve linked targets.
- Concern over the impact Brexit will have on the internationalisation of the University.

- Continue to explore and support work in new markets, informed by Schools, based on market research and previous returns.
- Integration of international student recruitment targets into each School Plan, as part of the ongoing planning process.
- Close management of all TNE initiatives, based on a robust governance structure – including Project Boards and Executive Groups.
- Expand 1-2-1 English language support, through Language Centre, to support conversion activity.
- Proactive monitoring of academic international visits to support staff mobility and growth of research networks using international partnership synergies.

### Student Recruitment

The retained net score of 25 is attributed to:

- Significant challenges in achieving RUK targets;
- Uncertainty over performance of new Online Distance Learning offerings, and the ability to meet targets in what are untested markets;
- Ongoing concerns over potential impacts of Brexit and how it might affect EU and Scottish student numbers.

- Roll out new online prospectus and other marketing materials, using new University branding.
- Continue to appraise potential impacts of Brexit and to develop and implement mitigating strategies;
- Develop individual strategies and plans for student recruitment according to student categories, i.e. Home/EU, RUK, International;
- Take forward implementation of new EU Marketing and Student Recruitment Plan;
- Take forward roll-out of a range of new Online Distance Learning programmes, targeted at specific markets, informed by market research.

### 4.3. School Risk Registers

4.3.1 At School level, Heads of School and School Administrative Officers have been working with the Directorate of Planning to each develop a new risk register, as part of a fully integrated strategic planning process. This work is ongoing. School risk registers have been designed to align with and support delivery of the key objectives listed in School plans, under specified areas of strategic importance. They are managed via School Executive Committees going forward, and will report centrally via the annual School planning process. Information on how Schools are managing and scoring risks will also be included as part of this report going forward (next report due as part of the October-December 2017 reporting cycle).

### 5. FURTHER INFORMATION

5.1 Further information can be obtained from Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk) or Iain Grant, Policy Advisor (i.grant@abdn.ac.uk@abdn.ac.uk).
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides an update to Court on progress in regard to the work on online education.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to discuss and note the paper which is for information.

3. STRATEGY

3.1 A Strategy for Online Education and an associated operational plan and five-year business plan was approved by the Operating Board at its meeting in May 2017. This Strategy sets out an overarching vision for the University to become a leading provider of high quality online education by 2020.

4. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, APPLICATIONS & FUTURE PROGRAMMES

4.1 Work in developing the programmes which will launch in September 2017 is progressing well. There is a positive trend in all PGT Online courses with 55% more applications, 86% more live offers and almost double the number of acceptances with 70 (as at 28 May 2017) as compared to 37 in 2016. The programmes in Decommissioning, Dispute Resolution and Health Economics look set to exceed initial target. Very targeted marketing of the programme in Scottish Heritage is also seeing positive results with a higher than average number of enquiries being received in direct response to targeted marketing on social media. The Faculty of Advocates is interested in certain courses within the Dispute Resolution programme and to date 35 members have registered. The new Access courses in English and Maths are attracting significant interest. These are targeted at those wishing to gain the necessary entry qualifications for the Postgraduate Diploma in Education and support has been obtained from the Scottish Government to help with this initiative.

4.2 Drawing on market analysis, work is ongoing to confirm the programmes which will be launched in 2018/19. These programmes will primarily be focused around the areas of healthcare, business, education and law which have been indicated as areas of strong market potential. In Medicine, it is planned to launch a Master’s programme in Public Health building on the successful on-campus programme. In Law, a new course in Regulatory Law is planned to meet the CPD needs identified by the Faculty of Advocates and the Scottish Social Services Council. This course has been re-prioritised for delivery summer 2017. In Education, a further lower level (SCQF level 5) Access course in Maths is planned, again to support applicants for teacher training. In Business, market research is being conducted to assess possible new programmes in Energy Law and Economics (jointly with the Law School), International Trade (jointly with the Law School), International Finance, Risk Management and Sustainable Business and online versions of existing on campus programmes in Petroleum, Energy Economics and Finance, and Real Estate and Finance. Outwith these areas, programmes have been identified in Translation Studies and Islamic Studies. In addition, interdisciplinary possibilities are being considered around leadership, heritage and sustainable development, the latter building on our previously highly successful open access course with FutureLearn. An area on the website is being created to enable early notice to be given of the planned new programmes which will allow interest to be captured. This site will also provide a vehicle for prospective students to indicate areas of interest for online study to inform future programme development.
5. **MARKETING OF ONLINE PROGRAMMES**

5.1 An overarching marketing campaign for online learning has been established underpinned by targeted specific advertising of each of the new programmes. This campaign is utilising social media, email campaigns and promotion at key events. A dedicated page on the University's website has been established to pull together all online provision and this has been enhanced by additional information about studying online, support for online learners, video animations and a suite of frequently asked questions. An enquiry management process is ensuring leads generated from the campaign are pro-actively followed. This is being further enhanced by a series of online webinar presentations which will provide an opportunity for prospective students to hear more about the programmes and the support available. In addition to marketing full programmes, a number of individual courses are also being promoted separately as ‘short courses’ to target a different audience who do not wish to commit to a full degree (e.g. Mediation Theory and Practice, and Scotland: A Millennium of History).

6. **SUPPORTING ONLINE LEARNERS**

6.1 Extensive work has been undertaken to establish processes to support online learners through the application and registration process in a way which best recognises the flexible nature of their study. A tailored and simplified application process has been put in place. After being accepted, students will receive a telephone call to confirm their specific course choices and to discuss fee payment. This personal approach will also provide the opportunity to gain feedback from applicants. Consideration is being given to longer term approaches to managing the application and registration process for online learners in a way that is as simple and flexible as possible and is scalable as numbers increase.

6.2 As online learners will frequently be studying alongside busy work and family lives, it is important to ensure that they have easy access to all the information they require to support them in their studies. To address this need, pages are being developed within MyAberdeen, the University's Learning Management System to provide tailored information for online learners on all aspects of support. Generic induction information will also be available. A generic support system is in place which will ensure timely and personal response to student queries. Non-academic queries will be directed to the Infohub with more specialist support in regard to IT and Library being directly accessible. This generic support will supplement the academic induction and support provided on a course/programme basis by Schools.

7. **SUPPORT FOR STAFF**

7.1 Learning technology staff in the Centre for Academic Development are providing support to academic colleagues in the development of five new online programmes (composed of over 37 separate courses) plus also support to the new Access courses in English and Maths and the stand-alone course in Regulatory Law. The storyboarding approach which underpins this development work is being well received and is enabling staff to review their programmes with an online audience in mind. The Centre for Academic Development is also developing a five-week online course (available September 2017) in online course development and delivery. This course will be supported by a range of guidance materials which will be available for staff to access on the web. A series of lunchtime seminars for staff on different topics around online education are also being planned.

8. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

8.1 Further information is available from Professor Peter McGeorge, Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching) (mcgeorge@abdn.ac.uk or extn 2248) and Dr Gillian Mackintosh, Director of Online Education and Academic Development (g.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk or extn 2045).

2 June 2017 [Open]
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper is to outline to University Court the University's performance in recent league tables (the Complete University Guide, the Guardian League Table, and the QS) and action plans in place to support improvement. This paper is for information and discussion where appropriate.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 University Court is invited to note and discuss where appropriate the University's league table performance.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 University rankings have been subject to much criticism over the years and many in the sector have questioned their value in measuring quality and the methodologies they employ. It is, however, becoming increasingly clear that league tables can be very influential in shaping the perceptions of the public and prospective students, and they are increasingly being used by universities and governments around the globe to inform their higher education strategy. The University is very cognisant of the importance that league tables have come to play in university life and in autumn 2016 established a League Table Working Group, chaired by the Principal, to develop a strategy for improvements in the University's rankings. This report provides an overview of the University's performance in recent league tables and of actions which the University is taking to improve future performance.

4. **COMPLETE UNIVERSITY GUIDE**

4.1 The Complete University Guide (CUG) came out on 26 April 2017. This league table, like other national league tables coming out this year, is based primarily on administrative data for academic year 2015/16. The University increased in rank by two positions compared to last year, and is now ranked 40th in the UK. This ranking was also achieved in 2015-16, and it is the highest rank the University has held in recent years. The University maintained its ranking of 7th in Scotland.

4.2 The University increased its UK rank in entry standards, student satisfaction, research intensity, graduate prospects, good honours and degree completion. It decreased its UK rank for student staff ratio, academic services spend, and facilities spend.

4.3 The University's ranking for 15 out of 41 subjects improved since last year and we now have the following in the subject top 20s: Accounting, Creative Writing, Celtic Studies, Dentistry, Electrical Engineering, Land Management, Sociology, Theology, Law, Linguistics and Sports Science.

5. **GUARDIAN**

5.1 The Guardian League Table, which is also based on 2015/16 HESA data, was published on 16 May 2017. The University moved down ten places, from 36th to 46th place in the UK but remains in 6th place in Scotland. The University of Edinburgh also saw a decreased rank by eight places, Robert Gordon University ranked 18 places lower than the previous year and Strathclyde ranked one place lower.

5.2 The University saw very welcome increases for the National Student Survey (NSS) metrics, with Aberdeen ranking 34 places higher for teaching, four places higher for feedback and assessment, and 19 places higher for overall satisfaction. The value added score went up by 18 ranks (16.25% weighting), and entry tariff ranked the same. The rank increased or was maintained for all the other metrics, with the exception of career prospects (down three places).
5.3 There were five new entries into the subject tables, three of which went directly into the top 10 in the UK (Anatomy and Physiology, Dentistry and Sports Science). The University now has nine subjects ranked in the top 20 in the UK, compared to seven last year, with Sport Science ranked first. A number of subjects such as Education and Engineering dropped as opposed to last year. This was expected as in both cases the NSS scores had dropped. The reasons behind this are understood and both Schools have put in interventions to address this.

5.4 At the University level, the drop mainly resulted from a decrease in the University’s staff-student ratio and expenditure per student, which dropped by 18 and 28 places respectively. These two metrics are among those which make the largest contribution to the overall ranking in this league table. Again, interventions are being put in place to address this in the data that will be submitted this summer and will impact on next year’s tables.

5.5 Those ranked in the top 20 are Sports Science, Anatomy, Dentistry, Anthropology, Medicine, General Engineering, Pharmacology, Law and Psychology.

6. QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

6.1 The QS World University Rankings came out on 8 June 2017 and are heavily based on opinion surveys which are used to inform a reputational score. The QS has received much criticism for its heavy reliance on subjective indicators. Overall the University ranked 17 places lower than last year, and is now 158th in the world. The University remains within the upper 20% of all institutions ranked within the QS league table, and therefore, as stated by the QS, within the top 1% of institutions in the world.

6.2 Twenty of the 28 UK institutions included within the top 200 institutions have seen decreases in position something that has been attributed both to the difficult funding situation in the UK over the past few years and the increased competition from other countries who have invested heavily in higher education generally and research in particular.

6.3 The International Students metric remains the highest ranked metric, at 59th globally, down two places from 57th in 2016. It is encouraging that the University increased its performance in the Citations per Faculty metric by 24 ranks. The largest decreases have been observed for Faculty Student Ratio and for Academic and Employer Reputation. The QS includes all student categories and all academic staff (including research staff) within their Faculty Student Ratio metric, and this year the score itself actually increased slightly for Aberdeen from 8.61 to 8.89 indicating the speed off improvement elsewhere.

6.4 The methodology for calculating the Employer Reputation metric has undergone a change this year, which will likely have a positive impact for the University going forward. Previously, international mentions of the University were given a higher weighting than domestic mentions; the balance has now been shifted so that they achieve equal weighting. The University has in place a strategy for improving the reputational metric (see section 7 below), and it is hoped that by giving equal regard to domestic and international mentions, this strategy will be easier to implement.

6.5 When looking at the University’s position when compared with UK institutions only (70 universities), the University ranked 14th in the UK for Citations per Faculty, moving from a position of 25th in 2016. We have also climbed in the International Faculty metric, from 24th in the UK to 22nd. UK rank decreased for Faculty Student Ratio and for Academic and Employer Reputation.

7. UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

7.1 Although it is difficult to link league table performance directly to student application trends, there is no doubt that league table influence is growing, particularly in international markets. The University League Table Working Group has developed a strategy for improving future league table position. As can be seen from the summary above, our performance in the most recent league tables (based on institutional data from 2014/15 and 2015/16) demonstrates that particular attention needs to be given to the institutional student-staff ratio, student spend, and reputational scores. The Working Group action plan focuses on the following key actions:

- Continued communication to staff and students. Meetings are currently being held with all Schools to review institutional and subject results and identify actions, including ways in which reputational scores can be influenced. A communication strategy for students has also been developed.
• Clear and unambiguous focus on areas where there can be improvements and strategies to address this. For example, Music is one of the poorest performing subjects on the Guardian tables, a position driven by extremely poor performance in the NSS on feedback and assessment.
• Review of institutional data which feeds into league tables. A review is ongoing around various institutional data returns to ensure they reflect activity and staff and student profiles appropriately.
• Improvement in student employability, completion rates, and internationalisation. This is being taken forward through active monitoring of performance within our strategic planning processes.
• Improvement in academic and employer reputation scores. This is being taken forward through enhanced communication with our academic community and industry partners.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION
8.1 Further information is available from Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk) and Dr Amanda Wilson, Data Analyst (amanda.wilson@abdn.ac.uk).
1. **Purpose of the Paper**

1.1 This paper provides an overview of the University's strategic vision for the delivery of a *world class campus experience* at King's College, Foresterhill and Hillhead. It is supplemented with three papers providing analysis of the challenges and opportunities related to the three sites.

1.2 This paper has been made available to the University community for discussion.

2. **Recommended Action**

2.1 The Court is invited to note this discussion paper.

3. **Discussion**

3.1 This paper provides an overview of the University's strategic vision for the delivery of a world class *campus experience*, through the ongoing evolution and development of our Kings College, Foresterhill and Hillhead locations over the next 10 years. The detail articulated in this paper is illustrative of an *approach* to campus development and is intended as neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. It is, however, intended as a broad and flexible framework, that provides an overarching vision and central themes within which the University can address future campus development needs.

3.2 The envisaged developments combine evolutionary and transformational initiatives to create a work and study environment that supports delivery of the institutional Strategic Plan (2015-2020) and encourages further ambition. This strategy aligns with the University's existing Kings Campus Framework Plan (2013), the Foresterhill Development framework (2014), and the related Framework Area Design Guidelines (2014). It also provides an overarching vision that compliments the 10-Year Capital Investment Programme, approved by Court at its meeting in December 2016.

4. **Strategic Context**

4.1 Universities in their traditional form, and the physical campus in particular, face increasing challenges from an external environment characterised by tighter funding, global competition and technological change. In paradox, the answers to these challenges lie, in part at least, in the campus itself. Through innovative re-design and development of buildings and spaces, and the sympathetic and appropriate use of digital technology, the campus can become a critical component in attracting and retaining staff and students. In this regard, the creation of an enlivened, vibrant and diverse campus environment is essential to long-term institutional sustainability and an integral part in supporting the generation of the ultimate currency that will define institutional success and sustainability over time – ideas.

4.2 In an era where online learning and mobile technologies proliferate, strategies and initiatives to support digital transformation are an important pillar in the development of a modern campus. Students can choose to work anywhere at any time, thereby creating new competition, increased demands, and major challenges for the traditional campus. The *campus experience* must, therefore, offer more than simply a venue for students to receive – and staff to deliver - information via a menu of traditional learning spaces. To give the University the competitive advantage it needs, the campus must provide a technology-rich, vibrant and exemplary experience in which staff and students can excel, and through which we can showcase the University to prospective staff and students.
5. VISION FOR A WORLD-CLASS CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

5.1 Given this strategic context, the University's vision for the campus will be to deliver a world-class campus experience. It will do so through its physical and digital infrastructure by seamlessly blending modern, flexible, technology-enhanced spaces for teaching, learning, and research with community and social spaces that support the full range of services and facilities that the University and its wider community can benefit from.

5.2 An open and outward facing institution is envisaged that attracts visitors and scholars by interacting with the world through its academic output and its community and cultural engagement. From the historic core in Old Aberdeen, to pioneering medical research facilities at Foresterhill, and the natural tranquillity of Hillhead’s leafy surroundings, our campus will emphasise people, place-making and wayfinding. It will seek to prioritise pedestrians and will provide an environment to be enjoyed by all. It will be characterised by high quality green and open space, picturesque quads and public plazas, interlinked by improved formal routes as well as the many informal paths and lanes that lace through our network of historic, modernised and new build facilities.

6. STRATEGIC THEMES FOR CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

6.1 This vision for the campus is underpinned by seven key themes. These themes are international benchmarks that are seen as the foundations of a world-class campus environment. While they will not apply equally across the entire campus, they will collectively frame our thinking:

I. **High Quality Teaching, Learning & Research Space**: the provision of high quality spaces for teaching, learning and research will facilitate growth and, through the integration of digital technologies, encourage new pedagogic approaches, promote different ways of working, and support innovative research. This includes major transformational projects like the new Science Teaching Hub, but also includes the widespread use of evolutionary or adaptive projects geared towards re-configuring and re-purposing existing spaces. The ability to transmit the on-campus experience to online and transnational students through the use of e.g. lecture capture and live streaming technologies, will ensure the campus experience is available to all students.

II. **Integration of Digital Technologies**: the provision of a technology-rich, digitally-enhanced campus environment is fundamental to the delivery of a world class staff and student experience. The integration of digital technology is key to connecting campuses and people, and will be at the heart of all future campus development plans. Ubiquitous high-speed wireless connectivity, digital wayfinding, and technology enhanced rooms that support both public and academic uses will help bring the campus seamlessly together. Full details of our digital ambitions are articulated in the University's Digital Transformation strategy, with examples of specific enhancements given in the zonal analysis below.

III. **High Quality Public Realm**: will put place-making and the creation of a vibrant, cohesive and fully integrated campus at the heart of the envisaged campus experience. This will be achieved through the enhancement and development of attractive, high-quality outdoor space, green zones and quads that support social and outdoor activities and learning. In addition, revitalisation of the campus edges, with improved identity and visitor-friendly entrances, will redefine and enhance the interface between the University and surrounding communities, making it more porous and welcoming. Improved public-facing spaces will bring the campus to life, with facilities that support our rich public engagement programme. Digital signage and electronic advertising will further enhance the visitor experience.

IV. **Pedestrian Prioritisation and Wayfinding**: pedestrian movement and the creation of pedestrian-priority zones and improved wayfinding are critical elements of the University’s vision for campus. The development of seamless pathways that bind together high-quality open spaces and the University’s network of buildings are an integral part of the campus experience.
V. **A Sustainable Campus**: social, economic and environmental stewardship are key considerations in all that we do on campus. Every campus development, whether new build or refurbishment, will emphasise energy efficiency and positive environmental performance and will contribute to the delivery of our institutional carbon management plan.

VI. **Heritage and Innovation**: our ancient Old Aberdeen campus embodies the identity and collective memory of the University. Heritage is expressed both physically in the architecture, and through our academic reputation and traditions. This historic core exemplifies our heritage, attracts visitors, and is central to the institutional sense of place. It also plays a crucial role in supporting the University's global brand and reputation. Simultaneously the campus will continue to embrace architectural innovation and the development of state-of-the-art research and teaching facilities. From pioneering medical research and teaching facilities through to student accommodation that supports an exemplary student experience, future developments will ensure that an appropriate balance between heritage and innovation is maintained.

VII. **University as Part of the City**: bringing together the prevailing trends in urban design, this theme has at its core an ethos to enliven the campus, by creating an open, productive and harmonious relationship with the surrounding community. It places emphasis on the University as a key part of its surroundings and, in the context of Aberdeen, links the explicit economic and intrinsic cultural value of the institution to the city and region.

6.2 In line with these themes, all developments will be taken forward in accordance with the University's Framework Area Design Guidelines. These set out three strategic objectives that should inform consideration of all future plans: (1) to build from the historic core; (2) to create direct links from the historic core into the adjacent development areas and to extend connectivity to the campus edge; and (3) to influence the character of the edge.

6.3 In parallel, the guidelines identify six principles or qualities which should be inherent in the creation and design of all successful spaces. They should be: distinctive; safe and pleasant; easy to move around; welcoming; adaptable; and resource efficient. These qualities are at the heart of our campus vision and will underpin all development including enhancement of the public realm. They will also help to ensure that a cohesive, consistent and measured approach is taken over time.

