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

Item 5  Financial Year End Outturn Report
Item 6  Reports on Transnational Education:
    Item 6.1 Prioritisation of Transnational Education Projects
    Item 6.2 Qatar Campus Update
    Item 6.3 Proposed TNE Partnership in Sri Lanka
    Item 6.4 Korea Campus Update
    Item 6.5 Proposal to Establish an East Africa Campus based in Uganda

Item 11.10  Development Trust Activity

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

Item 10.1  Governance and Nominations Committee
There will be a meeting of the UNIVERSITY COURT on Wednesday 4 October 2017 at 9am.

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 WELCOME AND PRESENTATION ON THE NEW COMPOSITION OF COURT

3 9.20am MINUTES
   Note: An Action Log is enclosed with the minutes.

4 9.25am COMMUNICATION FROM THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

5 9.35am FINANCIAL YEAR END OUTURN REPORT

6 9.55am REPORTS ON TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION – IN STRICTTEST CONFIDENCE
   6.1 Prioritisation of Projects
   6.2 Qatar Campus Update
   6.3 Proposed TNE Partnership in Sri Lanka
   6.4 Korea Campus Update
   6.4 Proposal to Establish a Campus in East Africa: Uganda

   10.45am Coffee

7 11.00am THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND PERFORMANCE AGAINST KPIS

8 11.45am RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT PRINCIPAL – IN STRICTTEST CONFIDENCE

   Lunch available from 1pm

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

9 OPERATING BOARD REPORT

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

11 ROUTINE BUSINESS NOT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION
DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2017/18

Tuesday, 12 December 2017  9.00 – 1.00 pm
Wednesday, 4 April 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, 4 April 2018 and 26 June 2018
UNIVERSITY COURT

WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2017

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 2-8 are items of business proposed for discussion.

BUSINESS NOT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION:

Items 9 onward are to 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 27 June 2017

Present: Ms M Chapman (in the Chair), Professor C Black, Principal, Professor N Booth, Mr C Duncan, Professor M Delibegovic, Mr L Fuller, Mr M Gilbert, Mr J Hall, Professor P Hannaford, Professor N Hutchison, Professor J Kilburn (for minutes 215 to 242), Cllr J Laing, Mr D MacFarlane, Professor P McGeorge, Mrs K McPhail, Ms A Minto, Mr K Murray, Dr N Oren, Cllr G Owen, Mr B Paterson, Mr I Percival, Mrs J Shirreffs and Dr D Steyn.

In attendance: Mr D Beattie, Mrs C Inglis, Mrs D Dyker (for minutes 255-256) Mr L Ogubie, Professor J Paterson (for minutes 215 to 238), Dr H Sveinsdottir (for minutes 215 to 238), Very Rev Professor I Torrance, Dr D Watts, and Mr B Purdon (Clerk).

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Haywood, Professor Akisanya, Professor Brittain, Ms Killin and Dr Pack.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

215 Mr B Paterson declared an interest as an Officer of the University of Aberdeen Branch of Unite the Union and in Minutes (223-236) as a member of staff within the School of Natural and Computing Sciences.

NEW AND RETIRING MEMBERS

216 The Court welcomed Councillor Owen to her first meeting and Mr Watts (UCU nominated member of Court) who was in attendance pending approval of the new composition of Court. The Court welcomed Mr Ogubie who was also in attendance as President (Elect) of the Students’ Association.

217 The Court noted that it would be the last meeting of Court for Professor Black, Professor Hutchison, Dr Pack and Mr Fuller. It would also potentially be the last meeting for a number of members if changes to the composition of Court were approved by Privy Council over the summer. The Court thanked all members for their respective contribution to the work of the Court and the University.

MINUTES

218 The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2017 were approved.

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

FINANCIAL PLANNING

BUDGETS 2017/18 TO 2019/20

220 The Court received a paper setting out the University’s proposed budget position for 2017/18 to 2019/20 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Court noted:

- The financial risks that had been identified in the budget setting process and the mitigating actions and early warning mechanisms in place to monitor progress against budget targets. The achievement of the budget targets would require both income growth and a reduction in staffing levels in certain areas to the sector norm. It was acknowledged that this needed to be done while also protecting income growth and maintaining high quality teaching and research.
- The Court noted the sensitivity analysis included with the paper and the impact on the University's overall financial sustainability should the underpinning budget targets not be achieved, in particular forecast income from online education, transnational education and international student recruitment.

221 In addition the Court noted that both the University's two pension schemes were undergoing valuations and that a report on the implications of those would be considered by the Operating Board.

222 The Court approved the budgets for 2017/18 to 2019/20 and the budget assumptions including the overarching Strategic Planning objective that the University achieves (as a minimum) a post FRS102 breakeven position by 2019/20.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RISK

SCHOOL BUDGETS 2017/18-2019/20

223 The Court received a paper which described how School plans and budgets had been aligned to the overall University budget, with a target of breaking even by 2019/20 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

224 The Court noted that, to achieve the budgetary target, Schools would cumulatively grow their income by £20M (through overseas student fee income, online delivery and TNE) over the next three years. In addition, £5.6M in savings would be achieved through reductions in staffing, including £3.1M identified by Schools (from natural staff turnover and planned or flexible retirements, operational efficiencies and restructuring), £1.1M through additional vacancy savings, and £1.45M from ongoing rationalisation particularly in light of REF planning and the use of approved JCCRA processes where necessary.

225 In discussion, it was clarified and noted by Court that a consultation on merging the School of Natural and Computing Science with the School of Engineering had begun and that, contrary to the inference of the wording of the paper, this had not been agreed. It was also clarified that at the most recent meeting of JCCRA the University had stated that at this time there were no plans to use JCCRA for staff reductions but that was subject to change if the budget position changed.

226 The importance of opportunities for industry, CPD and contract income was highlighted as an area that Schools could look to increase. In discussion, the Court was assured that while staff activity would need to prioritise income growth, the need for academic staff to continue to participate in activities which did not necessarily directly correlate to income generation such as academic conferences was recognised. The Court also discussed the importance of ensuring that in the new School structure there continued to be collaboration across disciplines and that there were mechanisms and structures to help ensure that the University fostered a culture of academic collaboration across School lines.

KPI PERFORMANCE MONITORING UPDATE: QUARTER 2, 2016/17

227 The Court received a report on progress made in the last quarter (January - March) against the institutional KPI targets underpinning the University's Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

228 The Court noted that in future it would 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 to providing regular updates on a set of institutional metrics to give a clearer overview of institutional academic and financial performance. In discussion, it was agreed that the Court did not consider a specific KPI on mental health to be necessary and that this could be more effectively reported by providing more information in existing Health, Wellbeing and Safety reports. The Court agreed that it would be important to ensure that the KPIs could allow Court to monitor performance against the key budget income growth areas such as online education.
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER: SIX MONTHLY REPORT

229 The Court received a paper on risk management and the institutional Strategic Risk Register (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Court considered the three risks which breached the institutional tolerance threshold net risk score which were: Financial Sustainability, Internationalisation and Student Recruitment. It was agreed that in future reporting the risk register and budgets paper could be presented in a more consistent way.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

230 The Court received a paper on the future challenges and opportunities for student recruitment, and the strategies in place to manage these (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Court discussed the issues presented by Brexit for EU students, and the outlook for home, rUK and international student recruitment.

ONLINE EDUCATION UPDATE

231 The Court received a paper on progress in regard to progressing the University’s strategy to grow online education and become a leading provider by 2020 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

232 The Court discussed the importance of digital marketing and institutional profile to the success of the strategy. It was agreed that the Court should receive a more detailed presentation on digital marketing and the use of social media at its next meeting. In further discussion, it was noted that the University’s approach to developing online education was to focus on specific courses where it considered it had an opportunity to be distinctive and attract high numbers of students. The University was confident that it could achieve the income growth in online education that had been included in the budget targets.