7. **CAMPUS ASSESSMENT: ZONAL ANALYSIS**

7.1 Building on work undertaken in developing the King’s Campus Framework Plan and the Foresterhill Development Framework, the opportunities and challenges presented by the campus are articulated in a series of separate but linked documents that cover distinct geographic zones. These zones lend themselves to discrete analysis and are as follows:

- Part A. King’s College
- Part B. Foresterhill
- Part C. Hillhead Student Village & Hillhead Centre

7.2 This analysis is presented for discussion at Court.

8. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

8.1 Further information is available from Angus Donaldson (Director of Estates) and Professor Sir Ian Diamond (Principal).
ZONAL ANALYSIS

PART A: KING’S COLLEGE

In Old Aberdeen four coherent zones containing the various academic and administrative buildings cluster around a central ‘spine’ formed by the High Street. This spine is considered alongside the wider ‘public realm’ and takes account of the numerous lanes and walk-ways that criss-cross Old Aberdeen and the interlinked open and green spaces available to the public.

Summary analysis of the four ‘academic’ zones and the public realm are included below. Indicative imagery highlighting the types of campus intervention possible, supplemented with examples of previous projects, is enclosed at Appendix A. A map indicating the extent of the four zones is included at Appendix B.

A1 South East: Historic Core

What / Where. Bounded by Regent Walk and College Bounds, this area includes the historic heart of the University at King’s College, as well as King’s Pavilion, New King’s, and Butchart. It is the part of campus that Aberdonians and visitors most closely associate with the University.

Challenges. This zone includes a number of historic buildings that are difficult to repurpose. It also includes a number of facilities currently without a formal purpose (i.e. Butchart and King’s Pavilion); areas that are being used inefficiently (e.g. the ‘Stack’ and former Special Collections); facilities that require substantial modernisation (e.g. teaching facilities in New King’s and the south of King’s Quad); and public facing facilities in need of modernisation and enhanced utilisation (e.g. James Mackay Hall and King’s College Conference Centre).

Opportunities. This historic part of campus offers considerable scope to enhance the academic, cultural, community and student experience on campus. Core projects will include new front-line roles for the Butchart and King’s Pavilion. The latter’s adjacency to revitalised conferencing and public facing facilities in KCCC would enhance this zone’s support for public outreach. The reinstatement of front-line academic activity into King’s College (either as the home for a relocated academic discipline and/or as modernised teaching space) will benefit the area further.

With existing teaching facilities and academic accommodation in King’s College to be systematically upgraded, there is a clear opportunity to bring a renewed vibrancy to this part of campus. In all cases digital enhancement will be the norm, with such intervention taken further in the transformation of New King’s into premium teaching space for executive post-graduate study. These facilities will dramatically enhance the experience of those undertaking such programmes and will open up possibilities for collaborative programmes of the kind being developed with Curtin. Enhancing the internal quad and providing a welcoming external ‘entrance’ on the east of the Old Senate Rooms offers further scope for value-added intervention.

Place. The sense of place and wayfinding will be improved by opening a pedestrian corridor from Butchart past King’s Pavilion and the Old Senate Rooms and through to a potentially pedestrianised Regent Walk. This simple intervention will improve campus inter-connectivity, while enhancing the sense of the area as a vibrant, public-facing, and welcoming destination.

A2 South West: College Gardens

What / Where. Bounded by Meston Walk and College Bounds, this zone includes all of the Crombie & Johnstone facilities and a range of stand-alone buildings, some of considerable age and character (e.g. the Old Nursery, Powis Gate, 53 College Bounds and Humanity Manse).

Challenges. Among the priorities for this zone is the need to identify appropriate front-line academic uses for buildings currently lying dormant or under-utilised (e.g. the old Nursery and 53 College Bounds). With its status as an A-listed building, Crombie presents a considerable conversion challenge in an era where its long-term use as an accommodation block is under review. Johnstone (and its refectory) offer little scope in their current form, but retain some interim utility as decant venues until demolition can free this corner of campus for development.
**Opportunities.** With a tree-lined perimeter to the south-west, this zone provides significant potential for redevelopment. There is an exciting opportunity to create a tranquil campus-within-a-campus on the current Johnstone footprint, with one possibility being the development of a purpose-built Business School on a potentially accreditation friendly site. Meanwhile Crombie, despite limitations imposed by its status, could lend itself to conversion as a post-graduate study block. A long-awaited relocation of History to more appropriate accommodation (possibly as part of a co-location alongside its cognate disciplines in King’s) would be among the key outcomes of this zone. This would free up the Crombie Annex as a development site or as further post-graduate study space. The stand-alone historic buildings in this area lend themselves to conversion as disciplinary hubs, with the adjacency of these buildings offering scope to ‘cluster’ related disciplines. This could allow individual disciplinary identities within a School to flourish while providing a coherence to several stand-alone buildings. Alternatively these could provide function specific venues e.g. for research institutes, a staff club, or (as with the current use of Powis Gate) stand-alone administrative roles.

**Place.** The principal amenity improvement in this area would be the enhancement of Meston Walk as a key east-west thoroughfare at the southern end of campus. Improved street lighting, signage and paving would improve safety and establish a more formal link between the historic core and facilities at the Library and Hub. Improved lighting and the creation of a pedestrian priority zone beyond the Powis Gate arch would further contribute to amenity improvement.

**A3 North West: Science Quarter**

**What/Where.** Bounded by Bedford Road and Meston Walk, this zone extends north from Meston to include the University’s Physical Science teaching spaces, the Sir Duncan Rice Library, and the Hub. Across St Machar Drive it incorporates Cruickshank, 23 St Machar Drive and Zoology. This zone also includes the site earmarked for the new Science Teaching Hub.

**Challenges.** The poor condition of much of the University’s science teaching estate has been acknowledged and is being addressed in part through the new build project. The principal challenge thereafter will be how best to maintain sufficient quality laboratory space to support research and teaching, while also rationalising the University’s science estate. To that end replacing or relocating facilities in Meston and St Mary’s are acknowledged as priorities.

**Opportunities.** The new Science Teaching Hub represents the main short-term intervention in this zone, with scope for an adjacent sister building. Allowing for the development of state-of-the-art, digitally enabled science teaching accommodation, this building also provides an opportunity to develop public-facing digital infrastructure in the form of outward facing electronic signage (on St Machar Drive). Rationalisation of facilities at Meston, 23 St Machar Drive and St Mary’s, with consolidation of some functions in Zoology will follow. Improved visibility of the Cruickshank Botanic Gardens is also envisaged, with this well-loved but under-utilised campus gem to be more fully showcased. The main development opportunity is around Meston which requires full (or major) redevelopment. The site has a number of potential uses – including as new research laboratories, teaching rooms and/or office space. As a prime site at the heart of campus it is essential that any project facilitates the eventual replacement of capacity elsewhere on campus. While façade retention to the front is an option, full redevelopment may offer scope for a highly ambitious multi-phase re-development of this site and would also support adjacent public realm improvements to the east.

**Place.** This zone showcases previous public realm development in the form of the academic plaza outside the Sir Duncan Rice Library (SDRL). The sense of ‘place’ will be further enhanced with an improved campus entrance from Bedford Road, enhanced signage at the St Machar Drive junction, and further improvements to all site entrances on St Machar Drive. In terms of wayfinding, the new Science Teaching building will be oriented to articulate with the SDRL. Long-term improvements to Elphinstone Road will be possible as part of any future Meston redevelopment but in the meantime considerable amenity improvement is possible through enhanced landscaping, signage and lighting to improve wayfinding from the historic core at King’s via Elphinstone Road (Meston) to SDRL, the Hub and beyond.
**A4  North East: Regent Zone**

**What/Where.** This zone, bounded by St Machar Drive and King Street, includes several major office buildings that accommodate numerous academic disciplines and much of the University’s administrative activity. Architecturally it consists of once ‘modern’ but now ageing facilities built during the expansion of the 60s/70s e.g. Taylor, William Guild, Edward Wright and MacRobert.

**Challenges.** This zone is home to a number of buildings of little architectural note but which have workhorse roles. Refurbishment, such as that currently underway in the William Guild building, will extend the useful life of facilities but in due course more radical transformation will be necessary in most. With limits to the external interventions possible (beyond over-cladding), buildings such as Taylor, Edward Wright, Regent, William Guild and University Office will rely on internal modernisation to enhance the campus experience. Improvement in the campus experience is also possible through improved space management, clearer delineation between functions, and enhanced identity where administrative and academic functions are required to share a building (e.g. Edward Wright). The principal academic change in the medium-term is the envisaged relocation of the Business School, while the impending need to demolish the Edward Wright Annex and find alternate accommodation for its occupants is a pressing issue.

**Opportunities.** In the longer term many of these buildings will require more radical intervention. In the meantime, internal reconfiguration and well considered external accretions can breathe life and vitality back into these facilities. Plans are being drawn up for a revitalised Law School in Taylor, with a revamped Law Library optimised as a digital learning hub. Less extensive internal works will enhance William Guild and will, in due course, benefit Regent, Edward Wright and University Office. In the meantime the EWB Annex has reached the end of its useful life and will need to be removed, offering opportunity for a more ambitious development of the site in the longer term. While MacRobert requires no immediate intervention, the low lying buildings to the rear and the area currently designated a ‘wildflower meadow’ to the east provide scope for a mix of new development and enhanced landscaping. The main elevation facing King Street offers further scope for electronic billboards showcasing the University and its events programme.

**Place.** The potential pedestrianisation of Regent Walk and closure of Dunbar Street to through traffic would provide an opportunity to create new public realm space around Taylor and New King’s as well as seamlessly linking the proposed King’s ‘corridor’ (to Butchart). The establishment of new public space outside Taylor would be enhanced through the establishment of the arches as a central information point and entry into the new Law facilities. Digital signage and public information in this area will improve the campus experience for visitors, students and staff alike. Additional access into the Law School through the Scott Brown quad will improve the identity of the Law School further and enhance the sense of this area as a tranquil gathering place. In the longer-term, redevelopment of this zone will allow for improvements in the warren of lanes between the existing 1960s buildings, further improving campus navigation. In the meantime consistent landscaping and paths through the public areas will lift this area. Better use of the ‘green’ space to the east of MacRobert can serve to further soften the campus edge, welcoming visitors rather than presenting a closed face.

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**A5  Public Realm: High Street to the Campus Edge**

**What/Where.** The High Street is the main thorough-fare in Old Aberdeen and sees a number of smaller University buildings interwoven with private properties and local businesses. Key institutional buildings include the Old Town House, Chaplaincy and Confucius Institute, as well as several minor facilities on the High Street. A series of properties linked to other zones also back onto the High Street (e.g. Taylor E, New King’s, and St Mary’s).

**Challenges.** The High Street is home to an eclectic mix of academic buildings, private residences and local businesses. With narrow lanes that meander east and west, this area is an integral part of the historic charm of Old Aberdeen. However, the impact of modern life is increasingly evident, from the congestion caused by cars, delivery traffic and buses, to the proliferation of waste bins. The lanes can be narrow and dark as well as presenting accessibility issues. Improvements would enhance the experience of this area for staff and students, but also for residents and visitors. Among the main challenge in this zone will be in securing support for more innovative solutions, notably any restriction on vehicular movement.
**Opportunities.** The most dramatic intervention would be to, with community support, establish the High Street as a pedestrian priority zone. The principal building project in this area is likely to be the transformation of the Chaplaincy into an Inter-Faith Centre. Consideration will be required as to whether the Old Town House remains the optimal venue in which to showcase the University’s collections (with previous consideration given to the possibility of using St Mary’s as a museum venue). The mothballed properties at 90 and 110 High Street offer potential for small scale developments, while ensuring that all its property along the High Street is well presented, will reinforce the importance of the High Street to the University’s sense of place.

In addition to material improvement of buildings and public amenity spaces, how people experience and navigate Old Aberdeen will be transformed as part of the digital enhancement of the campus envisaged in our Digital Strategy. From wayfinding (e.g. through electronic signage and apps), enhanced promotion of the University and its events (e.g. through outward facing digital media on building façades such as at the new Science Teaching Hub, the Hub, and MacRobert), through to the provision of a robust, campus-wide, and publicly accessible Wi-Fi network that supports these technologies, digital infrastructure will go hand-in-hand with physical improvement and user experience. Enabling works that support this digital transformation will form part of all projects, supporting delivery of envisaged performance and ensuring campus-wide resilience.

**Place.** Improved wayfinding across campus is critical. The series of narrow lanes at the heart of the campus are hampered by poor lighting, poor under-foot conditions, fly-posting, and the prevalence of waste bins. Investment in improved paving, better lighting, enhanced signage and aesthetic improvements will make transiting campus more user-friendly. One key project would see the route from Taylor (between New King’s and the Old Brewery) over the High Street to a redeveloped Meston, established as the main east-west route on campus. Enhancing the University’s public spaces, quads and tranquil green spaces with improved seating, consistent planting, and attention to aesthetic detail will ensure that this network of spaces supports the wider sense of campus health and wellbeing. A stronger campus identity at all entrance points, welcoming visitors in from the edge to the heart of the campus, also forms part of the vision.
Academic Plaza, Sir Duncan Rice Library

Public Realm. Transformation of the public realm (before / after).

Proposed Science Teaching Hub

Paths and Wayfinding. Pedestrian walkway linking new Science Teaching Hub to SDRL and Academic Plaza.

Scott Brown Quadrangle

Green Spaces and Quads. Previously a single slab footpath through a rough green area. Transformed into an open and attractive social space.

Narrow Lanes

East-West Navigation. Considerable scope to enhance cross-campus connectivity.
Butchart

Asset Utilisation. Identify a suitable front-line use for Butchart

Taylor Arches

Pedestrian Zones and Public Realm: proposed closure of Dunbar Street to be closed to through traffic.

King's Corridor

Improved Connectivity. Opportunity to create new pedestrian corridor by connecting University Road (Butchart) to a pedestrianised Regent Walk.

Pedestrian Friendly Campus

Pedestrian Priority. Potential to transform Regent Walk.
ZONAL ANALYSIS

PART B: FORESTERHILL

Our vision for Foresterhill, shared with NHS Grampian, envisages the continued long-term regeneration of the campus with a view to the further integration of healthcare, education and research facilities. This process will consolidate and improve Aberdeen’s international reputation for clinical teaching and research, and will in turn support the recruitment and retention of both students and the high quality clinical and teaching staff upon which our teaching, research and clinical reputation is built.

The challenges presented at Foresterhill are different to those in Old Aberdeen, not least because the site is shared with NHS Grampian and features a mix of University, NHS and collaborative facilities. While extensive investment in recent years has seen the University bring online a series of exemplary new facilities, older facilities and shared site use do present their own challenges and opportunities. For the purposes of this exercise, these are considered on a site-wide basis.

What/Where. A 56 hectare medical campus shared with NHS Grampian, this site is home to the University’s medical education, medical research, and life science innovation facilities. University owned or operated buildings are located in three main clusters to the north, north-west, and east of the site (see map at Appendix A). Most of our medical teaching and research facilities are accessed via Ashgrove Road West, while two further entrances on Cornhill Road provide access to the Dental School and Polwarth.

Challenges. Across the Foresterhill site, incremental development by both the NHS and University has, over many years, embedded a number of issues in terms of site navigation, building orientation, and vehicular and pedestrian circulation. The Foresterhill Development Framework, produced jointly by NHS Grampian and the University, seeks to tackle these by setting out a vision for a revised clinical core, with a circulation and parking plan that aims to address the worst of these issues. The Framework also provides a shared vision of how future development of the site should be undertaken. Alongside agreements that govern the use and share of the site, there are clear parameters defining the scale and type of development possible in the future.

Strategic investment over the past 10 years has, however, transformed the University’s facilities. Many are now of a very high standard e.g. Rowett, Suttie Centre, Institute of Medical Science (IMS), Life Science Innovation (LSI), and the Dental School. Older facilities do, however, require modernisation (e.g. Polwarth), while others would benefit from more dramatic intervention or redevelopment (e.g. Bio Medical Physics). Many of the teaching rooms in our older buildings will require investment to bring them up to a standard consistent with that experienced in more modern facilities across campus. This will include the need to embrace and embed the distributed digital infrastructure that is envisaged in the University’s digital strategy. In order to improve the student experience, the Medical Library has also been singled out as requiring substantial modernisation.

Opportunities. While scope for major development of University facilities at Foresterhill is now limited, there are some possibilities for medium and longer term replacement or new build projects. The area to the south of the LSI building has previously been identified as a possible site for a second LSI unit, but could equally serve any medical research or teaching role. The relocation of the Maternity Hospital will free up a prime development site in an area currently zoned for use by the University. At the western end of Foresterhill, a University site has been earmarked for development by Opportunity North East (ONE) as a life sciences centre; this project that will be taken forward as part of the City Deal.

Among the University’s existing building stock there is scope for the re-development or replacement of the Bio Medical Physics building, while the west wing of Polwarth offers scope for a substantial development to replace its mix of poor quality office and outdated teaching space. In both cases, better use of the available space, including more intensive use and improved orientation with adjacent buildings, is possible. While our newest buildings require limited intervention, older facilities (e.g. Polwarth) will require substantial internal refurbishment. A key priority in this regard will be to bring teaching accommodation and the medical library up to a consistent, high-standard. Across all facilities, Foresterhill will benefit from improvements in institution-wide digital infrastructure. Through our plans for a digitally enabled campus, new ways of conducting teaching and research, improved student engagement, and the further facilitation of international linkages will all be integrated. One initial project in this field has seen Foresterhill’s Medi-Chi Hall re-developed as one of the University’s exemplar Digitally Enhanced Learning Spaces (DELS).
Alongside our own institutional projects, the NHS has ambitious plans for a series of major developments in which the University will have an academic interest. These include the new Baird Family Hospital, the Anchor Centre, a Clinical Research Facility, and a Simulation Centre. These projects are at various stages of development.

**Place.** The main priority on the Foresterhill campus is to improve way-finding and circulation. While the future road layout will be closely linked to the Development Framework, pedestrian links and appropriate signage to improve navigation between University buildings is seen as a priority.

Although pedestrian transit between the University clusters is limited, there remains a need for clearer way-finding across the Foresterhill site. University owned buildings need clearer and more consistent identities, with legacy signage that uses the old corporate identity to be replaced as part of an effort to reduce the currently confusing campus presence.

Improvements to the institutional identity signage at the main entrances that service University facilities from Ashgrove Road West and Cornhill Road should be introduced to more visibly identify these as University areas. Where the University logo features on shared signage, this should conform to the University’s refreshed corporate identity and be an integral part of that signage.

Given the complexity of navigating the site, public mapping is required to improve the visitor, staff and student experience. Although there is scope for electronic mapping and apps, traditional mapping will also be needed. Such maps need to clearly indicate where building entrances are, as well as identifying inter-building transit routes. Where public mapping is provided, this should complement existing NHS maps to avoid visitor confusion. Working with the NHS to ensure a consistent approach to all directional signage will be required.

In terms of campus presence, there are a number of opportunities to improve the visibility and impact of University buildings. Prominent wall space e.g. at the front of Polwarth, provides further scope to showcase the University’s presence on a site that many primarily associate with the NHS.

While our ability independently to improve green and public spaces is more limited, the NHS has developed a comprehensive strategy that reflects the impact of such public amenity spaces on the wellbeing of staff and patients. Public realm interventions in proximity to University facilities that can complement the intentions of this NHS plan would, therefore, be beneficial. Existing examples of what is possible include the outdoor space at the entrance to the Suttie building.
FORESTERHILL MAP WITH UNIVERSITY CLUSTERS

1. Liberty Safe Work Research Centre
2. Foresterhill Health Centre
3. Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital
4. Lillian Sunnun Building
5. John Mallard Scottish PET Centre
6. Royal Aberdeen Maternity Hospital
7. Dugald Baird Centre
8. Dental School
9. Life Science Innovation
10. Bio Medical Physics
11. Polworth Building
12. Institute of Medical Science
13. Health Sciences Building
14. Nuttall Centre for Teaching and Learning in Healthcare
15. Muslim Prayer Room
16. Howard Building
17. Regulated Parking

Page 3 of 3
ZONAL ANALYSIS

PART C: HILLHEAD STUDENT VILLAGE & HILLHEAD CENTRE

The University's extensive student village at Hillhead is an integral part of the campus experience for large numbers of our home and international students.

Following extensive investment in our residential accommodation and shared facilities, the remaining challenges and opportunities presented by Hillhead are assessed below.

What/Where. Hillhead is the University's main student accommodation hub and home to over 2500 students. Located north of the King's College Campus, a tranquil setting is provided by the natural boundaries of the River Don to the north and west, and Seaton Park to the south. The picturesque Brig o’ Balgownie only a short walk to the east. The site is accessed on foot from Kings College via Don Street or Seaton Park and by road along Don Street via King Street.

Challenges. Hillhead has benefited from significant investment in recent years, with a major programme of new-build and refurbishment projects undertaken to modernise the student accommodation and adjacent amenities. Ensuring that our accommodation remains of a competitive quality over-time will require continuing investment and efforts to gauge and meet student demand, adapting what is on offer to meet evolving student expectations, and monitoring moves in the private rental market. Critical to any commitment to an exemplary residential experience, will be the need to ensure that all facilities are equipped to take advantage of the major digital infrastructure developments envisaged elsewhere on campus. Robust connectivity to networks that support both study-related and personal technologies will be central to the provision of a seamless experience in which students can learn and relax.

The main infrastructure challenges include the need to identify a use for an unoccupied ex-retail unit adjacent to the Central Building, while in the longer-term there will be a need to consider upgrades to the heating network. Investment in recreational and sporting facilities that serve both the student population at Hillhead and the wider University community (at the adjacent Hillhead Centre) will be necessary.

Beyond the physical infrastructure, the main challenges at Hillhead centre on improving pedestrian accessibility to and around the village, and enhancing the public areas, most notably the numerous green spaces spread across the Hillhead site. Public areas at Hillhead include a number of large green spaces between buildings and smaller secluded quads. The site is encircled by a one-way road for vehicular access, with associated car parking bays, while pedestrians move around the site via a series of inter-linked footpaths lacing through the accommodation blocks and amenity facilities. Some of the roads and paths are in poor condition, while many of the green and open spaces could be more imaginatively utilised and better maintained.

Pedestrian access, notably through Seaton Park, presents a number of challenges. The scenic route through Seaton Park is preferred by students during the day and is the most direct route. It does, however, present security and safety challenges after dark (when using this route is actively discouraged). Access to Seaton Park from Hillhead is via a secluded wooded area behind South House that joins a formal path in the park; this too presents further safety challenges. The route encouraged by the University is along Don Street, but takes longer and could be better signposted.

Opportunities. With limited need for any major redevelopment of buildings, there is now a chance to focus on improving the amenity value of the site through public realm investment. Improving pedestrian access to and around the site is a priority, in particular by enhancing the route via Don Street with better signage, lighting and improved paving to create a clear, designated route to and from King’s College. This will improve wayfinding and increase use of this route by students. However, acknowledging that students will continue to use Seaton Park during the day, improved lighting where appropriate and moves to enhance security should be considered. Improving accessibility to the park from the area behind South House, while continuing to discourage use of this route during the hours of darkness, should be a priority.

There is considerable scope to make better use of both formal and ad hoc open and green space to encourage and facilitate communal usage. Through more innovative landscaping across the site, these green and open spaces, particularly in the main areas in front of Central Building, offer potentially attractive outdoor social space that will enhance the village’s sense of community. The possibility of creating simple landscaped terracing could, for example, provide a focal point at the centre of the village that would be ideally suited as an outdoor gathering point and informal event space. The provision of informal outdoor
seating around the various accommodation blocks will further improve the usability of these spaces as socialising spaces for residents. Across the site more generally, improved paving, re-surfaced roads, better signage, and general aesthetic improvements will enrich the village as a modern living environment and enhance the student experience.

The unoccupied retail unit adjacent to Central Building offers a development opportunity, perhaps as a flexible, multi-functional space capable of supporting a range of social, learning or commercial activities. Identifying an alternate fuse for this building is a short-to-medium term priority.

In terms of sports facilities, the current tennis court / five-a-side pitch requires upgrading, with plans to transform this into a multi-sport area for the use of Hillhead residents. The Hillhead Centre (which is home to sports facilities that serve the wider University community) is also in line for collaborative investment to introduce high-quality all-weather pitches and to extend the provision of ancillary facilities housed in the pavilion. This latter project forms part of a wider plan for the eventual rationalisation of University facilities at Balgownie and the ongoing development of our relationship with Aberdeen Sports Village in support of our institutional sports and wellbeing strategies.

**Place.** Further enhancement of the site, through the kind of outdoor interventions mentioned above, will improve the student experience and reinforce the sense of place and belonging. Improving both the accessibility and security of the south facing entry point, will help to create a more welcoming, secure and attractive entrance for residents. Along the western perimeter, there is potential to create better links to the River Don via existing footpaths and trails, embracing the spectacular natural setting and local environment. Across the entire site, improved landscaping will encourage the use of these areas by students. A series of relatively modest interventions will enliven the campus, creating a vibrant sense of place that underpins a high-quality campus and student experience for all residents.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides Court with an update on a number of matters which may be of interest to members but which might not otherwise feature on the agenda.

1.2 This paper is for information.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The paper is for information and no action is required.

3. TERRORIST ATTACKS

3.1 The recent horrific attacks in the UK and abroad are sadly a reminder of the continuing threat posed by extremism and terrorism. The University as part of its obligations as a public body under the Prevent legislation had already been working closely with Police Scotland but in light of recent events we have reviewed our security arrangements in line with advice received, in particular for major events on campus and issued guidance to staff on the need to remain vigilant.

4. GENERAL ELECTION

4.1 As I write this, we are still taking in the outcome of the election. We know it means a Conservative minority Government but there is much that remains unclear on how the political dust will settle particularly with regard to Brexit negotiations. If a Conservative administration can be sustained, it does mean current policy on tuition fees in England will continue but it could mean a change in the approach to Brexit which could be to the benefit of higher education. Time will tell.

5. HIGHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION

5.1 Just prior to the election shutdown, the Higher Education Act passed through Westminster. The Act has important implications for us most notably with the implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and the setting up of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). While in common with a number of Scottish universities we are not taking part in the TEF, it will remain critical that we are able to articulate the benefits and advantages of an Aberdeen degree given that others will use the TEF grades in publicity.

5.2 I believe UKRI will be very helpful to the UK’s research endeavour and it will be important for us to engage fully with it. I am impressed with the way that UKRI has thus far engaged with Scotland and given the current political climate, I envisage it having a very important role in ensuring that the UK is properly engaged internationally. We will also find out soon, from UKRI, the rules for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF). Regardless of the final rules, the important features will continue to be the need for all academic staff who do research to have some top class outputs and for our impact case studies to be compelling. As it is over half way through the REF cycle we are working closely with Schools to review everyone’s outputs and our preparedness for REF.

5.3 As I have reported previously to Court, the Scottish Government has been considering the future of the agencies that impact on economic development in Scotland, including the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). It seems increasingly likely that the SFC will remain independent but will be overseen by a strategic board whose role will be to ensure that all the agencies driving economic development are working together in the national interest. The Scottish Government is also working on a review of the learner journey between ages 15 and 24 and with support from colleagues in our own School of Education I have been engaging with Universities Scotland to input to this work which could have significant implications for higher education funding.
6. **Graduations and May Festival**

6.1 As I write this report, we look forward to our summer graduations and I am sure that as well as being occasions that our graduates will always remember fondly, I also see them as celebrations of the tremendous work that our staff do throughout the year for our students and of the University itself and the vital contribution it makes to the education and citizenship of our society.

6.2 We can only hope to have as good weather as we enjoyed for our May Festival at the end of last month. That played its part in healthy attendance, but I have no doubt the range of events on offer for all ages and interests remains why we continue to attract really strong numbers of visitors to the Festival. That is good for the reputation of the University and I think it is particularly important that our own academic staff and work feature prominently in the events on offer at the Festival.

7. **Athena Swan Awards**

7.1 I was hugely pleased that in addition to retaining our institutional Athena Swann bronze award, we succeeded in achieving a further five awards at the academic unit level. This is very good news and enormous credit must go to all those who worked so hard on the submissions. We are committed to building on these awards to ensure that equality and diversity is fully engrained in our culture.

8. **Dental School**

8.1 The Dental School has had a ‘seal of approval’ by having its sufficiency status confirmed by the General Dental Council. This is the successful outcome of eight years hard work and allows the School to move forward with its ambitious plans to develop the Bachelor of Dental Surgery programme an add to a portfolio of Postgraduate Taught programmes from next year.

9. **Student and Staff Successes**

9.1 As ever, there are more examples of the achievements of our staff than I can mention here and I encourage members to take some time to review our media summary and the news pages on our website to read more about the work that is raising the profile of the University at home and abroad. By way of example, however, I will highlight Professor Pete Smith who learned in the same week that he had won a £2 million research grant and also that he had been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society – the highest award for a scientist.

9.2 I was both privileged and humbled to be at the distribution of the money raised by our students to 34 charities, each of whom do so much for the disadvantaged members of our community. Our students raised an amazing sum of over £160,000. Even more impressive than this sum was the range of activities that they had undertaken, from cake bakes through to a 24 hour hockey match and, of course, the student show entitled Sister Echt! I know everyone will join me in thanking the committee who worked so hard, alongside their studies, to achieve all this.

9.3 Congratulations also to our students Zoey Clark, Daniel Rees and Kelsey Stewart who won gold, silver and bronze respectively at the British Universities Outdoor Athletics Championships. Zoey and Kelsey ran in the Women’s 400m while Daniel ran a personal best to take silver in the Men’s 400m. Both Zoey and Kelsey also helped Scotland finish in first place at the Loughborough International Athletics Event, and remain in the mix for Scotland’s Commonwealth team for 2018. Another student, Megan Mackay, regarded as Scotland’s top female surfer, won the Ladies title at the recent Scottish Surfing Championships, following her win at the Women’s Open final of the Nordic Surf Games in Norway, which the Scottish Surfing Federation described as ‘the highest accomplishment of any Scottish surfer ever at an international event’.

10. **Further Information**

10.1 Further information is available from the Principal, ian.diamond@abdn.ac.uk.

[6 June 2017] [V1] [Open]
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT FROM THE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This is a paper about the Students’ Association’s activities.
1.2 This paper is provided for information and discussion.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the contents of this report and discuss any points they wish.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Overview

3.1.1 The Students’ Association have had a very busy year since moving from Johnston to the Hub. We have entered discussions about space utilisation both within the Hub and further afield to maximise engagement and ensure students feel they can get involved in all we offer.

3.1.2 We continue to build on the integrity of our organisation by ensuring our processes are strong and that governance is good and sound. We now have a fully functioning set of Byelaws to complement our new Constitution which aims to ensure processes are in place for all aspects of our organisation and that they can continue to be improved upon according to and in line with effective practices.

3.1.3 The work of the Students’ Association has been difficult to promote against the backdrop of history but our Officer team has, by and large, worked incredibly hard to counter criticism and provide activities, services and opportunities for students to engage in.

3.2. Student Partnership Agreement

3.2.1 Since February 2016, I have been working on improving the relationship between AUSA and the university and one clear way to help aid this was to look to the sector-wide organisation SPARQs (Student Partnership in Quality Scotland) who work to improve processes and representation within HEIs. Other institutions have worked to their guidance on creating Agreements that look to highlight shared areas of work and goals using a formal document to outline how they can be achieved and what is expected of each partner. We are working hard to finalise the document and it should be ready by the 2nd Semester of the next Academic Year.

3.3. Student Activities

3.3.1 Our Student-led Groups are often the most rewarding activities for our students to get involved in. We have had a good year and have increased our engagement within Sports Clubs and Societies in line with our goals. We have received word that the Trampoline Club’s hard work this year definitely paid off with two of our girls winning individual medals and the four girls that were entered for the team medal placing third at the Irish Student Trampoline Open. The Club also won the ISTO Shield for their noted improvement and hard work. In other Sporting news, our Women’s Weightlifting team are off to South Africa for the World Competition where they hope to beat their amazing finish at 4th Place last year!
3.3.2 Our Societies have had a successful year, too, with our TAURacing Club will hope to retain the Bosch Eco Challenge trophy for a fifth year in a row at the FormulaStudent held annually at Silverstone. Our Dance Society (AUDS) are one of our largest and have an impressive membership. They have been successful in organising their Annual Showcase at the Aberdeen Arts Centre where over 200 students performed to a sell-out audience. Our Student Media Groups, the Gaudie, Aberdeen Student Radio and Granite City TV have all moved out of Johnston and into the AUSA Students’ Union Building. The Gaudie have successfully increased circulation.

3.4. Raising & Giving

3.4.1 In total all the fundraising initiatives from AUSA RAG raised a phenomenal £116,717.44 for the 34 local charities.

- Student Show - £92,194.15
- Bookends - £6,000
- AUSA RAG Committee fundraising activities - £10,861.34

3.4.2 Due to the amount raised being over our target of £75,000, it is the intention that charity applications that had been rejected will be reconsidered. And hopefully more selected so the remainder can be disbursed out to other worthy causes in the North East.

3.5. Representation

3.5.1 This year has seen a marked improvement in engagement within our democratic structures on previous years. We have had around a 5% increase in our Student Council Elections in April from the previous month’s elections for the Sabbatical Officers. Our committees, thanks to new Byelaws, now have distinctive positions for International Students, Postgraduate students, Mature, Part-time and LGBTQ+ students. We hope that all of these and others not listed will increase our student engagement. Our new Sabbatical Team will take over office one Monday 3rd July.

3.5.2 The Class Rep System has been improved on all sides of operation and we are very content that the move to depoliticise the process in order to focus on the Student Learning Experience has enhanced not only the reps themselves but the overall quality of feedback. That said, there is still an attitudinal change required of students and some staff to bring around the effective measures of gathering and acting on feedback to improve the student experience.

3.6. Advice & Support

3.6.1 As seen in Appendix A, Nightline has had an interesting year. The number of calls has remained slightly higher across the year than the year before and the number of calls relating to stress and anxiety has increased minimally. We had expected a sharper increase but this has not come about.

3.6.2 Our Advice Centre has been busy settling into its new home in the Students’ Union Building and have received more requests for support than usual. We have been working hard with other services across campus to give students the support they need.

3.6.3 Our famous Paws for stress occurred as normal with a sell-out crowd coming to see the dogs to aid in stress reduction. Over 1000 stress support packs were distributed in each exam season to help aid revision and reduce stress.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Liam Fuller, Acting Student President at ausaeducation@abdn.ac.uk

15 June [version1] [Open]
Nightline Semester 1 & 2 AY 2016/17 Call Breakdown

Number of Calls

- Stress / Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Academic Stress
- Family Problems
- Sexuality
- Friends / Flatmate Issues
- Rap / Sexual Abuse
- Insomnia
- Physical Health
- Suicide Attempts
- Housing
- Alcohol / Drug Abuse
- Disability
- Bereavement
- Bullying
- Housing
- Stress / Anxiety
1. **Purpose of the Paper**

1.1 This is a paper on the recommendations of the Court effectiveness review which focuses on what the respective roles of Court and the Operating Board should be. The paper has been informed by a discussion of the recommendations at Governance and Nominations Committee on 9 May, Operating Board on 8 June and with Conveners of Court Committees.

1.2 This paper is provided for discussion and approval.

2. **Recommended Action**

2.1 This paper asks the Court to **consider and agree** upon a high level articulation of its role and that of the Operating Board, subject to which a more detailed schedule of decision making authority between the two would be developed.

2.2 Subject to 2.1, it invites Court to **approve** proposed changes to the Operating Board remit at Appendix 1.

3. **Consideration by Operating Board**

3.1 Operating Board agreed Court is responsible for strategic, long-term issues, while the Operating Board should be concerned with the execution of such strategies. It was important to be clear about the areas of activity for which the Board had delegated authority to make decisions in order to progress business more quickly between meetings of Court. The Board agreed that the more streamlined format of papers might be enhanced by a third box indicating the decisions made by the Board and any subsequent actions required of Court, to avoid duplication of effort. Decision-making and action-taking should not be suspended until the next meeting of Court.

3.2 The Operating Board considered its remit and agreed to remove the reference to strategy, placing the emphasis of the Operating Board's remit upon implementation.

4. **The Roles of Court and Operating Board**

4.1 The Good Governance Institute (GGI) report on Court effectiveness included a section on Court Committees (extract attached at **Appendix 1**). This focused almost entirely, however, on the role of the Operating Board relative to the role of Court. The Governance and Nominations Committee has considered a potential draft action plan to respond to the recommendations of the GGI review but agreed that the question of what the respective roles of Court and Operating Board should be was of such fundamental overarching importance to the review as a whole that it such should be considered first.

4.2 The Operating Board was established to facilitate a reduction in the number of Court meetings. It was established, however, as much due to the Court’s decision at the time (2008) not to reduce in size and a recognition by Court that it could not as a group of 28 members be a body which discharged all its functions within four meetings a year. The Operating Board was established on the basis that the Court’s primary role was to set the strategy for the University and monitor high level performance, and for the Operating Board to monitor the implementation and delivery of that strategy at a more detailed level. The Operating Board was not, therefore, envisaged as being the “Strategy” body, which was considered to be the role of Court.
4.3 The Court’s primary role of setting the mission and strategic direction of the University is articulated in its Statement of Primary Responsibilities (attached as Appendix 1). This also details other responsibilities of the Court including approving budgets and borrowing commitments, ensuring the financial sustainability of the University, acting as the legal and employing authority, and safeguarding the reputation of the University.

4.4 The Operating Board’s current role and functions that are delegated to it by Court are set out in its remit which is attached. The Operating Board has suggested some initial amendments to that remit (see annotations in appendix 1) as a result of its discussion of the GGI report.

5. Refreshing the Roles of Court and Operating Board

5.1 Informed by discussions at Governance Committee and Operating Board, the Court is asked to consider and agree the following high level articulation of its role and, based on that, the role of the Operating Board:

- Agree that the GGI articulation of the roles of Court and Operating Board risks both being “the strategy body” leading to potential confusion and duplication of effort.
- The role of Court should be to develop and agree strategy and the Operating Board should monitor the delivery of that strategy.
- The focus of Court business needs to be more strategic and its business revised and streamlined to enable that. In turn, the Court should empower the Operating Board and the Executive to take more decisions and a clear schedule of delegation should be prepared setting out which matters are delegated to the Operating Board for decision and those which are reserved to Court.
- For this model to be effective, the Court accepts that the Operating Board can and will engage with issues on a deeper level than a Court of 25 members can do effectively, however frequently it meets. This means that members of Court on Operating Board by definition will be more closely involved with some issues than those members who are not on the Board. This is true of other committees, for example, members of Court who are on the Audit Committee will be more engaged with the business of that committee but they should be seen as the means by which all Court members assure themselves that there is independent scrutiny and challenge within the sub-committees.
- The challenges of a highly competitive, fast moving and increasingly commercial world which the GGI report describes necessitate governance that can be ‘fleet of foot’. This cannot be achieved by a Court meeting quarterly and discussions have questioned whether a Court meeting more frequently would be effective given its size. It is suggested this reinforces the need for the Operating Board, with suitable decision making authority agreed by Court, to act as a smaller sub-set of Court and meet more frequently.

5.2 If Court agrees that in broad terms this is how governance should work at Aberdeen, a more detailed articulation of the respective decision making powers of Court and Operating Board would be developed for discussion by Court at its extended meeting in October. This could then form the basis for a new articulation of the roles of Court and Operating Board to provide the clarity on how governance works in the University that the GGI review recommended.

6. Further Information

6.1 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary, c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 272094

[9 June 2017] [V1] [Open]
9. Court Committees

9.1 Currently, there are four main Court Committees: Audit; Governance and Nominations; Remuneration and Operating Board. This latter Board has a further five sub-committees reporting into it: Health & Safety Committee; Strategic Business Ventures Group; Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee; Capital Programme Management Committee and the Advisory Group on Investment.

9.2 The remit of the Operating Board is wide and it must necessarily have a keen focus on financial and sustainability matters. However, as a Committee of Court it needs to be essentially strategic in outlook. We would recommend, therefore, that careful consideration be given to those matters of business (e.g. Accidents & Incidents; Online Education Update etc.) which might be more the preserve of the Executive Team, rather than the Operating Board - the Committee’s very title suggesting a concentration on operational matters. In doing so, we recognise the importance placed on health and safety as a defining element in the governance of the University, but believe that this point has now been effectively made, and also that there have been previous decisions by Court to move away from the ‘policy and resources’ title, which is more the norm for the sector.

9.3 Court members place a great deal of weight on the scrutiny function of the Operating Board, which was introduced in part to reduce the frequency of Court meetings. From our observations, we would conclude that on balance this presents a problem to the overall governance of the University, with too much reliance being placed on the work of the Board, resulting in too little space for detailed engagement with important strategic matters by Court as a whole. The perception that extensive work has already been undertaken in the Operating Board undoubtedly reduces the level of questioning by members in Court meetings, especially by those Court members who are not also members of the Operating Board.

9.4 We would suggest that by adding a further formal Court meeting into the annual cycle, there would be a clearer delineation of what constitutes scrutiny from strategic, thereby re-balancing current arrangements. This would reflect better the pace of business and reduce the scope for potential disconnection of Court members from the business conducted in the Operating Board.

9.5 We would propose that this additional meeting would provide more space for in-depth discussion and would also allow Court to develop a collective approach to both benchmarking and performance. This would allow Court to increase its value in supporting and challenging the Executive, currently struggling with complex policy and strategic issues.