REPORT ON LEAGUE TABLES

233 The Court received a paper on the University’s performance in recent league tables (the Complete University Guide, the Guardian League Table, and the QS World Rankings) and action plans in place to support improvement (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

234 The Court agreed that rankings and league tables were of major importance to student choice, employability and decisions on funding charitable, commercial and overseas partners. Improving the University’s standing in league tables should therefore be a priority at an institutional and School level. The Court discussed some of the specific areas within the three recent league tables and that in a number of these current data suggested the University’s ranking would improve.

REPORT ON PROGRESS OF TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECTS

235 The Court received a report on the progress of four significant initiatives in transnational education – East Africa (Rwanda), Korea, Qatar and Sri Lanka (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

236 With regard to the Korea Campus, it was noted that there were challenges in the Korean economy which the University believed required a refocusing of the programmes being offered and discussions in this regard with Korean partners regarding the feasibility of the current start date of September 2017 were taking place. It was agreed to circulate an update to Court on the outcome of those discussions at an appropriate point.

237 The Court discussed the current political situation in Qatar and the Gulf Region and was assured the University was monitoring the position very carefully. Following discussions with key partners and contacts in the area, including the British Council and British Embassy, the University was content at present that there was no immediate risk to the project or staff.
The University was also keeping any reputational risk from operating in Qatar under review should the current position change. It was agreed to keep Court informed of any significant change to the position.

238 The Court noted that the initiative to open a campus in Rwanda was now unlikely to proceed. This was as a result of the business case for it becoming unsustainable in the light of a categorical statement by the Rwandan regulatory authority that new licenses would only be issued for a restricted range of energy-related academic programmes, alongside a withdrawal of potential Government funding for undergraduate students studying at the proposed campus. The University was exploring alternative opportunities in the region.

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN PLANNING

239 The Court received a paper on the activity undertaken in preparation for the public launch of the University's new fundraising campaign. It was provided by the University to update Court on the current status of Campaign planning following recent discussions with the Development Trust Board of Trustees (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) regarding potential projects for inclusion in the Campaign.

240 The Court noted that a number of projects as noted in the paper had been agreed with the Development Trust for inclusion in the Campaign with further information requested on a further four which were Energy, the School of Law, Interfaith and Civility. In discussion, it was noted that there were potentially significant opportunities around renewable energy and climate change and this should be considered in the context of the Energy project. It was also noted that further projects on North-East Culture were being considered for future development. The Court noted that in governance terms the process was that the University would seek the Development Trust’s view on the fundraising potential of projects but that the decision on whether to proceed with a particular project outside of its fundraising potential was a matter for the University and Court to agree. The Court was also assured that funds raised for projects would be protected in the budget for those purposes.

ESTATES AND CAPITAL PLANNING

VISION FOR THE ESTATE: A WORLD CLASS CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

241 The Court received a discussion paper on the University’s strategic vision for the delivery of a world class campus experience at King’s College, Foresterhill and Hillhead. It was supplemented with three papers providing analysis of the challenges and opportunities related to the three sites which had also been made available to the University community for discussion (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

242 The Court agreed that it would benefit from having an extended discussion of the future vision for the campus and that this needed to consider what the overriding context for the delivery of university education would be in the future and the part that digital technology and infrastructure would have in shaping that Estate. It was agreed this should be included in the programme for the Court meeting in October.

INSTITUTIONAL 10 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

243 The Court received an update paper on the Institutional 10 year capital programme which had been reviewed and updated to ensure it remained relevant to the University’s strategic priorities and accurately reflected the most up-to-date information (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

244 The Court noted:

- the revised assumptions around the timing of land sales, and the impact of these on the availability of cash;
- the revised plan is aligned with the budget presented to this meeting for approval (which assumes a break even position by 2019/20 on the FRS102 basis);
- the cash available for investment towards uncommitted projects totalled £95.1M over the 10 year period.

STANDING REPORTS

REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

245 The Rector provided a report to Court noting in particular the success of the summer graduation ceremonies and thanked Mr Fuller as the Acting President of the Students’ Association for his work over recent months.

REPORT FROM THE SENIOR GOVERNOR

246 The Senior Governor reiterated his appreciation of the contribution that retiring members had made to the work of the Court. The Senior Governor also provided a brief update on discussions among the Committee of Scottish Chairs regarding the draft Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and noted that the Court was being asked to approve the University’s response to the consultation elsewhere on the agenda.

REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL

247 The Court noted a report from the Principal (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) on recent developments within the University. The Principal reported further on the progress of the Scottish Government’s Skills agencies review, the publication of the teaching excellence framework and potential changes to the ‘learner journey’ in the Scottish education system.

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

248 The Acting President of the Students’ Association introduced his written report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) on the recent activities of AUSA. The Court discussed the information provided regarding calls to the ‘Nightline’ service and it was agreed that further information and trend statistics would be provided in future as part of the report.

GOVERNANCE

EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW: ROLE OF COURT AND OPERATING BOARD

249 The Court received a paper on the recommendations of the Court effectiveness review which focused on what the respective roles of Court and the Operating Board should be (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The paper had 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. The paper proposed:

- that 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.
- The challenges of a highly competitive, fast moving and increasingly commercial world which the GGI effectiveness report described necessitated governance that could be ‘fleet of foot’. The paper noted that this could not be achieved by a Court meeting quarterly and discussions had questioned whether a Court meeting more frequently would be effective given its size. It was therefore suggested this reinforced the need for the Operating Board, with suitable decision making authority agreed by Court, to act as a smaller sub-set of Court and which met more frequently.
250 The Court approved the high level articulation of its role and that of the Operating Board, and that a more detailed schedule of decision making authority between the two would be developed on this basis for further consideration at the next meeting. This would 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 had recommended.

251 The Court also approved proposed changes to the Operating Board remit as set out in the paper.

**REPORT ON TRANSITION TO NEW COMPOSITION OF COURT**

252 The Court received a paper providing: (i) an update on the feedback received from the Scottish Government/Privy Council on the Draft Ordinance for a revised composition of Court; (ii) a reminder of the process of transition that the Court had agreed should be taken forward for implementation by 1 October and how this would affect the different categories of membership; and (iii) 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 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

253 The Court noted that since the paper had been prepared the Scottish Government had confirmed it was content for a formal application to approve the draft Ordinance be submitted to the Privy Council. This had been done and a response from the Privy Council was awaited. The Court was advised that in the event that the matter was not considered by the Privy Council in July it was not expected to then be considered until the next meeting of the Privy Council in October. In this event, the current composition of Court would continue to apply for the October meeting.

254 The Court approved that, in the event the Privy Council approval of the new composition was not received by 30 September 2017:

1. That of the six current Senate Assessor positions, the two positions falling vacant on 30 September would 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. 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.

**PEOPLE**

**RENUMERATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

255 The Court received a paper on this year’s Senior Staff Pay Policy, including details of the proposals for consideration at the Remuneration Committee meeting on 26 June 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

256 The Court noted that 40 cases for senior staff pay awards had been considered by the Committee and had been agreed subject to two abstentions by members of the Committee. The Court noted that these amounted to £85k before additional employers’ costs.

**HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY**
The Court noted a paper *(copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes)* which provided an update on accidents and incidents in the University since the last report to the Court and on some of the key recent activities aimed at sustaining and improving the Health, Safety and Wellbeing culture of the University.

The Court agreed that in future the report should contain information on the wellbeing of staff and students. It was also agreed that the Court should receive a presentation on the University's Mental Health Strategy at its next meeting.

**BUSINESS FOR STRATEGY MEETING AND YEAR AHEAD**

The Court received and considered a paper *(copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes)* which set out 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.