We recommend the title and remit of the Operating Board is changed to reflect a clearer strategic focus on policy and resources, and an additional Court meeting is added into the annual cycle.
UNIVERSITY COURT STATEMENT OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1 To approve the mission and strategic vision of the University, including institutional and longer-term academic and business plans, and key performance indicators, and to ensure that they meet the interests of stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, local and national communities and funding bodies.

2 To safeguard the good name and values of the University.

SUPERVISORY OBLIGATIONS

3 To delegate to the Principal, as chief executive, authority for the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the University, and to establish and monitor such management functions as shall be undertaken by and under the authority of the Principal.

4 To ensure the quality of educational provision through the review of decisions of the Senate made under its statutory powers to regulate and superintend the teaching and discipline of the University and to promote research.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES

5 To be the University’s legal authority and, as such, to ensure that systems are in place for meeting the University’s legal obligations, including those arising from contracts and other legal commitments made in the University’s name.

6 To act as trustee for any property, legacy, endowment, bequest or gift in support of the work and welfare of the University, which is not within the control of the University of Aberdeen Development Trust.

7 To ensure that the University’s constitution, as enacted in the Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions Affecting the University 1858-1990 and subsequent legislation, is followed and that appropriate advice is available to enable this to happen.

8 To be the employing authority for all staff in the University.

9 To ensure that the University behaves ethically, responsibly and with respect for the environment and for society at large.

CONTROLS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

10 To be the principal financial and business authority of the University, to ensure that proper books of account are kept, to approve the annual budget and financial statements, to ensure adherence to the funding requirements specified by the Scottish Funding Council, and to have overall responsibility for the University’s assets, property and estate and their use.

11 To ensure the establishment and monitoring of systems of control and accountability, including financial and operational controls and risk assessment and management, so as to maintain the solvency of the University and safeguard its assets.

12 To ensure that processes are in place to monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the University against approved plans and key performance indicators, which should be benchmarked against other comparable institutions, wherever possible.

13 To ensure that arrangements are in place to promote the proper management of the health, safety and security of students, staff and others affected by the University.

14 To make provision, in consultation with the Senate, for the general welfare of students.
To ensure that procedures are in place for dealing with internal grievances, conflicts of interest and public interest disclosure.

To establish processes to monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the University Court and its sub-committees and to ensure that business is conducted in as open a manner as possible, in accordance with best practice in higher education corporate governance and with the principles of public life drawn up by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

To ensure, through the appointment of co-opted lay persons, a balance of skills and experience amongst the membership of the Court to meet its primary responsibilities.

**MONITORING OF SENIOR EXECUTIVES**

To appoint the Principal as chief executive, and to put in place suitable arrangements for monitoring his/her performance.

To appoint the Secretary to the Court and to ensure that there is an appropriate separation in the lines of accountability between responsibilities to the Court and managerial responsibilities within the University.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

OPERATING BOARD
(Committee of Court)

Proposed Revisions following discussion by Operating Board 8 June 2017 are in track changes.

1. COMMITTEE TITLE

OPERATING BOARD

2. DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT

September 2008

3. CONVENER AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AREA

Convener: Court Member
Clerk: University Secretary’s Office

4. PURPOSE

To integrate academic, financial, estate and human resource planning and policy making, and advise Court and Senate on long-term strategic objectives. To monitor the operational performance of the University and advise Senate and Court on performance matters as required.

5. REMIT: (To be reviewed annually at first meeting of committee cycle)

Responsible for:

**Strategic Objectives**
- monitoring the implementation of strategies agreed by Court, including reviewing all Business Plans associated with strategic projects
- monitoring the University’s Health and Safety performance
- monitoring the effectiveness of the University’s risk management processes and reviewing the risk register biannually

**Resource Planning**
- making recommendations to Court on the University’s Annual Budgets and Financial Forecasts
- making recommendations to the Court regarding the University’s Capital Plan and its implementation
- monitoring the University’s financial performance and approving additional expenditure on approved projects within a tolerance threshold of up to the lesser of 10% or £1m
- monitoring performance of the implementation of University’s capital projects and receiving reports from the Capital Programme Monitoring Committee
- overseeing cash management, borrowing policies and compliance with banking covenants and ensuring compliance with the Financial Memorandum
- overseeing the management and performance of the University’s investments
- monitoring the performance of the University’s spin-out/joint venture companies
- overseeing the creation, dissolution or sale of University subsidiary companies

**Policy Making**
- approving University staffing and development policies and staff terms and conditions of employment
- approving the strategy for the setting of University tuition fees
**Operational Performance**
- monitoring the University’s performance across financial and HR performance, student recruitment and admissions, and all other matters necessary for strategy delivery
- overseeing institutional equality and diversity issues

6. **COMPOSITION AND QUORUM** – WITH EFFECT FROM OCTOBER 2017 IN LINE WITH CHANGES TO COURT

Convener: Court Member

Independent Members: Four independent members of the Court (including the Convener), appointed by Court on the recommendation of the Governance & Nominations Committee (independent being defined as external to, and not employed or remunerated by, the University). The Convener of the Board to be an independent member of Court and appointed by Court on the recommendation of the Governance Committee but not being the Senior Governor of Court (or Chair, should the position of the Rector as Chair be changed).

Two Senate Assessor to Court, to be agreed by the Senate Assessors on Court

The President of the Students' Association

*Ex officio:* The Principal, and one other member of the Senior Management Team

*In attendance:* University Secretary, Senior Vice-Principal (if not otherwise members).

Other Senior Administrative Officers to be in attendance as required.

Quorum: 50% of formal membership (including Convenor)

**ACCOUNT TO BE TAKEN OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP**

7. **MEMBERSHIP (NOTE: THIS IS THE CURRENT MEMBERSHIP AND DOES NOT TAKE ACCOUNT OF REVISED COMPOSITION ABOVE WHICH IS PROPOSED TO TAKE EFFECT FROM 1 OCTOBER 2017 FOLLOWING NEW COMPOSITION OF COURT)**

Convener: Mr B Pack (Court Member)

Court Members: Professor Nuala Booth  
Mr J Hall  
Ms A Minto

*Co-opted* Mr D MacFarlane

3 Senate Assessors: Professor C Black and Professor M Delibegovic (*Role Share*)  
Professor N Hutchison  
Dr N Oren

*Ex officio:* Professor I Diamond  
Professor J Kilburn  
Mrs C Inglis  
Mr L Fuller (Acting President of AUSA)

Clerk: Mrs R MacLure

8. **REPORTING LINE/PARENT COMMITTEE AND INTERFACE WITH OTHER COMMITTEES**

Formal reporting line: Court
Parent committee: Health and Safety Committee
Strategic Business Ventures Group
Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee
Capital Programme Monitoring Committee
Investment Committee
Digital Strategy Committee
Transnational Education Committee

Interface with other committees: Audit Committee

9. **FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS**

Seven meetings per session (with a further meeting in April if required)
Meetings between 10-4 in accordance with University Policy.

10. **PUBLICATION OF PAPERS**

Cognisance will be taken of the University’s Publication Scheme and Agenda papers will be made available on web pages/staffNet where possible.
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper is to provide Court with:

(1) An update on the feedback received from the Scottish Government/Privy Council on the Draft Ordinance for a revised composition of Court.

(2) A reminder of the process of transition that the Court agreed should be taken forward for implementation by 1 October and how this will affect the different categories of membership.

(3) An update on the recent decision of Senate to recommend a different approach to the transition from six to four Senate Assessor members of Court than had been proposed at the last meeting of Court.

1.2 This paper is for discussion and includes recommendations for approval with regard to two categories of current members of Court: Senate Assessors and the current appointment of the non-academic staff member on Court.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The Court is invited to **note** the progress towards a new composition of Court being implemented by 1 October 2017 pending Privy Council approval.

2.2 The Court is invited to **approve** that in the event that Privy Council approval of the new composition is not received by 30 September 2017:

(1) That of the six current Senate Assessor positions, the two positions falling vacant on 30 September will be left vacant until such time as the reduction from six to four Senate Assessors is approved by Privy Council.

(2) The appointment of the current non-academic staff member on Court is continued on an interim basis until the new categories of trade union and elected staff members can legally commence through approval by Privy Council.

(3) The Court is invited to confirm that the new categories of Trade Union and elected staff members may commence appointments as soon as practicable subject to approval of the Ordinance by Privy Council.

3. **DRAFT ORDINANCE: FEEDBACK FROM SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT**

3.1 The University has received initial feedback from Scottish Government on the proposed draft Ordinance and the preferred transitional arrangements agreed by Court. The Scottish Government noted that the University had clearly set out the rationale for the changes and that they supported the policy goals that the changes set out to achieve. While a number of technical and legal comments regarding the drafting of the Ordinance were received, the Scottish Government have at this stage only raised one substantive issue which relates to the provisions for student membership of Court. The University’s draft had specified that one of the two student members required by the Act would be the President of the Students’ Association. The Scottish Government has stated that this does not achieve compliance with the Act because while it requires there be “two persons appointed by being nominated by a students’ association of the institution from among the students of the institution” and while one of these may in practice
routinely be the President of the Students’ Association, the draft Ordinance should not fetter the discretion of the Students’ Association to nominate someone else. Following consultation with Governance and Nominations Committee on this point, the University has advised the Scottish Government it can accept this change and responded on the other matters raised. The University has made clear it wishes to formally commence the new composition from 1 October 2017 and has requested confirmation that formal approval by Privy Council can be sought at its July meeting (it does not meet in August or September).

4. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 The draft Ordinance includes provisions to enable the Court to achieve a phased transition where necessary to the new composition. The implications of that transition are summarised below but have also been represented for illustrative purposes at Appendix 1.

4.2 The following categories of member commence (or continue as the case may be) immediately on the date of Privy Council approval.

- Rector; Principal; Four Senate Assessors; Two Student Members; Twelve independent members including a minimum of four members of the General Council (as previously agreed these members will retain their current periods of appointment rather than commencing new periods of appointment).

4.3 The following categories of member commence in a phased way at a time agreed by the Court. These are:

- Two Elected Staff members; Two Trade Union nominated members. There is also provision to reflect that the next Senior Governor will be required by law to be appointed through an election. This does not impact on the current Senior Governor’s appointment.

4.4 The remaining categories of membership of Court will be removed from the current composition as follows:

- The position of Chancellor’s Assessor (the position on Court at present that is held by the Senior Governor) will be revoked on the date that a Senior Governor elected in accordance with the HE Governance Act commences office.

- The Rector’s Assessor will cease immediately on approval of the new Ordinance by Privy Council;

- The three Vice-Principal members will cease immediately on approval of the new Ordinance by Privy Council;

- The two local Council Assessor members will cease immediately on approval of the new Ordinance by Privy Council;

- The four assessors elected by the General Council will cease immediately on approval of the new Ordinance by Privy Council (but the Court has agreed the incumbents will become independent members in the new composition and retain their current period of appointment at that point);

- There will cease to be six Senate Assessors immediately on approval of the new Ordinance by Privy Council and the corresponding provision in the new Ordinance for four Senate Assessors will commence.

- The provisions for a President of the Students’ Association and eight co-opted members (including not more than one member of staff) will cease immediately on approval of the new Ordinance by Privy Council. The corresponding provisions in the new Ordinance for student members and twelve independent members will then commence.

4.5 It should be noted that until the Privy Council approves the new Ordinance, the current composition of Court remains in force. In the eventuality that no approval has been received by 30 September 2017, there will be a requirement to clarify the position of two of the six Senate Assessors falling due on 30 September 2017 and the appointment of the current non-academic member of staff. The position of Senate Assessors is considered below. With regard to the non-academic member of staff, it is proposed that the appointment of Mr Paterson which runs to 31 July 2017 is extended on an interim basis until the new categories of trade union and elected staff members can legally commence office.
5      SENATE ASSESSORS

5.1 The Court previously accepted a proposal from Senate Assessors for an approach to the transition from six to four senate assessors (1 from the Business School and 1 from each of the three Colleges) be facilitated by means that avoided holding new elections. This was submitted to Senate for consideration at its meetings on 24 April and 7 June. The Senate agreed, however, that as the University was to remove the remaining College structure to move fully to an academic governance structure based around twelve Schools, the transitional approach for the Senate Assessors no longer remained appropriate. The Senate has recommended an alternative approach for new elections which is reported separately on today’s agenda. It proposes elections to the four positions be held over the summer (existing Assessors are eligible to stand for election). In the eventuality that Privy Council approval has not been received by 30 September, there would in theory continue to be positions for six Senate Assessors on Court. It is proposed, however, that given that two of the Assessor’s terms of office were due to conclude on 30 September 2017, and that the incumbents of these positions do not intend to seek re-election, that no elections to those two positions are held. This in effect means the Court operates on the new basis of four Senate Assessors and if there is a delay in Privy Council approval being received, there would be two unfilled vacancies until the new composition is approved. This is likely to be one meeting of Court at most.

6.     RULES FOR NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF NEW CATEGORIES OF MEMBER

6.1 Rules for the nomination and/or election of Trade Union, Staff and Student Members have been considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee and are enclosed separately as part of the Committee’s report on today’s agenda for approval.

6.2 The Court is invited to confirm that the new categories of Trade Union and elected staff members may commence appointments as soon as practicable subject to approval of the Ordinance by Privy Council.

7.     FURTHER INFORMATION

7.1 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary, c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 272094

[9 June 2017] [V1] [Open]
## Appendix 1

### Current Court Membership: Transition and Impact of New Ordinance as at date passed by Privy Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Membership</th>
<th>Position as at Date new Ordinance Approved by Privy Council</th>
<th>Comments on Transitional Arrangements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rector</td>
<td>Continues - no change</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Continues - no change</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor Nominated by the Chancellor (position on Court currently held by Senior Governor)</td>
<td>No immediate change but position of Chancellor’s Assessor will be removed under phased transition.</td>
<td>The position of Chancellor’s Assessor will continue until the date that a new Senior Governor is elected (which must be no later than Dec 2020).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor nominated by Rector</td>
<td>Ceases immediately to be member of Court</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Vice-Principals</td>
<td>Cease immediately to be members of Court</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Local Council Assessors</td>
<td>Cease immediately to be members of Court</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Elected General Council Assessors</td>
<td>Cease immediately to be General Council Assessors on Court.</td>
<td>The four incumbents transition immediately to appointments as Independent Members but retaining current periods of appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Senate Assessors</td>
<td>Cease immediately to be six positions and immediately reduces to four assessors.</td>
<td>No transitional arrangement – elections for the four positions to be held with a view to commencing as of 1 October 2017.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the Students’ Association</td>
<td>Ceases immediately to be a position specific to the office of President.</td>
<td>It is expected that the President will transition immediately to being one of the two student members in the new composition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight co-opted members, not more than one of whom may be a member of staff.</td>
<td>Ceases immediately.</td>
<td>The seven independent members transition immediately to the twelve available positions for independents (one member, Mr Pack, is retiring from Court at 31 July 2017). There will cease to be a position through this route for a member of staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
appointed by Court. The current non-academic staff member of Court will therefore cease to be a member of Court on the date the Ordinance is passed and new categories of staff members will commence.

### New Composition as at 1 October 2017 with Transitional Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position in New Composition</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Comments on Transitional Arrangements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rector</td>
<td>Ms Chapman</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor’s Assessor, then moves to “Senior Governor” at date of next election/appointment.</td>
<td>Mr M Gilbert</td>
<td>As per comments in table above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two elected members of staff (one academic and one non-academic)</td>
<td>New members: To be elected</td>
<td>Can be immediate but there is flexibility to allow the Court to determine the date this category commences as members but this cannot be before the new Ordinance is approved by Privy Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Trade Union nominated members (one academic staff member and one non-academic staff member)</td>
<td>New members: To be nominated</td>
<td>Can be immediate but there is flexibility to allow the Court to determine the date this category commences as members but this cannot be before the new Ordinance is approved by Privy Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Senate Assessors</td>
<td>New Elections to be held</td>
<td>Immediate transition if Ordinance has been approved by Privy Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two persons nominated by the Students’ Association from among the students of the institution.</td>
<td>Members to be nominated by AUSA but expected to include President of AUSA.</td>
<td>Immediate transition if Ordinance has been approved by Privy Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve independent members appointed by the Court at least four of whom shall be members of the General Council</td>
<td>Professor Booth, Mr Duncan, Mr Hall, Mr MacFarlane, Mrs McPhail, Ms Minto, Mr Percival, Mrs Sherriffs, Mr Steyn, Mr Murray to 31.10.17, Vacancy from 1.11.17, Vacancy, Vacancy</td>
<td>As per comments in table above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

REMNUNERATION COMMITTEE

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides a progress update in relation to this year’s Senior Staff Pay Policy, including details of the proposals for consideration at the Remuneration Committee meeting on 26 June 2017. An oral update on the outcomes of the Remuneration Committee will be provided to Court.

1.2 This paper is provided for information.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the content of the paper.

3. NATIONAL PAY NEGOTIATIONS 2017/18

3.1 The 2017 Pay Negotiations are ongoing between UCEA and the Trade Unions. A final offer of 1.7% has been made by UCEA. It is expected that all trade unions will consult their members on the final offer.

3.2 The overall impact of a 1.7% pay award is £1.46m. The overall cost of applying automatic increments and the proposed 1.7% pay offer is £3.16m. Due to their continued eligibility for an automatic increment 42% of support staff, grades 1 – 4, 49% of academic staff and 47% of administrative/professional services staff will all receive a total uplift of 3.9%. All other individuals will receive any agreed national pay award. Those individuals that only receive the agreed pay award will already be at the maximum point of the scale or will be on an off-scale point.

4. 2017 SENIOR STAFF PAY POLICY

4.1 At the meeting of the Court on 28 March 2017 the Senior Staff Pay Policy 2017 was approved. The Policy confirmed that a fund of £100k would be established to recognised and reward senior staff.

4.2 The Policy also confirmed that the following principles should be taken into account when considering nominations and/or applications for salary uplifts for individuals at Grade 9 level:

- Exceptional performance/contribution
- Equal pay considerations

4.3 As a result the Senior Vice Principal, Heads of Colleges and the Secretary to the University wrote to their senior staff seeking self-nominations as part of this year’s Remuneration Committee exercise. Thereafter, and in keeping with practice in recent years, the salary levels of all Professorial staff below the level of Vice Principal were collated and issued to Heads of College for review in April 2017. Heads of College were provided with comparative salary information from the sector based on individual academic disciplines, size of institution and management responsibilities where appropriate. The Principal and Senior Vice Principal have sought justification from the Heads of College for their recommendations.
4.4 The Principal and Senior Vice Principal reviewed the performance and contribution of all Vice Principals (including the Heads of Colleges) and the Principal reviewed the contribution of the Senior Vice Principal and the Secretary.

4.5 The Principal and Senior Vice Principal reviewed, with the Heads of Colleges, the recommendations from each College. The Principal and University Secretary also reviewed the recommendations from the Professional Services.

4.6 Following the Principal’s appraisal, the Convener of the Remuneration Committee will provide a recommendation in relation to the Principal’s remuneration package at the Remuneration Committee.

5. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND COST IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The following is a summary of the cases being recommended for consideration at the meeting of the Remuneration Committee on 26 June 2017. As previously indicated, these cases have been reviewed against the agreed criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>CLSM</th>
<th>CASS</th>
<th>COPS</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Professional Services</th>
<th>SMT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost</td>
<td>£31,000</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£27,000</td>
<td>£4,000</td>
<td>£9,000</td>
<td>£5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 The overall cost of the recommended awards is £88,000 (including salary on-costs is £115,720).

6. GENDER PAY GAP

6.1 The Remuneration Committee continues to monitor the gender pay gap for Professorial (Grade 9) staff. As such, an analysis of the impact of the proposed recommendations has been undertaken. Table 1 below demonstrates that the proposed awards has no significant detrimental impact on the gender pay gap. In addition, the Remuneration Committee continue to monitor decisions taken at key stages in employment including recruitment and promotion processes. The Remuneration Committee received detailed information on this matter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Feb-17 with Uplifts</th>
<th>Feb-17</th>
<th>Dec-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median Female Salary</td>
<td>Median Male Salary</td>
<td>Median Pay Gap(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 Yrs</td>
<td>£69,480</td>
<td>£66,726</td>
<td>-4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 Yrs</td>
<td>£73,094</td>
<td>£76,062</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 yrs and above</td>
<td>£83,153</td>
<td>£89,849</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>£72,750</td>
<td>£78,733</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information is available from Mrs Debbie Dyker, Director of Human Resources, d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk; tel 01224 273732.

[12 June 2017] [version 1] [Open]
1. **Purpose of the Paper**

1.1 The purpose of the paper is to provide an update on accidents and incidents in the University since the last report to the Court. The paper also informs the Court of some of the key activities aimed at sustaining and improving the Health, Safety and Wellbeing culture of the University.

2. **Recommended Action**

2.1 The University Court is recommended to note the information contained in this paper and seek clarification of any aspects covered, as appropriate.

3. **Consideration by Operating Board**

3.1 At each of its meetings in May and June, the Board received and noted an Update on Accidents and Incidents. The Board approved the actions taken to address issues raised.

4. **Update on Accidents and Incidents**

4.1 There have been the following incidents in the University since the last report:

- A cleaner found a black bag labelled as ‘Danger Chemical Waste’ in a Lab in Meston.
- A cleaner reportedly found chemical waste bottles in black bin bag in a Lab in Meston.
- A cleaner found gloves and pipettes in a black bag in Meston. Such items should be deposited in orange bags for contaminated waste.
- An Assistant Stores Person, working for Campus Services was injured when the lift door closed on her and she suffered a fractured rib.
- A piece of wood fell from scaffolding where contractors were working on a roof and narrowly missed persons below.
- A student suffered depression and anxiety during an overseas field trip and was at risk of self-harming and suicidal.
- A student suffered a burn injury to his hand in a lab experiment.

4.2 Laboratory controls were improved along with the change in the cleaning procedure and waste removal at Meston. In addition, a Policy specifying responsibilities and procedures to follow for the cleaning of laboratories and waste disposal has been drafted for consultation. Immediate action was taken in response to the lift incident but no fault was found. The contractor responsible for the piece of wood incident dismissed the site manager and remedial actions were taken to ensure that the site was safe and operated safely. In response to the field trip incident, colleagues responsible for planning and leading field trips will be offered Mental Health First Aid Training as well as complete information on support available. The procedure relating to the experiment being carried out by the student that resulted in the burn injury has been revised.

5. **Key Activities**

5.1 The following is a summary of the key activities:
• The online Health and Safety training has now been rolled to staff in Schools and feedback has been good. Further “Managing Safely” Courses have been held for supervisors and managers.
• Safety tours by members of the senior management team are continuing and getting a good level of response and engagement in Health, Safety and Wellbeing matters.
• The University Health and Safety Committee met in May and discussed amongst other issues matters of health and new policies.
• The University responded to the Health and Safety Executive Specialist Inspector following his visit in February to IMS and his subsequent letter. The recommendations from the Inspector in relation to the work in Category 3 and Category 2 laboratories were implemented to the satisfaction of the Inspector.
• A Health and Wellbeing Day for staff took place at Foresterhill in the Suttie Centre.
• The Project Group reviewing the arrangements in place for the safety and security of staff while traveling has reviewed the current arrangements in place, tools and services available from providers and ways of simplifying the procedures.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

6.1 Further information is available from Naveed Qamar, Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing (01224 272783, naveed.qamar@abdn.ac.uk).

7 June 2017 Version 2 FOI Status: Open
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
BUSINESS FOR STRATEGY MEETING AND YEAR AHEAD

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper sets out a potential areas of focus for Court’s extended meeting on Wednesday 4 October while also inviting members to submit proposals for further potential items for inclusion on the agenda.

1.2 It is suggested that the Court should also use the Strategy Day to set a forward agenda of Court business for the year ahead.

1.3 The paper is for discussion.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to discuss the paper and suggest potential further areas of focus that should be considered by Court in October.

3. POTENTIAL AREAS OF FOCUS FOR STRATEGY DAY

3.1 The October meeting is intended to provide Court with additional time to consider particular areas of strategy and longer term issues in more depth. The Court may wish to review the University’s Strategy against the future demands of the external environment and higher education landscape across its key components of:

- People
- Teaching and Learning
- Research and Knowledge Exchange
- With a further focus on the cross-cutting issues of Internationalisation, Digital and Financial.

Risk Appetite: The Court may wish to include a session on the University’s Risk Appetite.

The Court may also wish to use the outcome of the day’s discussions to inform the future priorities for Court business across the remainder of the year.

Members are, however, invited to consider and suggest further areas or issues that the Court might benefit from discussing at the extended meeting.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Committee (tel: (01224) 273949 or email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk).

8 June 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is the regular report to Court from Operating Board, outlining business from the meetings held on 9 May and 8 June 2017.

1.2 This paper is provided for Information.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.2 Court is invited to note the report of business from two meetings held in the reporting period.

3 GOOD GOVERNANCE REPORT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 At its June meeting, the Operating Board considered the implications of the Good Governance Report, particularly in respect to its future Remit and Composition. A note of this discussion appears elsewhere on the Court agenda.

4 STUDENT RECRUITMENT

4.1 UPDATE ON STUDENT ADMISSIONS

4.1.1 The Operating Board received and noted an Update on Student Admissions at each meeting. Applications from the EU and rest of the United Kingdom (rUK) were down by 8%. In common with other Scottish institutions, the University was having difficulty recruiting sufficient numbers to its Postgraduate Diploma in Education (teacher training). The Board discussed the current recruitment environment and issues surrounding Brexit. The Board noted continuing improvement in the University’s International student recruitment statistics, at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels, both in terms of applications and acceptances.

4.2 ONLINE EDUCATION STRATEGY AND BUSINESS PLAN

4.2.1 The Board received and discussed a paper on the Online Education Strategy and Business Plan. The Director of Finance reported that the budget for 2019/20 included an assumption that 2% of the University's revenue would be generated by its online provision, with the expectation that this figure would rise in subsequent years. The Board noted that the Student Loan Company would fund online programmes but that SAAS would not provide funding for online Postgraduate Taught courses in 2017/18. This position was to be reviewed for 2018/19.

4.3 RUK UNDERGRADUATE OFFER-MAKING

4.3.1 The Board received and approved a proposal to make unconditional offers to rUK applicants (prior to sitting A level exams), taking into account the applicant’s existing academic profile, predicted A level grades, and an interview.

5 FINANCE

5.1 BUDGETS 2017/18 TO 2019/20

5.1.1 In May, the Board received and approved a paper on Budgets 2017/18 to 2019/20. A note of this discussion appears elsewhere on the Court agenda.
5.2 INSTITUTIONAL 10 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND REPORT FROM CPMC

5.2.1 The Board received an update on the 10 Year Capital Programme, noting three areas of focus: the Science Teaching Building, capital support for the Digital Strategy, and maintenance of the physical estate. It was agreed to give greater prominence to the Digital Strategy in future reports. The Board received and approved reports from Capital Programme Management Committee (CPMC) meetings of 19 April and 16 May 2017 and received, for information only, a Vision for the Estate, comprising Zonal Analyses for each of: King’s College, Foresterhill and Hillhead Student Village and Hillhead Centre.

5.3 UNIVERSITY PENSION SCHEMES.

5.3.1 The Board received and approved a paper on University Pension Schemes, providing an update on the process for carrying out the triennial valuation which for UASLAS will be completed as at 31 July 2016.

5.4 STRATEGIC BUSINESS VENTURES GROUP – RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.4.1 The Board received and approved a proposal on the resource implications to create a Pump Priming Fund to provide financial support for pre-spin-out companies, start-ups and other knowledge exchange activities aimed at income generation. The Board noted the intention to resource the scheme through a managed share sales process and utilising a proportion of royalty income received within each financial year. The University is also investigating the potential for alumni to support the initiative through the creation of a UK Investment Scheme.

5.5 MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORTS

5.5.1 The Board received and noted Monthly Management reports for March and April 2017.

6 RESEARCH

6.1 REF PREPARATIONS

6.1.1 The Board received a paper on Research Excellence Framework (REF) Preparations and noted that the Strategic Plan required each academic member of staff to have at least four papers of at least 3* quality by 2020. An overview of current status was provided at School level. All Schools had confirmed that measures were in place to address the number of staff appearing in red or red/amber categories.

6.2 ANALYSIS OF COST OF RESEARCH STAFF

6.2.1 The Board received and noted an Analysis of the Cost of Research Staff, provided in response to a request for further information.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 In June, the Board received a Risk Management Update and approved the latest version of the Strategic Risk Register. A note of this discussion appears elsewhere on the Court agenda.

8 INTERNATIONALISATION

8.1 GOVERNANCE OF TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

8.1.1 In May, the Board received and approved a proposal to establish a sub-Committee to maintain an appropriate level of monitoring and oversight of Transnational Education

8.2 TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECTS

8.2.1 The Board received and noted updates on developments in Rwanda, Qatar, and Korea as well as an emerging project in Sri Lanka.
9  STANDING ITEMS

9.1  HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

9.1.1  In May, the Board received and noted a Travel Policy Case Study, concerning the University's efforts to establish whether any of its staff or students were in London at the time of the tragic incident of 22 March 2017. The Board agreed that it was reasonable for line managers to have access to Outlook calendars. The Board continued to receive reports of Accidents and Incidents, as reported elsewhere in today's agenda.

9.2  STAFFING MATTERS

9.2.1  The Board received regular Staffing Updates, including news of the successful renewal of the University's Athena SWAN bronze award. In addition to the institutional award, the Board noted that five academic units of the University had received individual bronze awards.

9.2.2  In May, the Board received a report on Lessons Learned from the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition Restructuring Exercise. The paper identified a number of areas of good practice but also noted the areas in which lessons could be learned around: training, use of the annual review, adherence to agreed criteria for redundancy, communications and the reporting of reviews of the Consultation on Avoidance of Redundancy Policy.

9.2.3  In June, the Board received and approved a Review of the Promotions Process and a paper on the Employee Engagement Strategy. It also received and approved a paper on the Review of Honorary Appointments, subject to the University ensuring that Honorary Appointees were made aware of the continuing need to declare any conflicts of interest.

10.  FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information is available from Ruth MacLure, Clerk to the Operating Board, r.m.maclure@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 273239

[13/06/17] [Version 1] [Open]
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper provides a short update on the main items of business considered by the Governance & Nominations Committee at its meeting on 9 May 2017. The report focuses on:

1. Membership of Court: The reappointment of an independent member of Court and recruitment of new independent members.
2. Committee Vacancies: Appointment of the next Convener of the Audit Committee and the invitation of nominations from members to forthcoming vacancies on sub-committees.
3. The appointment to the role of Senior Independent Member.
4. The approval of rules for the nomination and election of new categories of member in the new composition of Court. Attention is drawn to comments received from Trade Union colleagues with respect to these at section 6.

1.2 This paper is provided with recommendations for approval. The draft minutes of the meeting of 9 May 2017 are available at the foot of today's agenda in Meeting Squared.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The Court is invited to:

1) **Approve** the reappointment of Mr Steyn for a further period of office of three years from 1 August 2017 and note the commencement of recruitment processes for three further independent members of Court.
2) **Approve** the appointment of Mr MacFarlane as Convener of the Audit Committee to succeed the current Convener, Mr Murray, on his retirement from Court on 31 October 2017.
3) **Approve** the appointment of Mr Hall to the role of Senior Independent Member.
4) **Approve** the enclosed rules for the nomination and election of trade union, staff and student members, and for the future election and appointment to the position of Senior Governor. (Appendix 1)
5) **Note** the other matters reported for information.

3. **MEMBERSHIP OF COURT**

3.1 The Committee considered a report on the future membership of Court. It agreed:

- To recommend to Court the reappointment of Mr Steyn for a further period of office of three years from 1 August 2017.
- To commence as soon as possible the recruitment process for three forthcoming vacancies for independent members of Court. The Committee agreed the skill sets of finance/audit, digital technology and international experience should be sought. The need to achieve gender balance in the independent membership was emphasised as a priority. It was further agreed that it would be appropriate for the Principal to be a member of the appointment Committee which would be based on the membership of the Governance and Nominations Committee but with co-option where necessary to ensure gender balance.
4. **Committee Vacancies and Memberships for 2017/18**

4.1 The Committee received a paper on the membership of committees of Court for 2017/18. The Committee:

- Agreed to recommend to Court the appointment of Mr MacFarlane as Convener of the Audit Committee to succeed the current Convener, Mr Murray, on his retirement from Court on 31 October 2017.
- Agreed that nominations for vacancies for independent Court members on committees should be invited for further consideration by the Committee in September: these included vacancies on Audit Committee, Governance and Nominations Committee, Remuneration Committee, Operating Board and also with regard to the role of Operating Board Convener.
- Note there would be two vacancies on the Audit Committee from 1 October and 1 November 2017 for co-opted members and that discussions would be undertaken with the incoming Convener regarding these.
- Noted there may be a further vacancy for the non-executive member of staff position on the Remuneration Committee depending on whether the current staff member of Court continued on Court and on the timing of transition and addition of new non-executive staff members in the new composition of Court. The Committee agreed that following appointments to the new composition of Court, non-executive staff members should be invited to submit applications to the Governance and Nominations Committee for the position, to be considered in consultation with the Convener of the Remuneration Committee.

5. **Senior Independent Member**

5.1 The Committee received and considered a nomination for the role of Senior Independent Member (the Convener left the meeting for this item and Mrs Shirreffs took the Chair). The Committee agreed to recommend the nomination of Mr Hall to Court for this role.

5.2 The Committee discussed whether, given the nature of the role, the Senior Independent Member could also serve as Convener of the Committee. It was agreed that for absolute independence that might not be appropriate but also noted that members would also have recourse to the Senior Governor. The potential for a circumstance where issues could not be raised with either the Senior Governor or the Senior Independent Member therefore appeared to be minimal.

6. **Future Composition of Court: Rules for the Nomination and Election of Trade Union, Staff, & Student Members of Court and for the Election of the Senior Governor**

6.1 The Committee recommends Court approve the enclosed rules for the nomination and election of trade union, staff and student members, and for the future election and appointment to the position of Senior Governor (Appendix 1). The Committee noted that it was a requirement of the HE Governance Act that the Court establish such rules and that further consultation with the relevant trade unions and AUSA on the rules related to their representatives would be undertaken before Court was invited to formally approve the relevant rules.

6.2 In consultation, Trade Union representatives have noted their concern regarding section 4 of the rules:

> “Following determination of its preferred candidate, all three trade unions shall agree upon the final nominations for each of the two positions on Court. In so doing, the trade unions shall have due regard to the principles of equality and diversity and, in particular, shall seek to achieve gender balance in the two nominations agreed.”

6.3 The Trade Unions consider that their respective processes, one of which includes an election, render it impractical and inappropriate to achieve gender balance across their two respective nominations. Trade Unions also noted this could in effect mean their right to nominate who they consider is best placed to serve on Court is restricted based on grounds of gender. It should be noted, however, that the wording does not require gender balance in the two nominations but that Unions “seek” to achieve gender balance. It has been explained that this was included to reflect the Court’s wider commitment to addressing its current gender imbalance.
7. **COURT EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

7.1 The Committee received a paper regarding the recommendations of the external review of Court effectiveness and a draft Action Plan to respond to these. The Committee also received feedback on the consultation that had been undertaken with Conveners of the formal sub-committees of Court regarding the effectiveness report. The Committee discussed in particular the respective roles of Court and Operating Board. It agreed that the immediate priority arising from the review should be to respond to a perceived lack of understanding of the respective roles of Court and Operating Board and the decision-making authority of the latter. It was agreed that the Court should receive a paper which set out what these respective roles could be and which could also include clarification of the roles and responsibilities of Court members. Subject to this, further consideration could be given to the review's detailed recommendations at a later date as considered appropriate.

8. **FURTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 The Committee considered the following further business. Further information can be found in the minutes.

- Approval of the establishment of a Transnational Education Committee (TNE) which would report to the Operating Board;
- Qatar Project: It was noted that following the Committee's consideration (by circulation) of due diligence reports on the Qatar Project, Court had approved (by circulation) the commencement of the project.
- Nomination for Benefactor Award: the Committee agreed that a nomination should not progress on the grounds that the University had previously acknowledged the benefactors’ support publicly and visibly through other recognised University processes.
- Review of Scottish Code of Good HE Governance: The Committee received a paper on the new draft Scottish Code of Good HE Governance which had been issued for consultation and noted the University would submit a response to the consultation.
- Governor Self Appraisal: The Committee agreed that the annual governor self-appraisal questionnaire should be issued notwithstanding that the effectiveness review of Court had been undertaken.

9. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

9.1 Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Committee (tel: (01224) 273949 or email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk).

7 June 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
Appendix 1

Rules for the Nomination of Trade Union Members of Court

The composition of Court, in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 provides for a member nominated by a trade union from among the academic staff of the University who are members of a branch of a trade union that has a connection with the institution; and one member nominated by a trade union from among the support staff of the University who are members of a branch of a trade union that has a connection with the institution.

As required by S 12 (2) of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, the Court has agreed that the following process should be observed by those trade unions entitled to nominate to these positions on Court.

1) The nomination of an academic member of staff who is a member of a trade union shall be the responsibility of the local branch of the University & College Union, which shall make a nomination from within its own academic staff membership at the University.

2) The nomination of a member of support staff who is a member of a trade union shall be the responsibility of the local branches of the Unison and Unite trade unions, which shall make a single nomination from within its joint professional and support staff membership at the University.

3) It will be the responsibility of each trade union entitled to nominate to ensure it has appropriate processes and procedures in place to promote and invite nominations for membership of the Court and to determine its preferred candidate.

4) Following determination of its preferred candidate, all three trade unions shall agree upon the final nominations for each of the two positions on Court. In so doing, the trade unions shall have due regard to the principles of equality and diversity and, in particular, shall seek to achieve gender balance in the two nominations agreed.

5) The period of office of members of Court nominated by trade unions shall be three years commencing 1 August. A member nominated by a trade union who ceases either to be a member of the trade union or to be a member of staff of the University shall cease to be a member of the Court. Members will be eligible for re-nomination, subject to a limit of three periods of three years whether served continuously or not, and with a restriction preventing returning to serve on Court in another position after that maximum of period of office for a period of three years.

6) In the event of a casual vacancy arising in either nominated position, the trade unions responsible shall agree upon a new nomination as soon as practicable in accordance with the process set out above. The agreed nomination shall commence a new period of office. Where this falls at a time other than 1 August, in order to regulate the period of office, it shall be considered to have begun on 1 August preceding the date of the actual appointment where this is before 1 February and on the following 1 August where this falls on or after 1 February.

7) ‘Alternate members’ are not permitted at Court.

8) Members of Court nominated by trade unions shall be subject to the Court’s terms and conditions of appointment, and regulate their conduct in accordance with the highest standards of governance, as set out in the University Court’s Code of Conduct, adherence to which is part of the terms of the appointment of all members of Court. In addition, members are subject to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which provides for circumstances under which an individual is disqualified from serving as a charity trustee and trade union nominated members will be required to confirm that they are not so disqualified as part of their terms and conditions of appointment. In accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, a Policy and Procedure for the Removal of Members Court is in place to address circumstances where a member has materially breached their conditions of appointment.
9) These rules may be amended by the Court subject to the consultation required under S12 (4) of the Higher Education Governance Act 2016 being undertaken.

Ends
Rules for the Nomination and Election of Academic and Non-Academic Staff Members of Court

The composition of Court, in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, provides for two members elected by the staff of the University. The Court has further agreed, that one such member shall be a member of academic staff and that one such member shall be a member of non-academic staff. As required by S 11 (2) of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, the Court has agreed that the following process should be observed in the election of both these positions on Court.

Election Process

Returning Officer

1) The Secretary to the Court, or her/his nominee, shall be the Returning Officer for the election.

Constituency for Academic Staff Member

2) The constituency for the election of an academic staff member of Court shall be all academic staff members of the University, defined as ‘academic, teaching and research staff’. The member elected as the ‘academic staff member’ must be a member of the same constituency of ‘academic, teaching and research staff’.

Constituency for Non-Academic Staff Member

3) The constituency for the election of a non-academic staff member of Court shall be all non-academic staff members of the University, defined as ‘professional and support staff’. The member elected as the ‘non-academic staff member’ must be a member of the same constituency of ‘professional and support staff’.

Nominations for Election

4) The Secretary shall arrange for notification of a vacancy in either position to be issued to each member of the relevant constituency, together with the conditions for the nomination of candidates, the requirements and responsibilities of the role of a member of Court, and the date for return of nominations. The duration of the nominations period shall be a minimum of 21 days. Nominations shall be made on the form of nomination as issued by the Returning Officer. Nominations shall require to be supported by a proposer and a seconder who shall both be members of the relevant electing constituency.

5) During the period of 7 days after the close of the nomination period, it shall be in order for a candidate to withdraw their nomination. The Returning Officer, on expiry of the nomination period, shall intimate to each candidate and to each candidate’s proposer and seconder the names and designations of all the candidates nominated, together with the names and designations of their proposers and seconders.

6) Where two or more nominations are received for a vacancy, an election ballot will be issued. Where only one nomination is received for a vacancy, the Returning Officer shall declare such candidate to be duly elected.