The following items were noted as potential items of business:

- Reviewing and confirming the University’s Strategy;
- The Estate and what the impact of long-term trends and change in higher education would be for the campus;
- The University’s approach to digital marketing and social media;
- The University’s brand;
- The University’s mental health strategy
- The University’s partnership with industry: its potential as a source of income diversification and as a partner for its students;
- A presentation by the Students’ Association. Further suggestions on what the Court would particularly find helpful for this to include were requested by AUSA.

The Court agreed it should use the Strategy Day to set a forward agenda of Court business for the year ahead.

The Court agreed to extend the scheduled duration of the October meeting to include the afternoon of Tuesday 3 October, followed by dinner and the already scheduled meeting over the course of Wednesday 4 October.

**OPERATING BOARD REPORT**

The Court received and noted a report from the Operating Board meetings held on 9 May and 8 June 2017 *(copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes)*.

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

**Governance and Nominations Committee**

The Court received a report of the principal items of business considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee at its meeting on 9 May 2017 *(copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes)*. The Court approved:

(i) the reappointment of Dr Steyn as an independent member for a further period of office of three years from 1 August 2017 and noted the commencement of recruitment processes for three further independent members of Court.

(ii) the appointment, in principle, of Mr MacFarlane as Convener of the Audit Committee to succeed the current Convener, with effect from 1 November 2017.

(iii) the appointment of Mr Hall to the role of Senior Independent Member.

(iv) rules for the nomination of trade union and Students’ Association nominated members of Court respectively, for the nomination and election of staff members of Court, and for the future election and appointment to the position of Senior Governor. The Court noted...
the comments that had been received from trade union representatives regarding the wording of the rules with respect to seeing gender balance in their nominations to Court.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

265 The Court received a report of the principal items of business considered by the Audit Committee at its meetings on 20 April and 1 June 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

266 The Court on the recommendation of the Committee approved the reappointment of the University's Internal Auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), for a two-year period with effect from 1 August 2017.

PARTNERSHIP, NEGOTIATION AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

267 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Partnership, Negotiation and Consultative Committee at its meeting on 17 May 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Court approved:

- CCTV Policy
- Employee Engagement Strategy
- Changes to Staff Promotions Procedures
- Changes to the Honorary Staff Appointment Process
- Terms and Conditions of Employment: Additions to the existing policy on Intellectual Property and Spin-Out Companies.

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

268 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the University Committee on Teaching and Learning at its meeting on 3 May 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

269 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Student Experience Committee at its meetings on 8 May 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE

270 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Research Policy Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

ROUTINE BUSINESS

STRATEGIC PLAN FORECASTS (SPF) 2016-17 TO 2019-20

271 The Court received and approved a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which provided information from the 2017-18 budget paper in a standardized format for submission to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

AMENDMENT TO ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO RESOLUTION NO 281 OF 2015

272 The Court received and approved changes 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 would be removed with effect from 1 August 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The Court also approved the required amendments to Resolution No 281 to reflect these proposed changes to the
academic governance structure which had been considered by Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and made available to the wider University Community.

273 In discussion of business elsewhere on the agenda, it was queried whether the proposal should have been considered first by Court rather than at Senate.

AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION NO 282 [PROCEDURE FOR REMOVAL OF MEMBERS OF COURT]

274 The Court received and approved minor changes to Resolution No 282 Procedure for Removal of Members of Court (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which had been intimated to Court in March 2017 subject to the required statutory consultation with Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and the wider University Community which had since been undertaken.

REVIEW OF SCOTTISH CODE OF GOOD HE GOVERNANCE

275 The Court received and approved a response to a consultation on a new draft Scottish Code of Good HE Governance (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

SENATE REPORT

276 The Court received and noted a report of the principal items of business considered by Senate at its meetings on 14 March, 24 April and 7 June 2017 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

277 The Court approved the proposed changes to the draft Resolutions ‘Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees’.

EQUAL PAY AUDIT

278 The Court received and noted a paper which outlined the results of the most recent Equal Pay audit carried out in 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

DEVELOPMENT TRUST ACTIVITY

279 The Court received and noted an update on the activity undertaken by the University of Aberdeen Development Trust since the last meeting of Court.

VACATION POWERS

280 The Court received and noted a paper on the standard delegated powers that would be used should any urgent business arise during the summer, with any decisions made to be reported to Court.

EU STAFF AND STUDENT NUMBERS

281 The Court received and noted a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which provided information regarding the number of EU staff and students in the University.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

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

DATE OF MEETINGS FOR 2017/18

283 The Court noted that meetings had been scheduled for 2017/18 as follows:

Wednesday 4 October 2017 9am to 5pm, preceded by Dinner on Tuesday 3 October 2017, at 7pm. Note by Clerk: The Court further agreed to extend this meeting to include the afternoon of Tuesday 3 October 2017, with timings to be confirmed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court Date</th>
<th>Minute Ref</th>
<th>Action Arising</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2017</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>Report on Progress of TNE Projects: Korea Campus</td>
<td>VP Internationalisation</td>
<td>Complete: A report is provided on today’s agenda.</td>
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<td>With regard to the Korea Campus, it was noted that there were challenges in the Korean economy which the University believed required a refocusing of the programmes being offered and discussions in this regard with Korean partners regarding the feasibility of the current start date of September 2017 were taking place. It was agreed to circulate an update to Court on the outcome of those discussions at an appropriate point.</td>
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<td>The Court discussed the current political situation in Qatar and the Gulf Region and was assured the University was monitoring the position very carefully. Following discussions with key partners and contacts in the area, including the British Council and British Embassy, the University was content at present that there was no immediate risk to the project or staff. The University was also keeping any reputational risk from operating in Qatar under review should the current position change. It was agreed to keep Court informed of any significant change to the position.</td>
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<td>June 2017</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>Vision for the Estate: A World Class Campus Experience</td>
<td>University Secretary</td>
<td>In progress: As a result of the refocusing of today’s meeting to a shorter agenda, this item has been deferred to a future meeting.</td>
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<td>The Court agreed that it would benefit from having an extended discussion of the future vision for the campus and that this needed to consider what the overriding context for the delivery of university education would be in the future and the part that digital technology and infrastructure would have in shaping that Estate. It was agreed this should be included in the programme for the Court meeting in October.</td>
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<td>June 2017</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>Effectiveness Review: Role of Court and Operating Board</td>
<td>University Secretary</td>
<td>Complete: The paper is included on today’s agenda.</td>
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<td>June 2017</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>Health, Wellbeing and Safety</td>
<td>University Secretary/VP for People</td>
<td>In progress: As a result of the refocusing of today’s meeting to a shorter agenda, the presentation has</td>
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<td>- The University’s brand;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The University’s mental health strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The University's partnership with industry: its potential as a source of income diversification and as a partner for its students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- A presentation by the Students’ Association. Further suggestions on what the Court would particularly find helpful for this to include were requested by AUSA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In progress: As a result of the refocusing of today’s meeting to a shorter agenda, these items will be considered for inclusion on the agenda of future meetings.

List of completed items available on Court Intranet or on request from the Clerk.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT

COMMUNICATION FROM THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE: GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS ON COURT

Purpose of the paper

1. This is a paper from the Business Committee of the General Council to suggest how, under the new composition of Court, the links with the General Council might best be preserved.

Recommended Action

2. The Court is invited to consider the recommendations of the Business Committee as detailed at Section 9.

New composition of Court

3. The Privy Council approved the new composition of Court on 19 July 2017. As a result of those changes, there ceased to be four Assessors to Court elected by the General Council. Instead, there are now twelve independent members of Court appointed by the Court of which at least four must be members of the General Council. Under the transitional arrangements agreed by Court, the four General Council Assessors as at 18 July 2017 (Professor Booth, Mr Duncan, Mr Percival and Mrs Shirreffs) have been appointed as independent members of Court.