Conduct of an Election

7) When a ballot is required, it will be conducted through electronic voting via a secure online voting system administered by the University or election management professionals appointed by the University. Each member of the relevant constituency shall be issued by e-mail with a notice of the ballot and instructions on how to cast their vote. Where a member of staff is unable to vote
electronically, the University will, if requested, be required to make arrangements for such staff to have access to facilities to cast their vote, in a manner and timeframe approved by the Returning Officer.

8) The Returning Officer will set and publish the voting period dates for an election and agree the census date at which those eligible to vote in each constituency shall be determined. The voting period will be for a minimum of 21 days. Where a change of circumstances occurs which in the opinion of the Returning Officer renders the voting period insufficient to enable a representative vote to be obtained under the special conditions ruling at the time, the Returning Officer may extend the said voting periods as she or he considers necessary. Such extension shall be intimated to any nominated candidates and to their proposers and seconders.

9) Each candidate shall be entitled to provide a photograph and election communication of not more than 250 words which will be made available to the electorate by the University.

10) The candidate who secures a simple majority of the total number of votes cast shall be declared the winner. Where there is a tie, the winner shall be determined by lot under the supervision of the Returning officer.

11) At any time before voting closes a candidate may withdraw their candidacy. If in consequence of such withdrawal or in the event of the death of a candidate during the said period results in one candidate for the vacancy remaining, the counting of the votes lodged will not take place and the remaining candidate will be declared to be duly elected.

12) The validity of any election shall not be affected by any defect in the procedure in carrying out such an election unless, on the application of a candidate or an individual designated as a candidate’s representative made to the Returning Officer after due enquiry, declares the election to be invalid.

Period of Office and Conditions of Appointment

13) The period of office of shall be three years and will normally commence on 1 August of the year of election. If the member elected ceases to be a member of staff of the relevant constituency of the University, she or he shall cease to be a member of the Court. Members will be eligible for nomination for re-election, subject to a limit of three periods of three years whether served continuously or not, and with a restriction preventing returning to serve on Court in another position after that maximum of period of office for a period of three years.

14) In the event of an election to a casual vacancy being required, the member elected shall commence a new period of office. Where this falls at a time other than 1 August, in order to regulate the period of office, it shall be considered to have begun on 1 August preceding the date of the actual election where this is before 1 February and on the 1 August following the date of election where this falls on or after 1 February.

15) ‘Alternate members’ are not permitted at Court.

16) Members of Court elected by staff shall be subject to the Court’s terms and conditions of appointment, and regulate their conduct in accordance with the highest standards of governance, as set out in the University Court’s Code of Conduct, adherence to which is part of the terms of the appointment of all members of Court. In addition, members are subject to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which provides for circumstances under which an individual is disqualified from serving as a charity trustee and any elected member will be required to confirm that they are not so disqualified as part of their terms and conditions of appointment. In accordance
with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, a Policy and Procedure for the Removal of Members Court is in place to address circumstances where a member has materially breached their conditions of appointment.

Ends
Rules for the Nomination by AUSA of Student Members of the University Court

The composition of Court, in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 provides for:

“2 persons appointed by being nominated by a students’ association of the institution from among the students of the institution”

As required by S 12 (2) of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, the Court has agreed that the following process should be observed by AUSA when nominating its two members of Court.

1) The nominees of AUSA shall be the President of the Students’ Association and a further student or sabbatical officer.

2) Nominees must be matriculated students or sabbatical officers of the University of Aberdeen. ‘Alternate members’ are not permitted at Court.

3) The period of office on Court of the President of the Students’ Association will be the same as the period of office he or she is elected to the role of President of the Students’ Association for. The period of office of the second AUSA nominee will be one year with re-nomination permissible for a further year. Where either nominee ceases to be either a student or sabbatical officer, their appointment as a member of Court shall also cease.

3) It will be the responsibility of AUSA to determine the procedure it wishes to use for the appointment of its second nominated member of Court.

4) The Court requests that wherever possible AUSA seeks to ensure a gender balance across its two nominations and that consideration is also given to the need more generally for diversity on Court.

5) In the event of a casual vacancy arising, for whatever reason, it will be the responsibility of AUSA to make a new nomination as soon as possible, who will hold office for the remaining period of office of the preceding nominee.

6) Members of Court nominated by AUSA shall be subject to the Court’s terms and conditions of appointment, and regulate their conduct in accordance with the highest standards of governance, as set out in the University Court’s Code of Conduct, adherence to which is part of the terms of the appointment of all members of Court. In addition, members are subject to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which provides for circumstances under which an individual is disqualified from serving as a charity trustee and AUSA nominated members will be required to confirm that they are not so disqualified as part of their terms and conditions of appointment. In accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, a Policy and Procedure for the Removal of Members Court is in place to address circumstances where a member has materially breached their conditions of appointment.

8) These rules may be amended by the Court subject to the consultation required under S12 (4) of the Higher Education Governance Act 2016 being undertaken.

Ends
University of Aberdeen

Guidance and Rules for the Election and Appointment of the Senior Governor of Court

The following process and rules for the election of the Senior Governor have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act sections 1 to 9. The Act refers to the position of ‘Senior Lay Member of the Governing Body’ which at the University of Aberdeen is the position referred to as the ‘Senior Governor’.

Part I: Appointment Committee, Advertisement of the Vacancy and Application Process

1 Appointment Committee and Relevant Criteria for the Position

1.1 Where a vacancy for the position of Senior Governor arises, the Court will establish an Appointment Committee. The Court will have responsibility for—

(a) devising the relevant criteria with respect to the position;

(b) ensuring the efficiency and fairness of the process for filling the position;

(c) promotion and advertisement of the vacancy, in a manner suitable for bringing the vacancy to the attention of a broad range of persons and in accordance with the requirements specified in section 4 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

(d) interview of applicants who are considered to meet the relevant criteria for the position and determination of their suitability to stand as candidates in the election;

1.2 As required by the Act, the membership of the committee will include at least one member of staff and one student of the University. The Court will determine the further membership of the committee as appropriate but it shall normally also include the Senior Independent Member as Convener and members of the committee shall normally be members of the Court. The incumbent Senior Governor will not be a member of the committee or participate in the appointment process. The Committee will, as far as possible, have an appropriate balance of members in terms of its gender and diversity. No individual who applies for the position may be a member of the committee.

1.3 The relevant criteria for the role will be determined by the committee (within delegated authority agreed by the Court). These will include, but will not be restricted to, the skills and knowledge considered by the committee to be necessary to—

(a) exercise the functions of the senior governor,

(b) command the trust and respect of—
(i) the members of Court,
(ii) the Senate,
(iii) the staff and students of the University.

1.4 In accordance with the Act, a person appointed to the position may not be a student of, or one of the staff of, the University during the period of their appointment. Applications from current members of staff of the University, matriculated students, or applicants for study, will not be considered. No former members of staff or student shall be eligible to be appointed until a period of three years after they ceased to be a member of staff or student.

1.5 The relevant criteria agreed by the committee will be made available through the promotion and advertising of the vacancy as required by the Act.

2 Interview of Certain Applicants

2.1 Where an application appears to the committee to show that the applicant meets the relevant criteria with respect to the position, then in accordance with the Act the applicant will be invited to an interview conducted by the committee. If the applicant satisfies the committee at such an interview that the applicant meets the relevant criteria, the applicant is entitled to stand as a candidate in an election for the position.

3 Expenses for Attendance at Interview

3.1 As required by the Act, reasonable expenses that are incurred by any applicant attending an interview will be reimbursed in line with the relevant University policies.

Part II: Election Process

Where more than one applicant is deemed to meet the criteria to stand for election and has confirmed their intention to stand as a candidate an election will be arranged. If the number of candidates in the election subsequently falls to below two then in accordance with the Act the election will be postponed until the election can be held with more than one candidate standing (and the vacancy will be re-advertised). The remaining candidate will continue to be entitled to stand as a candidate in the election.

4 Returning Officer

4.1 The Secretary to the Court shall be the Returning Officer for the election. If for any reason the Secretary is unavailable, the Court will appoint a Returning Officer.

5 Candidate Information and Campaign Expenses

5.1 The University will make available on its website the names of the candidates and an election statement from each candidate which will be limited to 500 words. Statements will be approved by the Returning Officer prior to publication.
5.2 In accordance with the Act, every candidate in the election will be entitled to the reimbursement of reasonable expenses that are incurred by the candidate in campaigning in the election. These will be limited to £500. Expenditure related to travel and accommodation related to campaigning by candidates will not be refunded. Evidence of all expenditure will be required within 5 working days of the close of voting. Failure to do so could result in the disqualification of the candidate.

6 **Election Franchise and Result**

6.1 In accordance with the Act, the following persons are entitled to vote in an election:

(a) the members of the Court,

(b) the staff of the University,

(c) the students of the University.

6.2 No individual is entitled to cast more than one vote in the election. Each vote cast in the election carries equal weight.

6.3 The election will be conducted through electronic voting via a secure online voting system administered by the University or election management professionals appointed by the University. Each member of the relevant constituency shall be issued by e-mail with a notice of the ballot and instructions on how to cast their vote. Where a member of the electorate is unable to vote electronically, the University will, if requested, be required to make arrangements for the elector to have access to facilities to cast their vote, in a manner and timeframe approved by the Returning Officer.

6.4 The Returning Officer will determine the dates of the election period but which will be during recognised term times and outwith examination periods. Where a change of circumstances occurs which in the opinion of the Returning Officer renders the voting period insufficient to enable a representative vote to be obtained under the special conditions ruling at the time, the Returning Officer may extend the said voting periods as she or he considers necessary.

6.5 The candidate who secures a simple majority of the total number of votes cast shall be declared the winner. Where there is a tie, the winner shall be determined by lot under the supervision of the Returning officer.

7 **Period of Office**

7.1 Appointment to the position is for the period specified by the Court, normally three years, and may be extended for a further period by agreement of the Court without recourse to a further election.
8 Remuneration and Terms of Appointment

8.1 In accordance with the Act, the person appointed may request remuneration and allowances in respect of their service as Senior Governor. The Court will consider and determine any remuneration requested through its agreed remuneration policy and processes for the role.

8.2 The person elected shall be subject to the Court’s terms and conditions of appointment, and regulate his or her conduct in accordance with the highest standards of governance, as set out in the University Court’s Code of Conduct, adherence to which is part of the terms of the appointment of all members of Court. In addition, the person elected is subject to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which provides for circumstances under which an individual is disqualified from serving as a charity trustee and the person elected will be required to confirm that they are not so disqualified as part of their terms and conditions of appointment. In accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 (and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance) a Policy and Procedure for the Removal of Members Court (including the Senior Governor) is in place to address circumstances where a member has materially breached their conditions of appointment.

9 Equality Monitoring Report

9.1 At the conclusion of the appointment and election process, the Appointment Committee will make publicly available a report indicating—

(a) the number of applicants for the position,

(b) so far as consent to disclosure has been received by the committee from the applicants, the characteristics listed in section 149(7) of the Equality Act 2010 with respect to—

(i) the applicants,

(ii) the applicants invited to an interview for the position,

(iii) the applicants entitled to stand as candidates in an election for the position following such an interview.

10 Appeals Process

10.1 The validity of any election shall not be affected by any defect in the procedure in carrying out such an election unless, on the application of a candidate or an individual designated as a candidate’s representative made to the Returning Officer after due enquiry, declares the election to be invalid.

10.2 Any appeals against the decision of the Returning Officer will be considered in the first instance by the Convener of the committee appointed by the Court to oversee the election process (who shall normally be the Senior Independent Member of Court except for circumstances in which he/she is a candidate) who may rule on the appeal or choose to refer the matter for decision by the
appointing committee. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the Clerk to the committee within 48 hours of the decision having been made. Appeals will only be considered on the grounds of procedure, competency or prejudice. The decision of the committee will be final and there is no further route of appeal.

Ends
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper is the regular report to Court from the Audit Committee, outlining business from the meetings held on 20 April and 1 June 2017. The draft minutes of the meetings are available at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

1.2 This paper is provided for Approval and Information.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 Court is invited to approve the reappointment of the University’s Internal Auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), for a two-year period with effect from 1 August 2017.

2.2 Court is invited to note the report of business from two meetings held in the reporting period.

3. **INTERNAL AUDIT CONTRACT**

3.1 At its meeting on 20 April 2017, the Committee was invited to approve the extension of its contract with PwC, the University’s Internal Auditor.

3.2 The Committee noted that the University had an option to extend the contract for a further two years, subject to satisfactory performance. In discussion, the Committee agreed that the service received from PwC had been of high quality and that it would therefore be appropriate to extend the contract.

3.3 Court is therefore invited to approve the reappointment of PwC for a further two years.
6. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS**

6.1 The Committee received the following Internal Audit reports:
- Freedom of Information Follow Up: *Low Risk, demonstrating significant improvements*
- Draft Report on Employee Expenses: *as yet ungraded (relating to the above Fraud)*
- Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986: *Low Risk*
- Procurement Strategy and Tendering: *Medium Risk*
- OneSource – Agresso Payroll, Interim Report: *reporting is scheduled to take place in two phases and that this was the first, comprising four draft Medium and one Low Risk findings.*

6.2 In April, the Committee received a progress report from the University on the implementation status of previous Internal Audit recommendations and commended continuing progress in the implementation of outstanding actions.

7. **OTHER ASSURANCE REPORTS**

7.1 In April, the Committee received the Research Councils UK Funding Assurance Report. The Overall Assurance Rating received by the University was Moderate, defined as: “Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of Governance, Risk Management and Control.”

8. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 In June, the Committee received a Risk Management Update from the University and was invited to consider the University’s Strategic Risk Register composition, in particular the possible addition of an eleventh stand-alone risk, concerning Information Governance. The Committee also considered the Risk Summary table, the scoring matrix and a copy of detailed Risk Action Plans for those risks where the net score sat on or above 18, the University's risk tolerance threshold. It was agreed to be appropriate to review the process for aggregation of scores and to reconsider the Governance risk score following receipt of the Internal Audit report on Cyber Security at the September meeting.

9. **PRODUCTION OF ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17**

9.1 In April, the Committee received and approved a proposed timetable for production of the Annual Report 2016/17. In June, the Committee received a presentation from the Director of External Relations who tabled a copy of sample pages of the Report, seeking feedback from Committee members by 8 June 2017.

10. **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

10.1 In April, the Committee received from KPMG the External Audit Strategy and Plan for the Year Ending 31 July 2017, followed in June by an Interim Management Report and Audit Status Summary.

11. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

11.1 Further information is available from Ruth MacLure, Clerk to the Audit Committee, **r.m.maclure@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 273239**

[09/06/17] [version 1] [Part Closed – paras. 4 and 5]
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper reports on issues arising from the most recent meeting of the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee held on 17 May 2017.

1.2 This paper is provided for Information and Approval.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the report from the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee and approve the recommendations at sections 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

3. CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) POLICY

3.1 The Committee received the policy which seeks to formalise the University’s policy on the use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) or similar systems. The policy has been drafted to reflect best practice in this area and outlines procedures which comply with appropriate statutory guidance, most notably our institutional responsibilities under the Data Protection Act (1998).

3.2 The procedures outlined in the policy have been in use by University Security staff since the policy was initially drafted in 2016. Recent advice has indicated that the policy should now be formally ratified by an appropriately authorised University committee before being made publicly available online. Court is invited to approve the policy, available for review at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

4. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

4.1 The Committee received the revised Employee Engagement Strategy and Action Plan. Feedback for the 2014 Staff Satisfaction Survey highlighted key areas for improvement including communication with staff, strategic leadership, improving staff recognition, motivation and a sense of purpose around change management. The Employee Engagement Working Group was set up with a remit to develop and implement an Employee Engagement Strategy to address these issues. The working group has developed the strategy and action plan which was approved for progression to Court. Court is invited to approve the Strategy, available for review at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

5. REVIEW OF PROMOTIONS

5.1 A paper on the work of the Promotions Review Working Group was noted. This short life working group was convened to review the current promotions procedures and to put forward a series of recommendations aiming to streamline the bureaucracy associated with the process whilst preserving our equality agenda and maintain consistency and transparency. It was agreed that the recommendations from the Working Group would now be presented to Court for approval. Court is invited to approve the recommendations, available for review at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.
6. **HONORARY APPOINTMENTS**

6.1 The University Management Group at its meeting on 20 February 2017 agreed to a review and evaluate current honorary arrangements and to establish a Working Group to take forward the Review. Following extensive discussion the Working group made recommendations to clarify and improve the Honorary Appointment process. Court is invited to approve the recommendations, available for review at the foot of today's agenda in Meeting Squared.

7. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS REVIEW – INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

7.1 A paper on the progress of the Terms and Conditions Working Group including proposed additions to the existing policy on Intellectual Property and Spin-Out Companies (2008) was considered. The additions to the Intellectual Property and Spin-Out Companies policy were agreed and these were also subsequently considered at Senate. It was agreed that the proposed additions be presented to Court for approval. Court is invited to approve the recommendations, available for review at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

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8. **35 HOUR WORKING WEEK**

8.1 The Committee noted a paper which had been prepared to inform discussion concerning the proposal submitted by the trade unions (Unite) to adopt a 35 hour working week for all staff at the University of Aberdeen.

9. **POLICIES**

9.1 The Committee received the following policies for consultation.

- Eye Protection Policy
- Biosafety Policy

10. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS REVIEW**

10.1 An update on the Working Group and the issues that had arisen was given. There was discussion around the Intellectual Property (IP) clause and overseas travel. Agreement was reached on the Intellectual Property policy (as noted above). Discussion continues on the clause concerning overseas travel.

11. **TRADE UNION ACT**

11.1 A paper on the implications of the Trade Union Act was noted, in particular the requirements that had been introduced in respect of monitoring and reporting trade union facilities time. The paper detailed the process for gathering and collating the data and had previously been discussed at the Policy Review Group.

12. **PAY NEGOTIATIONS**

12.1 The committee noted that a final offer of 1.7% had been made.

13. **CAPABILITY**

13.1 The committee noted the report on the update on the numbers of staff in the Capability Process.

14. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

14.1 Further information is available from Catherine Cook, Clerk to the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee, (01224) 273564 or c.cook@abdn.ac.uk or Mrs Debbie Dyker, Director of Human Resources, d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk, tel 01224 273732.

12 June 2017 [version 1] [Open]
1. **Purpose of the Paper**

1.1 This is a paper about the main items of business considered by the University Committee on Teaching & Learning (UCTL) at the meeting held on 3 May 2017.

1.2 This paper is provided for information. The draft minutes of the meeting of 3 May 2017 are available at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

2. **Recommended Action**

2.1 The Court is invited to note the contents of this report which is for information. No action is required.

3. **Proposal to Pilot a New Internal Teaching (ITR) Review Process**

3.1 The Committee approved a proposal to pilot a new Internal Teaching Review (ITR) process. The Committee noted that the current process is particularly onerous and focuses almost entirely on the assurance of quality rather than the enhancement of quality. The Committee further noted the introduction, over the course of recent academic years, of the Annual Course Review (ACR), Annual Programme Review (APR) and revised External Examiner Report (EER) forms ensuring the annual assurance of the quality of provision provided by each School/discipline and therefore allowing the ITR process to become more focussed in its objective to enhance the quality of existing provision.

4. **Class Representatives**

4.1 The Committee approved a paper providing an update on Class Representatives and seeking the Committee’s approval for the expansion of the Student Association’s recognition of roles in conjunction with the University’s Enhanced Transcript Initiative and Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR). The Committee recommended that the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) undertake the role of reviewing the quality assurance of the initiative, consider reports from the Students’ Association as appropriate and review any further roles proposed for recognition.

5. **Attendance Monitoring**

5.1 The Committee approved a pilot of the use of Quick Response (QR) codes as a means of attendance monitoring in lectures. The code (a type of two-dimensional barcode) can be scanned by a students’ mobile device and their attendance logged. The Committee noted the reasoning for the trial as:

- Registering attendance electronically and without the need for significant administrative intervention.
- As a driver for student attendance.
- To allow for the opportunity for intervention when a student is not engaging.

6. **Undergraduate Offer Making Protocols for September 2018 Entry**

6.1 The Committee, for its part, approved and agreed to forward to the Senate a paper proposing new Undergraduate offer making protocols for September 2018 and setting out a process by
which the University would widen its criteria for making unconditional offers with the aim of attracting and converting more Rest of UK (RUK) applicants. The Committee noted the minimal risk associated with the proposals, aimed at the very best of the RUK population, but also the uncertainty surrounding whether or not they would result in a significant impact on the recruitment of Undergraduate students.

7. **REVISED ANNUAL PROGRAMME REVIEW (APR) FORM**

7.1 The Committee approved the proposed changes to the Annual Programme Review (APR) form. The Committee noted that the APR proforma has been revised to include programmes offered collaboratively with other institutions.

8. **CHANGES IN REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS DEGREES**

8.1 On the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) the Committee, approved, for its part, and agreed to forward to Senate, the Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees comprising minor amendments to the Regulations governing the Degree of Bachelor of Theology (BTh) and Undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas in Christian Studies.

9. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

9.1 Further information is available from Professor Peter McGeorge (01224) 272248 or mcgeorge@abdn.ac.uk or Dr Rachael Bernard (01224) 273388 or r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk.

[31May] [version 1] [FOI Status: Open]
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper provides a short update on the main items of business considered by the Student Experience Committee at its meeting on 8 May 2017. These focus on: i) Aberdeen Universities’ Officer Training Corps, ii) Student Support Provision and iii) the AUSA Disbursement.

1.2 This paper is provided for information only. The draft minutes of the meeting of 8 May 2017 are available at the foot of today's agenda in Meeting Squared.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The University Court is invited to note this information.

3. **ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES’ OFFICER TRAINING CORPS**

3.1 As the committee with oversight of the Military Education Committee, the SEC received a presentation from the Aberdeen Universities’ Officer Training Corps on the activities available for students. The Committee noted that the primary aim of Officer Training Corps was to develop individuals' leadership capacities, and furthermore, that there were no expectations that Officer Cadets would go on to join the Armed Forces. In addition, the Committee noted the wide and varied range of development opportunities open to students through AUOTC.

4. **STUDENT SUPPORT PROVISION**

4.1 The Committee received and considered a report on the provision of support for students through the Student Advice and Support Office and the University Counselling Service. The Committee noted that the move to a time-limited model for Counselling meant that more students could be seen across the academic year, and that additional initiatives were aimed at providing early interventions for students, focusing on common issues, resilience training and developing psycho-educational information.

5. **AUSA DISBURSEMENT**

5.1 The Committee noted that budgets for the year ahead had not been finalised and agreed that the AUSA Disbursement would be decided by delegated authority in due course.

6. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

6.1 Further information is available from Christina Cameron, Clerk to the Student Experience Committee (tel: (01224) 274189 or email c.cameron@abdn.ac.uk).

30 May 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides a short update on the main items of business considered by the Research Policy Committee (RPC) at its meeting on 9 June 2017. These focus on:
   i) research performance;
   ii) preparations towards the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021); and

1.2 This paper is provided for information only. The draft minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2017 are available at the foot of today's agenda in Meeting Squared.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the paper which is for information.

3. RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

3.1 The RPC received reports on applications, awards and income trends. At the end of the third quarter of 2016/17, the value of both applications and awards have increased across the institution. Awards by Research Councils UK have increased. This is encouraging but needs to be seen within the context of significant additional RCUK funding made available to the sector through the Global Challenges Research Fund. Most of the research intensive institutions in receipt of RUCK funding are likely to report robust growth of RCUK funding this year.

3.2 At the end of the third quarter 2016/17, the projected outturn for research income is just over £60.4m, slightly ahead of the budgeted £60m. A number of Schools (Engineering, Natural & Computing Sciences, Geosciences, Biological Sciences and the Business School) are forecasting an outturn ahead of budget. Indirect cost contribution is also ahead of budget. Six out of 12 Schools are likely to report growth in their research income compared to 2015/16: Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition; Biological Sciences; Business School; Divinity, History & Philosophy; Education; Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture).

3.3 The Committee noted that although applications to EU government showed an increase, awards had decreased, reflecting the uncertainty around Brexit and its implications for European research funding for UK institutions. It was agreed that a working group should review current EU grant performance and propose a strategy for institutional support for future applications, complementing individual School strategies for EU funding.

4. REF2021 PREPARATIONS

4.1 RPC received and discussed a report on School’s REF preparations for the outputs element of assessment. At this point in time, 64% of REF eligible staff have either met or are highly likely to meet the strategic objective of 4 papers of at least 3* quality. A further 18% are likely to meet the objective. All Schools have outlined the measures being taken to ensure that all REF eligible staff have a strong REF hand. Follow on discussions with each School will be held by the Vice Principal Research over the coming weeks.

4.2 A more comprehensive review of REF preparedness, which will include all elements of assessment, will take place later this year, once the funding councils have published the first REF 2021 guidance.
5. **REPORT OF THE INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND CORE FACILITIES REVIEW GROUP**

5.1 RPC received and discussed the report of the Interdisciplinarity and Core Facilities Review Group. It noted that a strong portfolio of interdisciplinary research (IDR) was required for a variety of reasons, including access to RCUK’s Global Challenges Research Fund, enhanced REF performance and increased internationalisation of research. The report called for the creation of a pump priming fund, and recommended the creation of dedicated space for IDR related activities, complementing those already offered through the Grant Academy. The report further noted the importance of institutional core facilities for research to enable IDR and recommended the creation of a standing working group to have strategic oversight of current core facilities, monitor their usage and cost recovery and advise on future investment needs.

5.2 In discussion, the committee noted that focused horizon scanning for IDR opportunities and aligning research activity with funding priorities was an important aspect of supporting IDR. It was recommended that research activity under the RCUK GCRF programme could be increased by mapping Aberdeen research capabilities to the 17 UN sustainable development goals, followed by prioritisation and focusing support on activities that work towards those goals. It was agreed that the report should be amended to reflect this option before onward transmission to Senior Management Team.

5.3 It was further noted that should the principles and funding outlined in the document be approved, the IDR activities and horizon scanning would have to be integrated within the wider Grants Academy programme.

6. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

6.1 Further information may be obtained in the first instance from Marlis Barraclough (Senior Policy Advisor, Research & Innovation), Clerk to the University Research Policy Committee, tel: (01224) 273787 or email m.barraclough@abdn.ac.uk

10 June 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper proposes a change to the University's academic governance structure, namely that Schools now be recognised as the formal academic structure of the University and that the College as a governance entity be removed with effect from 1 August 2017. This follows the effective introduction of a planning model driven by School plans and the devolution of budgetary responsibility to Schools. It is now considered that the College structure is no longer necessary to enable the effective delivery of the University's strategy. The paper includes the required amendments to Resolution No 281 to reflect these proposed changes to the academic governance structure.

1.2 This paper is for approval.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is asked to:

(i) **Agree** that with effect from 1 August 2017 the overarching College structure is removed and the remaining functions of Colleges are devolved to School level or to areas within the central Professional Services.

(ii) **Approve** the revised Resolution on Academic Structures to reflect the proposed removal of Colleges from the academic governance structure. The Resolution together with a version highlighting the proposed changes from the current Resolution for ease of reference is attached at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

3. ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

3.1 Following the approval of the new Strategic Plan in 2015, the University agreed that Schools were the key academic vehicles for the delivery of its strategic objectives. In recognition of this, the University put in place a Schools based planning model and agreed the devolution of budgetary responsibility to Schools from the College level. From the outset, it was recognised that the devolution of responsibility for the development and delivery of strategic, financial, and operational plans and targets to School level would change the function and responsibilities of Colleges. The role of Colleges moved to being one of ensuring and supporting Schools to drive their strategic plans and holding Heads of School accountable for delivery.

3.2 The devolved budgetary and planning framework is now embedded within the 12 Schools and the annual and 5-year School Plans are now the primary focus for the delivery of our strategic ambitions. The new approach, coupled with Vice-Principal portfolios that ensure central oversight and coordination at an institutional level, is working effectively and, as a result, the role of the College as a central ‘enabler’ has steadily diminished. As a result, further consideration to the continuing need for an overarching College structure has been given. This has been cognisant of the importance of an approach that seeks to further empower Schools to help deliver our strategic objectives. It also sought to identify further opportunities to streamline decision making and achieve efficiencies.

3.2 The resulting recommendation, which has been endorsed by Senate, is that, taking into account its reduced role, the College structure is no longer necessary to enable the effective delivery of the University’s strategy and that this can be achieved through the School structure, supported
by the Vice-Principal structure and Professional Services which align with that academic structure and support the operational delivery of those strategic objectives.

3.3 It is, therefore, proposed that the Schools now be recognised as the formal academic structure of the University and that the College as a governance entity be removed with effect from 1 August 2017. It is proposed that the role of Head of College would also, therefore, cease to be required and that Heads of School would report directly to the Senior Vice-Principal.

3.4 The Court is also being asked to approve the amendments to Resolution No 281 [Reform of Academic Structure] which are required to reflect the proposed change in academic structure. The changes to the Resolution have, as statutorily required, been provided to the Senate and the Business Committee of the General Council for comment, and have also been made available for comment to the wider University community. As a result of that process, one minor change to the wording of the Resolution was proposed and has been incorporated in the draft recommended for approval by Court.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary, c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 272094

[9 June 2017] [V1] [Open]
AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION NO 282: [PROCEDURE FOR REMOVAL OF MEMBERS OF COURT]

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper sets out proposed minor changes to Resolution No 282 Procedure for Removal of Members of Court. The changes are required to comply with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and they were approved by the Court in March 2017 subject to the required statutory consultation with Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and the wider University Community being undertaken. That process has now concluded and no comments or amendments having been received, the Court is being asked to formally approve the revised Resolution.

1.2 This paper is for approval.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is asked to formally approve the amendments to Resolution No 282 Procedure for Removal of Members of Court available at the foot of today's agenda in Meeting Squared.

3. PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE RESOLUTION

3.1 The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 includes at (S 13) provisions regarding the removal of members of Court. In 2015 the Court agreed a Policy for the grounds for removal of a member of Court and a Resolution No 282 setting out the procedure to be followed when considering the removal of a Court member. These were, therefore, reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the Act.

3.2 The review identified one amendment that is required because the Act specifies that the procedures should “ensure that removal can be effected only by a resolution based on the grounds and passed by a specified majority of the members of the governing body.” While the current procedure under Resolution No 282 does specify that any decision regarding the removal of a member must be approved by Court it does not specify a majority required.

3.3 The Court in March, therefore, agreed that Resolution 282 be amended to include a requirement that the approval of a recommendation to remove a member of Court will require “a majority of two-thirds of the members of the Court present and voting”. This is consistent with the requirement in Court Standing Orders for any change to Standing Orders to “require a majority of two-thirds of the members of the Court present and voting”.

3.3 Amendments to Resolutions are subject to a statutory process of consultation with the Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and the wider University community. Following approval of the amendment in principle by Court, that process of consultation has been undertaken and no amendments or comments have been received. The Court is, therefore, being asked to formally approval and adopt the revised Resolution.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary, c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 272094

[9 June 2017] [V1] [Open]
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper reports on a new draft Scottish Code of Good HE Governance which has been issued for consultation by the independent Steering Group established by the Committee of Scottish Chairs. The paper invites Court to approve the University’s proposed response to the consultation – attached at Appendix 1.

1.2 The key issues to note are:
   - Compliance with the current Code is a condition of Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funding. It is expected this will continue to be the case with the revised Code.
   - The draft Code continues to be on a ‘comply and explain’ basis with a set of high level principles and then more detailed provisions on best practice that institutions are expected to adopt. However, the form, approach and content of the Code is significantly more prescriptive in requiring compliance with detailed provisions than the current Code. This is highlighted as a key concern in the proposed draft response.

1.3 The draft Code is available at http://www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/live-consultation/

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to approve the proposed response to the consultation.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC) has been undertaking an independent review of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance since summer 2016. The CSC delegated the review to an independent Steering Group chaired by Mr Ian Marchant (Chair), Chair of Wood Group plc. The review process to date included consultation meetings with representatives of University Court’s, including at Aberdeen, in the Autumn of 2016.

3.2 Under the requirements of the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013, it is a requirement of SFC funding that universities comply with principles of good governance applicable to higher education. At present, the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance is the set of good governance principles that SFC expects compliance with as a condition of funding. The revised Code is highly likely to be adopted by SFC for the same purpose.

4. APPROACH, STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE CODE

4.1 The Code continues to be on a ‘comply and explain’ basis with a set of seven high level principles and then more detailed provisions of best practice which institutions would be expected to adopt. The consultation states that the whole Code is subject to ‘comply and explain’ and that where a principle or provision uses the verb “must” that indicates something which institutions are expected to comply with “unless in truly exceptional circumstances.” Where the verb “should” is used then there would be an expectation of compliance but a recognition it would be reasonable for the overarching principle of good governance to be met in other ways.

4.2 This represents a potential difference in approach which could be significant depending on whether SFC were to require institutions to comply with the “principles only” or principles and...
provisions where the verb “must” is used. The word “must” appears 230 times in the draft Code but only 26 times in the current Code. The draft Code is therefore significantly more prescriptive in its approach.

4.3 While much of the principles are similar to the current Code, the detailed provisions include new content and changes in approach from the previous Code which would require the University to reconsider and review its governance procedures.

5. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

5.1 Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court (tel: (01224) 273949 or email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk).

13 June 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
Open consultation: Review of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance

April 2017

Context

In 2016, the Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC) of Scottish higher education institutions launched an evidence-based Review of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education (HE) Governance (henceforth ‘the Code’). The review was entrusted to a Steering Group whose membership includes all major stakeholder groups. Independent consultants from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education were commissioned to collect and analyse evidence from an open public consultation, a survey of governing body members and extensive consultation with stakeholders at each institution and at national level. Full details of the Steering Group and the evidence-gathering process can be found at scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk.

The Steering Group has now completed its review and has produced a draft revised Code. This seeks to recognise and reflect the continuous evolution of best practice in governance and to accommodate changes that follow from the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. Views are now sought on the draft revised Code.

How to respond

Please complete these questions using the online response form before 21 June 2017.

Alternatively, please email a response to the consultation, including your completed respondent information details, to nicola@universities-scotland.ac.uk or send a written response to the consultation by post to:

Nicola Cowsill, Universities Scotland, Holyrood Park House, 106 Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AS.

This consultation is an open invitation to comment, not limited to a specific set of questions. We welcome your views on any aspect of the content or structure of the draft revised Code. (Please do not comment on superficial presentational issues. This draft does not show the final formatting of the document, which will be finalised following the consultation.)

If your response contains multiple comments and/or covers different elements of the Code, please structure your response accordingly, separating different points clearly. Please refer to paragraph or page numbers where possible.

The University of Aberdeen is grateful for the opportunity to further input to the development of the Code. The University recognises and welcomes the need to revise and refresh the Code to ensure it remains fit for purpose as good governance practice evolves. The University is conscious of the number of responses the Steering Group may consider and while we provide more detailed comments on specific sections of the Code, we set out first our key comments on the Code in high level terms. These include those elements of the Code that we welcome and those where we feel further consideration is needed to ensure it can be effective and have the confidence of the sector. The University appreciates the challenge that the Steering Group has had in producing the draft Code given the range of
stakeholder interests involved. Overall, however, the University has some fundamental reservations regarding the new approach of the Code and we hope the comments that follow can help the Steering Group to address these points and enhance the Code.

Main Comments

- **Structure**: The University welcomes the structure of the Code and the seven thematic sections as high-level principles. The principles seem appropriate and relevant to the key components of good governance in higher education.

- **‘Comply or Explain Principle’**: The University welcomes the Code’s commitment to this. This is essential given the diversity of Scotland’s universities and their autonomy which is a strength of the sector. It is imperative that the Code recognises and reflects the importance of autonomy and institutional diversity in its approach and allows for flexibility of governance practice within a set of overarching high level principles. This is rendered all the more important, by the need for institutions to be successful in the internationally competitive environment that universities like Aberdeen operate. While therefore welcoming the commitment of the Code to ‘comply or explain’, the University is concerned that this is then, to all intents and purposes, fundamentally contradicted by the approach, form and wording of the Code that follows.

- **Overall Form and Approach of the Code**: The approach and form is significantly more prescriptive than the current Code. The University recognises there is a difficult balance to be struck between agreeing on certain core principles of governance that institutions should generally adhere to and a level of prescription around these and how they should be met in practice. The University considers, however, that the draft Code has moved to an approach and level of prescription which is unnecessary and whereby it is closer to a compliance checklist rather than a Code of Good Governance. This is exemplified and reinforced by the use of ‘must/should’. It is notable that the word ‘must’ appears 230 times and the word ‘should’ 83 times. In contrast, in the current Code, the word ‘must’ appears 26 times and the word ‘should’ 148 times. As the current draft suggests that adherence with not only the principles but the more detailed supporting provisions will be required and explained in corporate governance statements, and as compliance with the Code is a condition of SFC funding, the sum effect of the 230 requirements is that the Code will significantly extend compliance requirements on universities. Given the HE Governance Act has separately extended common governance provisions for universities, the approach of the Code may be less supportive to the principles of autonomy and diversity in practice than is intended and to encouraging innovation in governance practice. We would suggest these sound objectives set out in the foreword can be met by the Code through a less prescriptive and detailed approach.

- **Length and Detail of the Code**: Linked to the previous comment, while the University welcomes the principles of the Code, it then becomes too detailed and extends into a number of areas that are not appropriate for a code of this type. This results in the Code being long (it is around a third longer than the current Code). Aside from the issue of the level of detail being overly prescriptive, we would suggest all parties interested in the Code would benefit from it being reduced in size, ideally to be briefer than the current Code.

Comments on Specific Sections

**Page2, Foreword**: The use of the word “provisions” of the Code should be made clearer as to whether it refers to the “Principles”, the supporting detailed sections of the Code or both. This is particularly important as the Code will be adopted by SFC as the governance requirement as a condition of funding. Currently it is the “Principles” of the Code that SFC refers to but the draft Code needs to be clear as to what it means by “provisions” in this context. The University would suggest that it should be the
“Principles” which form the basis of ‘comply or explain’ in corporate governance statements, particularly given the increased level of detailed supporting requirements within the Code which might otherwise have to be reported against.

Page 6, paragraph 9: The reference to policies being ethical, while agreed, is highly subjective and open to differing views as to whether that requirement has been met. It is unclear how this requirement would be measured.

Page 6, paragraph 9: This states that a university “must aim to contribute to economic development”. Universities, of course, do this in a variety of ways but we would question whether it is relevant to a Code of Governance to specify what part of the mission of an institution should be. These are outputs which are more appropriate for Scottish Government, SFC and individual institutions to agree upon through existing channels of policy and funding.

Page 6, paragraph 10: The University is supportive of the Fair Work Framework but does not consider this to be a governance matter to be included in the Code.

Page 7, paragraph 17: This in effect seeks to require that the Higher Education Governance Act is applied in a specific and prescribed way with regard to elected staff members. The University agrees with the intention of this section but feels it is inappropriate for the Code to seek to apply this to all universities. It should be a matter for individual governing bodies to determine and the flexibility of the Act in this regard should be respected.

Page 8, paragraph 18: The University is unclear as to what this section would mean in practice and would suggest the wording is revised to provide more clarity if it is to be retained.

Page 8, paragraph 20: The University welcomes the final sentence of this section to help ensure consistency across different categories of membership.

Page 8, paragraph 21: Restricting the term of office of an elected Chair to one term of office would appear to contradict the requirements of the Higher Education Governance Act.

Page 8, Principle 3 and Page 9, paragraph 24: The reference to members exercising their responsibilities in the interests of the institution as a whole is both important and welcome, as is the wording of paragraph 24.

Page 9, paragraph 28: There is a risk that the wording of this section will be taken to mean that any non-lay individual may have the right to be a member of a committee regardless of skills. The wording of this section also directly contradicts the CUC guidance on membership of Audit Committees being all lay so as to preserve independence and objectivity. This may be unintended but if so the requirements for Audit Committees should be acknowledged for the avoidance of doubt. If intended, then the Code should explain why a differing approach in Scotland is considered necessary.

Page 11, paragraph 34: The matter of which KPIs a governing body considers relevant for its institution to report against should be a matter for the governing body to determine not the Code.

Page 13, paragraph 50: This section is an example of where the Code extends into a level of detail which is unnecessary ie stipulating the content of standing orders of a governing body.

Page 18, Principle 7 and paragraph 93: The wording of Principle 7 should be made clearer to avoid any interpretation that notwithstanding the interest of academic boards in academic freedom, the final responsibility for academic freedom rests with the governing body.

Page 19, paragraph 82: We would suggest it would be appropriate to amend “at least one elected or Union staff member” to allow for members elected by Senates to Court to also be included.

Thank you for responding to the Review
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This is a paper about the main items of business considered by the Senate at an extraordinary meeting held on 14 March 2017, and the regular meetings held on 24 April and 7 June 2017.

1.2 This paper is provided for information and approval.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to approve item 3.9 and to note items 3.1 to 3.8 of this report.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Proposal for an Overseas Campus in Qatar

3.1.1 The Senate held an extraordinary meeting on 14 March to discuss the details of the proposal to establish a University of Aberdeen campus in Doha, Qatar, working in partnership with AFG Limited. Following discussion and a vote, the Senate agreed that the University should go ahead with the proposal to establish the campus in Qatar.