4. Once these transitional arrangements expire, there is a danger that the link between the General Council and the court will be lost. In practice, there are likely to be more General Council members on Court than the prescribed minimum of four - but no Court member will necessarily feel any obligation to act as a link between the two bodies. The link seems worth preserving: quite apart from the historic status of both bodies as part of the governance of the University, the General Council (and in particular its Business Committee which is elected to represent it between its biannual meetings) can support the work of the University in a variety of ways including helping to mobilise graduates and their prospective employers and providing an interested but detached view of strategy.

Retaining the Court/General Council link

5. Under the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, the General Council has the right to review and comment to the Court on all questions affecting the well-being and prosperity of the University, and to make representations to which the Court must respond. That formal link is, however, largely uni-directional. It does not ensure that the General Council and its Business Committee are kept informed of the Court’s proceedings and concerns, other than by the Principal’s address to the biannual meetings of the General Council.

6. The Business Committee has suggested that, to facilitate communication from Court to General Council, the convener of the Committee (or in his absence an alternate) should be in attendance at Court meetings, without voting or speaking rights. That would be similar to the position of the Pro Vice Chancellor and would similarly reflect the formal statutory position of the General Council in the governance of the University. That arrangement could be put in place at once, or delayed until the end of the transitional membership of the former General Council Assessors.
Selecting General Council members of Court

7. The Business Committee has also suggested that, once the transitional membership of Mrs Shirreffs expires, a place on the Governance and Nominations Committee should be taken by a member of the Business Committee, to reflect in some measure the General Council’s interest in the selection of the four General Council members of Court.

8. Additional ways to emphasise the continuing involvement of the General Council could include one or more of the following:

- four of the independent members of Court could be appointed on the basis that they should sit both on Court and on the Business Committee
- the advertising for these independent members could be done in the name of the General Council and the Business Committee could be consulted on the wording of the advertisement and the skills sought;
- the Business Committee could nominate one or more representatives to sit on the appointment panel for these members;
- the Business Committee could nominate one or more representatives to help appraise the effectiveness of the Court members thus appointed.

Recommendation

9. Court is invited to consider the recommendation of the Business Committee that:

- the convener of the Business Committee (or an alternate) be in attendance at Court meetings (paragraph 6);
- a member of the Business Committee be appointed to the Governance and Nominations Committee (paragraph 7);
- the Governance and Nominations Committee be invited to consider how best to involve the General Council in the appointment of specific independent members of Court (paragraph 8).
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides Court with an update on progress made across 2016/17, at institutional level, towards achieving targets set against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that underpin the University’s Strategic Plan for 2015-2020.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 This paper is for consideration and discussion where appropriate; it does not include any recommendations.

3. CONTEXT – INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 The University has a Strategic Plan in place for 2015-2020 (available at the following link: http://content.yudu.com/htmlReader/A3xceo/UoA-Strategic-Plan/reader.html). The Plan is centred on three high-level strategic themes: Teaching and Learning; Research and Knowledge Exchange; and People. Hard copies of the Strategic Plan will be available for members at the meeting.

3.2 Under current planning arrangements, University performance against these themes is measured against five KPIs and in turn, a number of associated metrics. The KPIs are: Institutional Profile and Student Recruitment; Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience; Research Performance; Financial Sustainability; and Equality and Diversity. The associated metrics were chosen to reflect the themes listed, and to enable monitoring and control of performance within those areas throughout the planning period. It should also be noted that the chosen metrics closely align with those used by most league tables, as well as the Scottish Government when monitoring performance of institutions across the sector. All metrics are listed by KPI in Table 1 (appended), which also gives a breakdown of institutional performance. Performance is RAG rated; a RAG rating is a popular management method that is widely used for monitoring and control of performance in the higher education sector, and is based on Red, Amber and Green colours used in a traffic light rating system.

3.3 As a rule, progress against each KPI is measured at institutional and School level; institutional performance is normally an aggregation of performance across all Schools. The annual cycle starts in October each year, and performance is broken down by quarter; Q4 concludes at the end of September. Responsibility for performance monitoring and control lies centrally with the Directorate of Planning, taken forward as part of the strategic planning process under the leadership of the Senior Vice-Principal.

4. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AGAINST KPIs FOR 2016/17

4.1 The following gives a summary of institutional performance by KPI metric for 2016/17 by quarter. This is illustrated visually in Table 1, which also includes the position at the start of the strategic planning period and the 2020 target, enabling a longer term view of progress.

4.2 Within 2016/17, performance is measured by metric relative to agreed targets (set centrally), and RAG ratings are given by quarter, showing in-year trends. It should be noted that for the majority of metrics a green RAG rating is applied when actual performance reaches 95% of the target figure; amber is 70% or above, with red anything below that threshold. When target thresholds were set for each metric, a balance was sought between achieving what was realistic and what was aspirational.
4.3 Since 2015, the data shows that the University has improved across the majority of metrics, and in turn, that it remains on course to achieve targets set for 2020, albeit, this will not be without challenge. The following provides a summary of performance by KPI for 2016/17:

4.3.1 Institutional Profile and Student Recruitment KPI

The league table metrics were both RAG rated red. The University has ambitions to be ranked within the world top 100. Within the QS World University Rankings, the University dropped 17 places relative to the previous year, down to 158. The largest decreases were observed for faculty student ratio and for academic and employer reputation. Within the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE), the University rose three places, mainly due to an increase in the number of papers to academic staff and research reputation. There were decreases in teaching mainly due to a weaker staff student ratio, and in industry income. Positively, the University was ranked 33 in the world for international outlook within the THE (not shown). A League Table Working Group was set up in late 2016 to drive strategic action and this is ongoing.

For metrics linked to student population, performance was mixed in Q1, though by Q4 and year-end, all but PGT Overseas were RAG rated green; it was rated amber, having failed to achieve target across each individual quarter. This can be attributed to varying factors; for example, the decline in uptake of oil and gas related programmes as a consequence of the slump affecting that sector. However, for 2017/18 (pending release of most recent data), PGT overseas intake is expected to markedly improve, largely as a consequence of emerging international partnerships in countries like China and more targeted marketing and recruitment strategies. Additionally, the introduction of new online PGT programmes in 2018, through Schools like Business, and Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition (MMSN), is expected to have a significant impact on PGT numbers. As such, the outlook for these metrics is positive.

4.3.2 Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience

Institutional performance for each of the metrics under this KPI was RAG rated green by quarter throughout 2016/17. This reflects concerted efforts by Schools to make improvements across these metrics via a number of strategies. These include, but are not limited to, introduction of more focused student support mechanisms, improved processes for early engagement with students, and more targeted intervention where there are perceived to be potential issues, to support retention of students from year 1 of study to year 2. Schools are also targeting areas of identified weakness, and with regards to student satisfaction as measured through the National Student Survey (NSS) specifically, efforts are being made to improve response rates by raising the profile and enhancing buy-in among both staff and students. In terms of the employability of our students ('Positive Destinations'), more concerted effort has been made to improve employability by tailoring course content to align with employer requirements, and also through other initiatives; for example, developing 'role model' profiles of graduate students on discipline webpages. On the whole, outlook for this KPI is therefore positive.

4.3.3 Research Performance

Grant Income per FTE was RAG rated green across the full year. There is caution that this level of performance may be difficult to maintain, though it is notable that research funding availability across the sector has risen over the last three years, by approximately 15%. This gives scope for optimism going forward, though it should be noted that competition for funding is high; for example, large grants are harder to obtain, with most awarded to universities with significant track records, predominately within the Russell Group. It should also be noted that while performance under this metric has remained relatively positive, the total institutional research grant holding has declined; it currently sits at £61.5M, relative to £62.8M at year-end 2015/16.

For the number of research students per FTE (‘PGR per FTE’), the green rating reflects work undertaken by Schools to improve performance. There has been a focus on incentivising PGR recruitment through specific initiatives, such as better financial support packages, increased teaching opportunities and enhanced scholarship schemes. However, while evident that these strategies are starting to produce a return, growth has not exceeded current sector trends, meaning scope for further improvement remains; indeed, at the current time, Aberdeen is ranked fifth in Scotland for PGR population (according to HESA data).
For the REF-related metric (REF 2021 period publications for eligible academics (eligibility pending confirmation of national criteria)), performance was RAG rated amber for Q3 and Q4, though for the last quarter it was marginal (93% of target achieved). As a rule, performance under this metric should improve incrementally across the REF submission period, as researchers continue to produce outputs, and Schools continue to undertake external peer review on an ongoing basis as part of their preparations; as such, an amber rating half way through the submission period does not warrant undue concern.

4.3.4 Financial Sustainability

The ‘Institutional Underlying Surplus/Deficit’ metric was green across the full year meaning that Schools and Professional Services have performed well with respect to budget targets, albeit the targets still produce a deficit position overall. Moving forward, targets will pose an increasing challenge at both School and institutional level; increased cost pressures, accompanied by anticipated continued decline in public funding, predicts that the deficit will rise over the next year, before returning to breakeven in 2020. In order to meet this target, the University will require to generate significant new income streams, largely through new programmes (on-campus, online and international), whilst maintaining strict control over costs and realising staffing efficiencies.

4.3.5 Equality and Diversity

The University commitment to equality remains a strategic priority; it achieved successful renewal of the Athena Swan Bronze Award at institutional level in November 2016, and will now be working to implement an action plan throughout the rest of the planning period, with a view to readying a submission for the Silver Award by 2020 or 2021. Drilling down, every School has either achieved Bronze or, where not, has submitted a Bronze application.

5. **Further Information**

5.1 Further information is available from Professor Mike Greaves (Senior Vice-Principal) on m.greaves@abdn.ac.uk; or, Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir (Director of Planning) on hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk.

IG/AW/Planning[22 September 2017] [V2] [Open]
Table 1: Institutional Performance by KPI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPI</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>Position at start of Strategic Plan</th>
<th>2016-17 Q1</th>
<th>2016-17 Q2</th>
<th>2016-17 Q3</th>
<th>2016-17 Q4</th>
<th>2016-17 Q4</th>
<th>2020 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>League tables: THE¹</td>
<td></td>
<td>188 (2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: UG, Home/EU</td>
<td></td>
<td>7840</td>
<td>8047</td>
<td>8088</td>
<td>8088</td>
<td>8071</td>
<td>7876</td>
<td>7876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: UG, RUK</td>
<td></td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>1085</td>
<td>1141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: UG, Overseas</td>
<td></td>
<td>514</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGT, Home/EU</td>
<td></td>
<td>656</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>1002</td>
<td>1002</td>
<td>1004</td>
<td>1069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGT, RUK</td>
<td></td>
<td>659</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGT, Overseas</td>
<td></td>
<td>819</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>1232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGR, Home/EU/RUK</td>
<td></td>
<td>477</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student population: PGR, Overseas</td>
<td></td>
<td>368</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-continuation⁴</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student satisfaction: teaching³</td>
<td></td>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student satisfaction: assessment &amp; feedback³</td>
<td></td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive destinations³</td>
<td></td>
<td>75.1%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Performance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant income per FTE⁴</td>
<td></td>
<td>~£57,000</td>
<td>£15,822</td>
<td>£31,092</td>
<td>£45,446</td>
<td>£62,038</td>
<td>£60,586</td>
<td>£81,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGR students per FTE⁴</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REF period publications for eligible academics⁵</td>
<td></td>
<td>NA⁶</td>
<td>NA⁶</td>
<td>NA⁶</td>
<td>NA⁶</td>
<td>NA⁶</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>2046</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Surplus</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>-5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional underlying surplus/deficit (YTD, M)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bronze held but due for renewal</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>Ready to apply for Silver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹League tables are published yearly. In the QS this was in June (Q3) and for the THE this was in Sept (Q4). Prior to these points, the data relates to the previous year’s league table.
²Student population figures are by FTE rather than headcount. Main student intakes are in G1 (September student intake) and G2 (January student intake).
³Non-continuation. Student Satisfaction, Positive Destinations are updated yearly.
⁴Grant income per FTE is cumulative over the year. The denominator for grant income per FTE is ‘Research’ and ‘Research & Teaching staff’, and for PGR per FTE all ‘Academic Staff’.
⁵REF period publications for eligible academics currently measures the number of internally or externally reviewed publications within Pure recorded to be of 3* or 4* quality, against the target number based on existing eligible staff.
⁶Monitoring towards REF submission became most meaningful in Q3 of 2016-17.

The surplus in Q1-Q3 followed by a deficit, is explained by the fact that, in Q4 Schools and Professional Services generally utilise their operating budgets and there is less income from accommodation and catering etc after the teaching term has concluded.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT

PROCESS FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT PRINCIPAL

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper invites the University Court to discuss the process for recruitment of our next Principal, including, how the process should be conducted and the attributes that the University should seek in its next Principal. A copy of the current role description of the Principal is attached. Appendix A

1.2 The paper provides the Court with guidelines produced by Universities UK (UUK) on “Appointing Heads of Higher Education Institutions”. Appendix B. The key five stages of an appointment process as recommended in the guidelines are highlighted below. Court is being asked to consider how these might shape the process that is taken forward. In addition, the Court is asked to note the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance for the appointment of a Principal.

1.3 The paper also outlines in brief as background information the process that was followed in the appointment of the current Principal in 2008/9. It should be noted however that this was undertaken prior to the publication of the UUK guidance and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and would not necessarily be appropriate this time round.

1.4 It is recommended that Court delegates authority to the Governance and Nominations Committee to take forward the implementation of the agreed recruitment process, with the establishment of a Selection Committee to undertake the recruitment search, consultation process, shortlisting and interview of candidates.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is being invited to give consideration to the process for recruitment of our next Principal. As part of that initial consideration, the Committee is asked to:

1) Consider the UUK guidance on the appointment of Principals and how this should inform the process at Aberdeen.
2) Note the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance with regard to the appointment process.
3) Consider the current role description of the Principal and discuss the key attributes required for the role.
4) Establish a Selection Committee of Court with a remit to agree upon a recommendation for the appointment of a single preferred candidate to Court.
5) Approve the delegation of authority to the Governance and Nominations Committee to implement the recruitment process and to report back regularly to Court.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE 2008/9 APPOINTMENT PROCESS

3.1 It may be helpful to outline in brief the process that was undertaken for the appointment of the current Principal. It should be noted, however, that this is purely for information as it preceded the publication of both the guidance by UUK and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

3.2 The Court established a Selection Committee of eight members consisting of:

- Convener (Independent Member, Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee)
- Two further independent members of Court
- Five academic members of staff (including two Vice-Principals and a Head of School).
- An external assessor, who was a former Vice-Chancellor of a UK University, was also invited to attend meetings to assist and advise in the process.
3.3 Executive search consultants were appointed by the Governance and Nominations Committee to support the process.

3.4 The Selection Committee oversaw the recruitment process, including the development of the advertisement, the role description and personal attributes and consultation with key stakeholders. A range of representatives from across the University community were consulted as part of the process by which the job description and key personal attributes were developed. Those consultations were undertaken either by the Convener of the Governance and Nominations Committee or by the search consultants.

3.5 The process commenced in December 2008 and concluded with a recommendation by the Committee of one candidate to Court in September 2009. Professor Sir Ian Diamond’s appointment commenced in April 2010.