3.2 Motion to Recommend to Court a Name for the New Science Building

3.2.1 The Senate discussed a motion calling on Senate to recommend to Court that the new Science Building be named after James Clerk Maxwell who held the Chair of Natural Philosophy at Marischal College between 1856 and 1860. Following a vote, Senate agreed to recommend to the University Court that the new Science Building be named the ‘James Clerk Maxwell Building’.

3.3 Academic Structures

3.3.1 The Senate discussed a paper proposing the removal of the residual College structures now that the school based structure had become embedded. Senate engaged in a detailed discussion of various aspects of the change, in particular Senators stressed the need for there to be detailed consideration of the structural and policy changes which would need to be effected to ensure a smooth transition. To this end Senate agreed to establish a short-lived working group to assist with consideration of implications of the change for policy, procedures and committee memberships. Having agreed to establish a working group, Senate voted to approve the proposal to remove the College structure with effect from 1 August 2017. In addition Senate discussed and voted against a proposal to rename Schools as Faculties.

3.4 Research Postgraduate Completions

3.4.1 The Senate received a report on Research Postgraduate Completions. It was noted that discussions at Senate focused on actions which might be pursued to try to improve completion rates.

3.5 Working Group with Oversight of the Establishment of Overseas Campuses

3.5.1 The Senate discussed a motion to establish a working group to have oversight of the establishment of overseas campuses. Following discussion and a vote it was agreed that a
working party, comprising elected Senate members and appropriate management, would be formed, with the intention of revised procedures being remitted to Senate, through the Committee process.

3.6 Election of Senate Assessors to the University Court

3.6.1 Following discussions at Senate on 24 April, the Senate received a proposed method for the election of the Senate Assessors to the University Court. Senate agreed that of the four Senate Assessors, two should be drawn from Science, Engineering and Healthcare and two from Arts, Social Sciences and Business; Senate discussed in detail, the wording of the clause relating to achieving gender balance amongst the Assessors. Following a vote the proposed method was approved, with agreement that the final wording regarding gender balance should be agreed with the Athena Swan Group.

3.7 RUK Undergraduate offer-making protocols for September 2018 entry

3.7.1 The Senate considered a paper seeking approval for a new undergraduate offer-making protocol for rUK students from September 2018. The paper set out a process for widening entry criteria for making unconditional offers to rUK students. Following discussion, Senate voted to approve the proposed process.

3.8 Amendment to Resolution No 282: [Procedure for Removal of Members of Court]

3.8.1 The Senate discussed proposed changes recommended by the Court to the Procedure for Removal of Members of Court. It was noted that Senate’s consideration was part of a wider consultation on the proposed changes. Senate did not raise any specific issues with the proposed changes.

3.9 Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees

3.9.1 On the recommendation of the University Committee on Teaching & Learning (UCTL), the Senate approved, for its part, further changes to degree regulations as detailed within the Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees (attached as Annex B). These changes, comprise minor amendments to the Regulations governing the Degree of Bachelor of Theology (BTh) and Undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas in Christian Studies. These are supplementary to those regulatory changes previously considered by Court on 28 March 2017 (available at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared). Following subsequent consultation, Court is now asked to formally accept these changes for introduction in academic year 2017/18

3.9.2 The Court is asked to formally approve the draft Resolutions ‘Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees’ (available at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared as Annexes A and B).

3.9.3 With regards Annex B, the Court is further asked that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (2) of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, the draft Resolution be passed forthwith, so that the amended provisions may be applied with effect from date on which they are passed by the University Court.

4. Further Information

4.1 Further information is available from Professor Jeremy Kilburn (j.kilburn@abdn.ac.uk or extension 2017 or Dr Rachael Bernard (r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk or extension 3388).

[12 June 2017] [Version 1] [Open]
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This is a paper which outlines the results of the most recent Equal Pay audit carried out in 2016. To be confident that our pay systems deliver equal pay for work of equal value, the University is committed to carrying out an Equal Pay Audit every three years and publishing the results online. This paper also summarises and compares the highlights from the last three such reviews and presents additional analysis carried out using HESA occupational segregation categories.

1.2 This paper is provided for information.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The Court is invited to note the results of the Equal Pay Audit 2016.

3. **DISCUSSION**

3.1 It is important to note that the overall Gender Pay Gap is indicative of the uneven distribution of men and women across the pay grades. The under-representation of females at higher grades is a factor in weighting the overall gender gap in favour of males. With the exception of those on Grade 9 and Grade 9 Off Scale where the gap is 5% and 8%, there are no significant pay gaps across individual grades and none which exceed the 5% threshold. The analysis demonstrates that there is a higher proportion of male staff on the contribution points where, on average, 13% of the male population are in receipt of a contribution point salary compared to 8% of females.

3.2 The overall Ethnicity Pay Gap (EPG) is within the threshold at -3% and there are no significant gaps across the grades (excluding Grade 9 Off Scale where the EPG stands at -38%). However, there is some difference when the contribution points are analysed. A larger proportion of White ethnic groups (11%) are in receipt of a contribution point salary compared to only 5% of black and minority ethnic (BME) groups.

3.3 A small number of staff across the University have declared that they have a disability; it equates to less than 4% of the total population of staff at the University. Although the overall Disability Pay Gap is 16%, the low numbers make it difficult to probe further due to data protection and confidentiality. The low numbers also make it difficult to draw conclusions from the statistics relating to contribution points.

3.4 The difference in average salaries throughout the age groups is indicative of the well-established correlation between age, qualifications, training and grade. There are variances throughout the age groups in terms of those in receipt of contribution points and further work may be required to establish cause and effect.

3.5 Occupational Segregation analysis according to the 9 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC2010) groups adopted HESA Groups shows within the University Groups 1 and 2 are characterised by comparable distribution of males and females. Groups 3, 6 and 9 consist of a slightly higher number of females while groups 4, 7, 5 and 8 are characterised by a significantly higher distribution of a particular gender – Summarised in **Appendix 1**.

4. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

4.1 Further information is available as an appendix or from Debbie Dyker, HR Director, d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk, tel:3732 or Nicola Hendry, HR Partner, n.hendry@abdn.ac.uk, tel:2650.

5 June 2017 [Draft] [Open]
APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

EQUAL PAY AUDIT – AUGUST 2016

1. **Background**

1.1 The University conducts an Equal Pay Audit at least every three years analysing four equality strands: gender, ethnicity, disability and age. The University has now conducted its fourth Equal Pay Audit based on data extracted from the HR/Payroll system as at 31 August 2016.

2. **Methodology**

2.1 This review calculates the pay gap using mean (the method used in previous reviews) and median salaries (minimising the influence of salary extremes especially when employee numbers are small). Figures presented throughout the report correspond to mean and median salary values.

2.2 HESA age groups were used in the analysis of age salaries. No pay gaps have been calculated for age groups as there is a strong correlation between age and position on the salary scale, however, mean and median salaries for each age group have been published for comparison and discussion.

2.3 A horizontal pay gap has also been calculated for staff within the same grade structure. For the purposes of this review Grades 1-9 have been considered. The Grade 9 Off Scale Category refers to those staff who have been evaluated at the Grade 9 level but who are in receipt of salaries in excess of the Spine Point 54 maximum and are hence considered “Off Scale”. The data used in this review excludes the salaries of; Principal, Vice Principals, Clinicians and TUPE transferred staff with protected grades.

2.4 An additional analysis has been carried out on those staff sitting on contribution points within the salary grades. For each equality strand the number of people on a contribution point has been calculated and expressed as a percentage of the population within the grade.

2.5 Further analysis was carried out considering Standard Occupational Classification: SOC2010 - HESA. This analysis included the Principal and Vice Principals but excluded clinicians and TUPE transfers with protected grades.

3. **Gender**

3.1 The percentage of female staff in Grades 1-5 is 68% (slight decrease from 2013, which was 70%) and female representation at Grades 6-9 is 47% (no change from 2013). The percentage of female staff in full-time posts currently stands at 48% and male at 52%; part-time staff percentage for females and males is respectively 81% and 19% (Table 1). The gender balance for the University currently stands at 56% female and 44% male (Table 2). There has been little change in the overall gender balance over the past four audit periods.
3.2 The overall (vertical) Gender Pay Gap (GPG) based on a mean female salary of £34,272 and a mean male salary of £45,334 currently stands at 24% (and 23% based on median calculation) (Table 3). The horizontal GPG at grade level shows acceptable gaps within the recommended 5% threshold, with the exception of the Grade 9 and Grade 9 Off Scale where the GPG (based on mean) is at 5% and 8%. The overall GPG (based on the mean) of 23% for 2016 (Table 3) has reduced very slightly from 2013 which was 25%, 28% in 2010 and 29% in 2007 (Table 4).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>MEAN (FTE Salary £’s)</th>
<th>MEDIAN (FTE Salary £’s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Off</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 9</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1544</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>2751</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Mean Pay Gap %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Off</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 A total of 119 females are in receipt of contribution point salary from an eligible population of 1492, hence an 8% representation. The total number of males in receipt of contribution point salary is 142 from an eligible population of 1060, representing 13% of the population (Table 5).

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Number on Normal Grade Point</th>
<th>Number on Contribution Point</th>
<th>% On Contribution Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>242</td>
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<td>207</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>114</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1492</td>
<td>1060</td>
<td>2552</td>
<td>1373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Ethnicity

4.1 The proportion of black and minority ethnic groups (BME) currently stands at 8% alongside 88% white and 4% unknown (Table 6). The BME representation has increased slightly from 7% in 2013. The proportion of BME groups throughout the Scottish public sector work force currently stands at 2% and is 6%1 on average for Scottish Universities. Statistics produced by HESA for 2014/15 show the UK BME population at 12.1%2.

---

1 Scottish Census 2011, Census: 2011
2 HESA, HESA: 2014/2015
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>BME (BME)</th>
<th>White (W)</th>
<th>Unknown (U)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>172</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>307</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>241</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>12</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>460</td>
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<td>558</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>481</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>337</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Off</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>207</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>230</td>
<td>2415</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>2759</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

4.2 The overall Ethnic Pay Gap (EPG) for 2016 is -3% (Table 7). This is based on a mean BME salary of £38,873 and a mean White salary of £40,206. In comparison, the EPG for 2013 was 3% and for 2010 was 5%. The horizontal EPG shows no grades which exceed the 5% threshold (excluding Grade 9 Off Scale where EPG is influenced by number of employees).

4.3 A total of 12 employees from BME groups are in receipt of a contribution point from an eligible population of 223, representing 5%. The total number from White groups in receipt of a contribution point is 243 from an eligible population of 2182, representing 11% (Table 8). In 2013, 10 employees from BME groups were in receipt of a contribution point from an eligible population of 210, representing 5%. 294 employees from White groups were in receipt of contribution point from an eligible 2475, representing 12%.
**Table 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Number on Normal Grade Point</th>
<th>Number on Contribution Point</th>
<th>% on Contribution Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BME (BME)</td>
<td>White (W)</td>
<td>Unknown (U)</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>106</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>399</td>
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<td>481</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>2182</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Disability**

5.1 The number of employees with a declared disability is currently 103, representing less than 4% of the total population. For comparison, the number of employees declaring a disability from the 2013 review was 35, representing 1% of the total population.

5.2 The overall Disability Pay Gap (DPG) is 16%, based on a mean salary of £33,140 compared to £39,416 for non-disabled (Table 9). In comparison, the DPG for 2013 was 11% and a mean salary of £31,972 compared to non-disabled salary £35,980.

**Table 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>MEAN Salary (£'s)</th>
<th>MEAN Gap (%)</th>
<th>MEDIAN Salary (£'s)</th>
<th>MEDIAN Gap (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Non Disabled</td>
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<td>Disabled</td>
<td>Non Disabled</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>15831</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20427</td>
<td>20620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24635</td>
<td>24758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29321</td>
<td>29424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35342</td>
<td>36011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45319</td>
<td>44991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>54826</td>
<td>54900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64895</td>
<td>63010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Off</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>96432</td>
<td>92117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2549</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>33140</td>
<td>39416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 A total of 10 disabled employees from an eligible population of 98 are in receipt of contribution point salary, representing 10%. There are 241 non-disabled employees in receipt of contribution point salary from an eligible population of 2310, representing 10% (Table 10).
Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Number on Normal Grade Point</th>
<th>Number on Contribution Point</th>
<th>% on Contribution Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>Non Disabled</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2310</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Mean Salary</th>
<th>Median Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 1 (34 and under)</td>
<td>Group 2 (35-49)</td>
<td>Group 3 (50-65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Off</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>1163</td>
<td>907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** indicates where a figure cannot be calculated due to insufficient numbers or data

3 Equality Challenge Unit: Promoting Equality in Pay 2010
6.3 The percentage of each age group who are in receipt of a contribution point salary is Group 1 (2%), Group 2 (10%), Group 3 (19%) and Group 4 (5%). Further information regarding the correlation between contribution point and age (Table 12).

### Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On Contribution Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (34 and under)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (35-49)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (50-65)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (66 and over)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **Occupational Segregation**

7.1 Research has shown that occupational segregation is one of the main causes of the pay gaps in the United Kingdom (Equality Challenge Unit, 2014). The University is committed to monitoring occupational segregation, ensuring equal access to training/development, supporting mobility for all staff as well as flexible working opportunities. The spread of the University population across the 9 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC2010) groups adopted by HESA can be identified in (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

**Gender splits within HESA Occupational groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 Elementary occupations</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Process, plant and machine operatives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Sales and customer service occupations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Caring, leisure and other service occupations</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Skilled trades occupations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Administrative and secretarial occupations</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Associate professional and technical occupations</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Professional occupations</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Managers, directors and senior officials</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2 Groups 1 and 2 are characterised by comparable distribution of males and females. Groups 3, 6 and 9 consist of a slightly higher number of females while groups 4, 7, 5 and 8 are characterised by a significantly higher distribution of a particular gender (Figure 1).
7.3 Examples of imbalanced groups’ composition using the University ‘Post Long Description’ (F/M):

**Group 4**: Income Assistant (3/0), Payroll officer (5/0), School Finance Person (5/3), Information Assistant (10/2), Senior Information Assistant (13/2), School Administrative Officer (7/1), Clerical Assistant (6/3), Personal Assistant (16/0), Receptionist (6/1), Secretary (81/4)

**Group 7**: Sales Assistant (3/0)

**Group 5**: Ground Person (2/17), Assistant Engineer/E lectrician (0/6), Electrician (0/8), Engineer (0/6)

**Group 8**: Maintenance (0/3), Porter/Driver (0/11)

7.4 Further details of the pay and grade frequency distributions and histograms are presented in **Appendix 2**. The details demonstrate these patterns of segregation as identified above. Female pay aggregates around the earlier grades and tapers out where salaries are above £60,000 per annum. However, male pay is more centrally distributed with a more gradual decline above salaries of £80,000 per annum. These patterns of pay and grade distribution are mostly responsible for the overall pay gap described below.

7.5 The mean salary for females and males, across all grades is respectively £34,001 and £44,414 with the mean pay gap at 23.4% (**Table 13**). The median salary is £32,004 and £41,709 with median pay gap at 23%. With regards to the mean and median, the University pay gap is slightly higher than the Scottish HEI average results with the difference being less than 3%.

### Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HESA Group</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>MEAN (FTE Salary £'s)</th>
<th>MEDIAN (FTE Salary £'s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>1468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1547</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>2759</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Conclusion

8.1 It is important to note that the overall Gender Pay Gap is indicative of the uneven distribution of men and women across the pay grades. The under-representation of females at higher grades is a factor in weighting the overall gender gap in favour of males. With the exception of those on Grade 9 and Grade 9 Off Scale where the gap is 5% and 8%, there are no significant pay gaps across individual grades and none which exceed the 5% threshold. Females do appear to be disadvantaged when it comes to contribution point salaries. On average 13% of the male population are in receipt of a contribution point salary compared to 8% of females.
8.2 Analysis of Grade 9 Professorial staff when controlled by tenure in post demonstrates that there is no significant gender gap for staff with less than 10 years tenure. There is a pay gap for professorial staff with 10 or more years of tenure. It was observed that there is a high level of volatility within this group as the departure of a few females on high salaries resulted in a shift from 3.2% median pay gap in 2015 to 10.5% pay gap in December, 2016. This information is provided to REMCOM on an annual basis to assist in monitoring and addressing any gaps that may arise.

8.3 The overall Ethnicity Pay Gap (EPG) is within the threshold at -3% and there are no significant gaps across the grades (excluding Grade 9 Off Scale where the EPG stands at -38%). BME groups do appear disadvantaged on contribution points with 11% of White groups in receipt of a contribution point salary compared to only 5% of BME groups.

8.4 The number of colleagues who have a declared disability is low; it equates to less than 4% of the total population of staff at the University. Although the overall Disability Pay Gap is 16%, the low numbers make it difficult to probe further due to data protection and confidentiality. The low numbers also make it difficult to draw conclusions from the statistics relating to contribution points.

8.5 The difference in average salaries throughout the age groups is indicative of the well-established correlation between age, qualifications, training and grade. There are variances throughout the age groups in terms of those in receipt of contribution points and further work may be required to establish cause and effect.

8.6 The Occupational Segregation Pay Gap is less even with the threshold of 5% crossed with regards to group 2, 5 and 9 in favour of males and group 7 in favour of females (mean calculations). Groups 4, 5, 7, and 8 are also characterised by uneven distribution of males and females. These patterns of frequency distribution are illustrated in the attached Appendix 2.

8.7 In general terms, the University does not have significant cause for concern over Equal Pay when comparing Equal Pay for Equal Work. To ensure the University continues to meet Equal Pay obligations and the Equality Challenge Unit benchmarks for the sector the University may consider the following recommendations for further analysis/review.

9. Recommendations

- Further analysis could be carried out to determine the disproportion between males and females as well as ethnic groups on contribution point.
- A review of the promotion process could be carried out.
- A review of internal and external recruitment outcomes.
- Mandatory unconscious bias training for all recruiting managers.
- Continued commitment to Athena SWAN across the University to ensure that action plans are implemented and monitored.
- The University should consider whether some representation across the equality strands within their Committees and influential bodies would be beneficial in improving the monitoring and implementation of gender pay initiatives.
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is to advise Court of the standard delegated powers that will be used should any urgent business arise during the summer.

1.2 The paper is for information.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to note the paper which is for information.

3 Vacation Powers

3.1 During the vacation period between this meeting and its next meeting on 4 October 2017 matters requiring decision during that time will be taken under the standing delegated authority procedures for decisions required between meetings as previously approved by Court, being:

(i) that routine decisions required to be taken between meetings be delegated to a small group consisting of the Senior Governor, the Principal and the Senior Vice-Principal, subject to any such decisions being reported to the next meeting of Court.

(ii) that decisions on financial or estates matters that would otherwise require Court approval, but which for reasons of urgency cannot be deferred to the next meeting of Court, should be delegated to a small group consisting of the Senior Governor, the Convenor of the Operating Board, the Principal and Senior Vice-Principal or three of the four should one be unavailable.

(iii) that decisions on matters related to governance that would otherwise require Court approval, but which for reasons of urgency cannot be reserved to the next meeting of Court, should be delegated to a small group consisting of the Senior Governor, Convenor of the Governance & Nominations Committee and the Principal.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court (tel: (01224) 273949 or email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk).

8 June 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

EU STAFF AND STUDENT NUMBERS

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 The purpose of the paper is to provide Court with information requested at its last meeting regarding the number of EU staff and students in the University, in particular non-UK and non-Irish EU citizens. The information is provided in the attached tables.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the information contained in this paper.

3. FURTHER INFORMATION

3.1 Further information is available from Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, 01224 273939 or b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk.

15 June 2017 Version 1 FOI Status: Open
# Staff Numbers by School and Professional Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOLS</th>
<th>EU</th>
<th>NON EU</th>
<th>IRISH</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>161</td>
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<tr>
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<td>74</td>
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<td>Elphinstone Institute</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
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<td>66</td>
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<td>62</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>294</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1206</td>
<td>1727</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Professional Services

| Grand Total | 120 | 47  | 13  | 1052 | 1232 |

| Combined Totals | 414 | 244 | 43  | 2258 | 2959 |
### Number of Students

#### Headcount

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Domicile</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
<th>Headcount (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>Rest of UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>383.0</td>
<td>136.0</td>
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<td>1605.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7784.0</td>
<td>1761.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Full time Equivalent

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Domicile</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>FTE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>Rest of UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGR</td>
<td>300.2</td>
<td>112.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>PGT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>5437.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>1582.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Number of Students of Republic of Ireland Domicile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>% of all EU</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
<th>% of all EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PGR</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGT</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
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<td>UG</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>3.0%</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>