4. **SCOTTISH CODE OF GOOD HE GOVERNANCE**

4.1 The search process for our new Principal needs to be compliant with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, which states at **Main Principle 5: Statement of Primary Responsibilities** that the responsibilities of Court should include:

> “appointing the Head of the Institution (the Principal) as chief executive officer of the Institution and putting in place suitable arrangements for monitoring his/her performance. Both the appointment and the monitoring of performance of the Principal shall include consultation with all members of the governing body;”

4.2 The supporting guidelines to Principle 5 states:

> “The governing body should ensure that the appointment process for the Principal enables staff and student input to be taken into account.” and “The selection committee for the appointment of the Principal should include an appointed staff member and a student member of the governing body.”

5. **UUK GUIDELINES ON THE APPOINTMENT OF A PRINCIPAL**

5.1 UUK has produced guidance for ‘Appointing Heads of Higher Education Institutions’. The Governance and Nominations Committee considered the guidance and agreed it was helpful to informing the development of the recruitment process. The guidance sets out five key stages of the recruitment process which are:

- Governance & Planning
- Specification
- Search
- Selection
- Appointment and Review

**GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING**

5.2 The guidance notes that the decision on appointment should be one for the whole governing body but that the recruitment process and recommendation of a candidate is one that is taken forward by a smaller group which has credibility as being representative of the key stakeholders of the institution. The guidance emphasises the need for the process to be carefully planned and project managed by an officer of the University. It also sets out issues to consider in the use of search consultants.

5.3 A Selection Committee should be established and Court should agree the composition taking account of the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good Governance

5.4 The Committee should be gender balanced.

5.5 It is suggested that the Selection Committee should have delegated authority from Court to take forward the recruitment process including the objective of recommending a single candidate for appointment by Court.
SPECIFICATION

5.6 The guidance emphasises that the agreement of the job description and person specification, aligned to the strategic priorities of the University, is critical to the process. The guidance also notes that drawing upon the views of key stakeholders, in particular staff, will be important in developing the specification.

SEARCH

5.7 The guidance emphasises the need to ensure the search is as wide as possible, whether conducted with the support of search consultants or not, with appropriate advertising and promotion of the position. The guidance also emphasises that it is a process through which the institution is promoting itself to potential candidates and therefore the quality of the further information provided and the interaction of candidates with the University is critical in forming first impressions.

5.8 At this time, as a preparatory step, three firms of Executive search consultants have been invited by the Convenor of the Governance & Nominations Committee (with the agreement of Senior Governor) to bid for the role of supporting the University in this process. No decision on the use of or selection of search consultants has been made. The invitation has been issued so that the Court may progress with the process as swiftly as possible, and in accordance with an appropriate procurement process, if it is agreed that the University should engage search consultants.

SELECTION

5.9 The guidance suggests that a two stage process is usually followed. The first is to identify a longlist from the applications for further consideration. The second stage, to shortlist candidates to consider in more detail with a view to invitation to interview. The guidance then sets outs a range of options for how selection panels can at the final stage of the process evaluate candidates to determine if they are the right individual for the institution.

APPOINTMENT AND REVIEW

5.10 The guidance notes that following appointment of a candidate, the governing body or the equivalent of the Remuneration Committee of Court will determine the remuneration and performance targets of the Principal and arrangements for an effective transition in the leadership of the institution.

6. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DISCUSSION

6.1 Job Description

An up to date job description and a person specification aligned to the strategic priorities of the University will be required. The person specification will detail the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and personal characteristics of the individual. There will be consultation with Senate and other stakeholder groups in developing these critical documents.

6.2 The key responsibilities of the role to be considered may include:

- Raising the University’s profile nationally and internationally, further enhancing its UK and world rankings as an innovative, research-led institution
- Leading the University’s learning and teaching agenda
- Leading the University’s research agenda
- Enhancing the University’s internationalisation agenda including international partnerships and TNE
- Financial sustainability
- Providing strong leadership for all staff, developing an inclusive and supportive culture in line with the Institutional People Strategy
- Leading the University’s fundraising campaign
6.3 The key attributes to be considered for the successful candidate may include:

- Inspirational leadership
- Confidence to delegate effectively to encourage and empower the Senior Team and all staff to do their best
- Energy, drive and enthusiasm to deliver the University’s mission and strategy
- Innovative problem solver
- Decision making
- An ability to influence key stakeholders
- Personal presence

6.4 Consultation process

The Court is invited to consider which key stakeholders should be engaged to inform the recruitment process, including consultation in respect of the key responsibilities and key attributes, and to have the opportunity to make nominations for consideration. Potential stakeholders for consideration are:

- All members of Court
- Staff
- Senate
- Vice- Principals and Heads of School
- Directors of Professional Services
- Campus Trade Unions
- Representatives of the General Council and key alumni
- Representatives of the wider civic and business community of the region.

6.5 Selection Committee

The Governance & Nominations Committee considered an initial proposal for the composition of the selection committee. The proposal considered by the Governance & Nomination was:

- Convener (Independent member, Convener of the Governance and Nominations Committee)
- Senior Governor
- An independent member of Court
- President of the Students’ Association
- A Senate Assessor or academic staff member of Court
- One member of non-academic staff on Court
- Two members of academic staff
- Pro-Chancellor

In attendance: An external assessor to advise the Committee but who would not be a member of the Committee for the purposes of agreeing on the recommendation of an appointment to Court.

6.6 The Senate nominated a Senator to attend the Governance & Nominations Committee and following the meeting the Senator submitted further options and these are attached as Appendix C.

7. DISCUSSION AT COURT

7.1 The Convener of the Governance and Nominations Committee will lead a discussion at Court on the Selection Process with the view to agreeing a framework for progressing with this matter.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

8.1 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, Secretary to the University c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, 01224 272094 and Mrs Debbie Dyker, Director of People, d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk, tel 01224 273732.

4 September 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
The Role

The University is now seeking to appoint an outstanding individual to continue the legacy of achievement established under the leadership of Professor C Duncan Rice whose term of office is due to conclude in September 2010.

Candidates for the role will have international experience of higher education, be committed to the values of a research-led university and have significant experience of working in a complex organisation at a senior level. They will demonstrate a commitment to Aberdeen while seeking to extend the reputation that the University has already established internationally. They will relish the opportunity to undertake a presidential role with significant activity, including fundraising, outside of the University.

The Role Specification

1. This is an exciting and dynamic post requiring an academically credible individual of exceptional ability, confidence, energy and presence. Successful candidates are expected to have experience of working in a large and complex organisation at a senior level and will have a clear understanding of the challenges facing higher education. They will have the personal authority to act as an effective ambassador for the University and they will be very international in outlook. They will be politically adept and enthusiastic about developing and maintaining networks of influence internationally.

2. The Principal will want to be visible within the University and in the wider community and will be expected to quickly demonstrate total commitment to the University and its mission as well as a real interest in and passion for the city and region. He or she will appreciate and respect the contribution which all staff make to the life and success of the University and will have a genuine interest in the student experience. He or she will be ready to take difficult and sometimes controversial decisions and to follow these through.

3. The Principal will be ably supported by an effective team of Vice-Principals and by a strong and effective university administration. Notwithstanding this professional support the Principal will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the business of the University and the threats and opportunities facing it. Financial acumen, a strong commercial drive and a naturally entrepreneurial outlook will be required. Fundraising will be an important part of the role and the Principal will devote a significant proportion of his/her time and energy to growing philanthropic support and leading what is already a thriving international programme.

Key Responsibilities

The University has a great deal to be proud of as much has been achieved in recent years. The institution is in very good shape and confident and ready to achieve still more. The next Principal will be building on solid foundations and will have ample opportunity to move the institution forward with enthusiasm and a fresh perspective.
Key areas on which the Principal will be expected to focus are likely to include:

- raising the University’s profile nationally and internationally, further enhancing its UK and world rankings as an innovative, research-led institution;
- leading the University’s learning and teaching agenda;
- providing strong leadership for all staff, nurturing an inclusive, collegiate culture to empower them to realise their full potential;
- building on and nurturing partnerships with industry, the UK and Scottish governments and other national and international institutions;
- working with the city and region of Aberdeen with enthusiasm and imagination to improve its economic and wider regenerative position and international profile for mutual benefit;
- building on the University’s success in developing innovative interdisciplinary teaching and research;
- providing leadership to the University’s pursuit of a distinctive Aberdeen graduate, accomplished in disciplinary skills and displaying professionalism, enterprise and a sense of social responsibility and engagement;
- making a success of the University’s considerable investment in capital programmes to enhance the student experience;
- leading the next fundraising campaign to raise additional external funding for the University.

**Key Relationships**

The Principal reports to the University’s governing body, the Court, which comprises 28 members, the majority of whom are external to the University and are known as lay or independent members. The Senior Governor is vice-chair of Court and is responsible for the leadership of Court. In common with the other Scottish Ancient Universities, the right to chair meetings of the Court is reserved by the Universities (Scotland) Act to the post of Rector who is elected by the students of the University. The present Rector, however, has chosen not to chair meetings of the Court.
The Individual

Experience and Achievements:

- a distinguished academic record of international significance;
- evidence of a global outlook;
- experience of working in a large and complex organisation at a senior level;
- strong appreciation of emerging national and global trends in higher education;
- the ability to represent the University of Aberdeen effectively in its dealings with government and other external stakeholders;
- a significant track record of success in the pursuit of philanthropic support.

Personal Qualities:

In addition to complete commitment to the University and the role, the successful candidate is expected to be able to demonstrate:

- inspirational leadership and efficacy in communicating a vision throughout all levels of a complex organisation;
- strong intellectual resources and abilities;
- the confidence to delegate effectively and to encourage and empower others to achieve their best;
- energy, drive and enthusiasm for the Aberdeen mission and for its distinctive objectives;
- a zest for finding innovative solutions to problems, and for ensuring they are implemented with tenacity and sensitivity;
- an ability to focus and demonstrate persistence and constancy when taking decisions, even when circumstances are difficult and issues are controversial; and
- the personal presence to stand out from the crowd and to be seen as a natural leader, who will gain the respect of key opinion formers.
Appointing heads of higher education institutions: a resource for governors
This series of Management guidance published by Universities UK provides best practice guidelines and codes of recommended practice.

This guidance on appointing heads of higher education institutions has been produced in partnership with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) and GuildHE.

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2 Preface
1
3 Executive overview
2
7 Governance and planning
3
12 Specification
4
15 Search and selection
5
28 Appointment and review
   Appendix A
33 Avoiding discrimination and promoting diversity – legal commentary
   Appendix B
36 Job description and person specification
   Appendix C
38 Selection methods
   Appendix D
42 The candidate information pack
43 Notes
Preface

Appointing the head of an institution is one of the most important decisions that can be made by the members of its governing body.1 No matter how much experience the governors have in recruiting to senior positions in other walks of life, the nature of higher education presents challenges of its own.

Effective recruitment should secure the best possible candidate from the widest possible pool of talent, in a manner that is both fair and transparent. Increasingly, and in direct response to the changing challenges facing higher education, universities and colleges are looking at candidates from a wider field than hitherto. People with different experiences in the public and private sectors can bring much needed freshness to the leadership of our universities and colleges. And it is notable that despite recent progress, women and black and minority ethnic members of staff remain significantly under-represented at senior levels relative to their overall participation rate in higher education.2 Each university or college, being independent and autonomous, has its own needs and traditions to respect. But good recruitment practice will help to redress the imbalances and flush out hidden talent.

Consequently Universities UK, GuildHE and the Committee for University Chairs [CUC] have come together with the funding councils and other sector stakeholders to bring existing guidance up to date and to explore current good practice in the hope that all institutions may find new insights.

This guidance is not mandatory. Nor does it seek to replace tried and tested procedures. But it does try to distil good practice around the sector and reflect evolving practices, new resources and changing legislation. It takes the form of an aide memoire that:

- augments institutions’ own procedures by focusing on key issues of shared interest to governors;
- focuses on those aspects of recruitment for which the governing body is most directly accountable;
- draws upon the real world experiences of governors, institutional leaders, candidates and professional advisers from across higher education, as well as being informed by the solutions developed in other sectors;
- synthesises their experiences through the use of case studies and checklists for each key stage of the recruitment process.

For your part the guidance assumes you have:

- a good general knowledge of the business of senior staff recruitment;
- a sound (though not necessarily specialist) understanding of UK higher education and of the role of the head of the institution;
- access to a range of expert resources including, but not necessarily limited to, the secretary of your governing body and your institution’s human resources department.

The first part of the guidance is an executive overview – the briefest summary of the key issues encompassed by the full guidance including a single summary paragraph for each major point. Thereafter each stage in the process – from preliminary planning through to appointment and feedback to unsuccessful candidates – is examined in detail.
The guidance considers the process of recruitment over five key stages:

- governance and planning
- specification
- search
- selection
- appointment and review.

One key aim of this guidance is to encourage selection from the widest possible talent pool in higher education and beyond, drawing – as institutions wish – upon potential candidates in other parts of the public and private sectors, both nationally and overseas. In doing so it also addresses ways of doing more to encourage the candidacy of women and black and minority ethnic members of staff who aspire to fulfil senior leadership roles.

A baseline analysis completed by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) in 2008 presents a selection of key statistics relating to equality and diversity intended to ‗serve as an evidence base from which the sector can develop a shared understanding of the specific challenges in furthering equality and diversity for all staff and students‘.

Prominent among the extensive range of data presented in the report are the facts that:

- Women make up 42.3 per cent of the academic staff population, but a lower proportion (17.5 per cent) of heads of department and professors. They are particularly under-represented at high level within the science, engineering and technology group of subjects (7.9 per cent).
- Black and minority ethnic staff are under-represented amongst academics at 6.1 per cent (compared to 8.7 per cent in the UK population and 17 per cent of students). This reduces to 4.8 per cent for heads of department.

Clearly the recruitment process is a major determinant of the demographic of a higher education institution‘s senior management team. If current imbalances are to be redressed, institutional processes must secure the widest talent pool possible, including looking beyond the senior academic pool. Doing so is clearly the aim of the sector at large and this guidance suggests ways of directly facilitating the realisation of this ambition at each stage of the process.

**Governance and planning**

The appointment of the new head of institution will be a decision for the whole board of governors. It is likely however that a smaller group – the selection panel – will be convened to undertake the selection process and make recommendations.

The panel should have access to necessary expertise both in the form of the higher education institution/governing body secretary and the head of human resources. It is also critical for the credibility of the selection panel that it should include people from a range of backgrounds and be representative of the main groups with an interest in the continuing success and viability of the institution.

The recruitment needs to be thoroughly planned. The proportionate application of project management disciplines is strongly recommended. In this regard the panel should agree early on the identity and responsibilities of the individual who will – on their behalf – co-ordinate and manage day-to-day actions – a ‗recruitment manager‘. This person (often but not always the institution secretary or the head of human resources) should be accountable for the minutiae of the plan and progressing actions on a day-to-day basis.
Another early decision the panel will have to take is whether or not to appoint an executive search agency (ESA). Over the last 20 years the use of ESAs has moved from being a rarity to being common for leadership appointments – which is not to say that their use will always be appropriate or necessary. ESAs can be used to undertake a number of functions on behalf of the institution [advertising, information packs, research, initial contacts and discussions with potential candidates]. However, these are fundamentally matters of process management. A good agency also adds value by applying its experience and knowledge in the development of the institution's requirements – acting as a critical friend in the development of the detailed specification. To be effective an ESA should be prepared to spend time meeting stakeholders and in getting to know the institution. In return the panel for its part must be prepared to invest time in understanding how an ESA will go about its tasks and then in working with the ESA to achieve agreed goals – while ensuring that at all times the panel retains its primacy in directing all key activities.

The panel leads the process. The ESA, where used effectively and strategically, is both a critical friend and a means to an end – a tool to be deployed where it can demonstrably add value.

**Specification**

It is essential to agree and document the precise requirements expected of candidates. The panel/governing body will need to:

- review and affirm the strategic priorities of the institution;
- specify a job description and person specification that clearly reflect and are aligned to these priorities (including the likely salary range);
- identify the necessary attributes of the individual [skills, knowledge and experience];
- ensure that these requirements make the vacancy attractive to the widest possible field of potential candidates.

There are many stakeholders in the institution and beyond who will have an interest in the appointment of a new head. Clearly staff members are a key group and the institution’s senate or academic board may also have a role. The panel should also consider drawing on the views of selected external stakeholders to help shape aspects of the requirement.

This is the moment when the selection panel, together with the remuneration committee, should also reflect on the likely salary offer, allowances and conditions of service and performance assessment arrangements.

The job description and the person specification are key. Each has the potential to attract the best possible candidates. To be usable they will align closely with the strategic priorities of the institution, be wholly justifiable and satisfy the tests of legitimacy and proportionality.

**Search**

Ensuring that the talent pool from which the sector draws its future leaders is as wide as possible is key – and also challenging to accomplish. The traditional secrecy surrounding head of institution searches is being replaced by a culture of greater transparency and it is in the interests of all that this progressive change be upheld.

The panel will no doubt wish to direct the use of a search [be it internally or externally resourced] such that it encompasses the widest talent pool relevant to the role. Clearly the advertising channels the panel selects will shape the pool of applicants and their selection should be consistent with the overall search strategy as well as presenting the vacancy in the best possible way to attract the most diverse audience.
Even with comprehensive advertising an important source of candidates at this level will be through research and direct approaches to individuals. This is particularly true where the institution is seeking someone from outside the sector.

This typically involves discreet consultation with a range of stakeholders (academic groups, professional bodies, business leaders etc) to identify potential candidates who may be approached to establish their interest. Consultees to this guidance have been consistent in citing this as being the most valuable service that ESAs provide.

Finally, the search process is also clearly one of promotion of the institution to potential candidates. The quality of briefing materials and the handling of interactions experienced by individual candidates will make an immediate and substantive impression. The panel should therefore be clear as to what image it wishes this collateral and the wider process to express – and ensure it is projected consistently.

*Widening the talent pool will further sustain the drive to embed equality and diversity at all levels.*

**Selection**

Having created a candidate list from the applications, the panel will normally refine their selection over at least two stages.

The first step will be to take the ‘long list’ and identify the candidates who will be invited to the second stage. To do this the selection panel will apply agreed attributes from the person specification which can be identified from the information they have available on the candidate. The aim is to produce a shortlist of the most suitable candidates to be considered in more detail.

Final selection from the shortlist can be accomplished through a variety of evaluation techniques. One process is a formal presentation followed by a board interview. Presentations are found to be most useful by panels when they test specific attributes such as (but not exclusively) leadership, strategic thinking and communication skills.

The interview as a selection tool can be very effective if subject to careful planning and conducted by people who have received relevant training. It should be used to probe candidate attributes and add value by exploring actions and reasoning to build up a comprehensive picture, augmenting and checking information already held.

Panels need to be aware of other forms of candidate evaluation that may also have a place – and are in regular use across higher education as well as other sectors in the appointment of leaders. These include psychometric testing, the use of assessment centres and the wider/collective involvement by staff via consultative presentations and forums.

Governors will appreciate that their decisions will have a substantial and lasting impact on their institution and could be open to challenge and retrospective criticism. Appropriate records evidencing the steps taken and the basis on which decisions are reached should be maintained throughout the process.

*Panels are strongly encouraged to adopt a range of complementary approaches to candidate evaluation. Your head of human resources will be well placed to advise on their relative merits.*
**Appointment and review**

Once the final choice has been made the governors will need to decide on (or remit to the relevant sub-committee) the remuneration and performance targets for the new head and arrangements for an ordered transition.

Once the preferred candidate has accepted the post, detailed, trenchant and constructive feedback should be provided to unsuccessful shortlist candidates. Wherever feasible it is recommended this be undertaken by the panel chair.

Finally, the selection panel should critically review and provide a record of what was done and the lessons to be learned and applied for the next such recruitment process.

*Panels should apply the principles of continuous improvement to the process and ensure that lessons learned may be applied by their institution in the future.*
Overview
Manage the recruitment process as a business critical project, applying proportionate approaches to requirements specification, direction setting and control.

Governance
The appointment of a new head is the most important decision the board of governors can make. During the recruitment, therefore, there are certain principles which should be followed.

- The governors are at all times responsible for the recruitment. They may use both internal and external agencies (such as ESAs) but they retain the final accountability for the process.
- Governors should be aware of all decisions that are taken, including those to include or exclude potential candidates at the various stages.
- Governors have a responsibility to seek the best possible candidate for the role. This means taking positive and demonstrable steps to open up the field and seek candidates from a wide range of backgrounds and so promulgating equality and diversity.
- Accurate and complete records of all actions and decisions need to be made and retained. These provide a very useful resource for the institution as a repository of the knowledge and experience gained during the process. Additionally governors will be accountable for their decisions and good records will show how they have undertaken their role with due diligence.
- Those involved in the recruitment will remember to maintain the high standards expected of public bodies, particularly in relation to the declaration of interests (which may arise at any time during recruitment if a governor discovers a relationship of some sort to one of the candidates, for example). The broader requirements of the seven Nolan principles should also be addressed.

While governors may very well be experienced in recruiting in their own fields, higher education presents particular challenges. Institutions vary greatly in character, but in common they have a strong collegiate ethos, a wide range of stakeholders interested in the outcome of the recruitment process and a complex structure, both formal and informal. The job involves sophisticated financial and human resource management and demands excellent interpersonal and public relations skills. You are looking for a leader for your organisation, not simply a very senior manager.

Institutional statutes may direct the arrangements to be adopted for the selection procedure. This may, for example, be undertaken by:

- the whole board/court
- a sub-committee of the board/court
- some combination of board/court and senate.

The selection panel/search committee
Typically the board will delegate the selection to a sub-committee (appointment panel) although the decision to appoint will normally be reserved to the full board.

Whatever the arrangement it is essential that:

- any delegated body reports regularly to the full board at key stages in the process;
- it is clear which matters are delegated to the panel to determine and which the governing body wishes to reserve to itself. This is particularly important as regards remuneration and terms of employment.
The panel's membership should combine necessary interests with relevant competences and capabilities and:

- include the chair of governors;
- include individuals from a range of backgrounds and as far as is practicable be representative of different stakeholder groups and interests. Panels that are composed entirely (or even overwhelmingly) of one group (gender, ethnicity, background etc) will not command confidence or credibility. They should reflect the diversity of the institution and the community they serve;
- be small enough to be an effective discussion forum where everyone's views can be aired and decisions taken. This may mean that certain individuals will need to take responsibility for consulting and representing a wider constituency than their own immediate interest;
- comprise people who are able to commit the significant amount of time required to see the process through to completion;
- include an external adviser with current or recent experience of heading a higher education institution;
- include as senior advisers the head of human resources and the institution secretary/secretary to the board of governors. These are key experts in the institution and its processes and will be able to offer invaluable advice and guidance on areas such as employment law, recruitment good practice, the institution and its statutes.

Reflection 1

Representative selection panels (an external adviser)

I was pleased to be asked by another institution to be an external assessor for their panel appointing the new Principal. I have been a Vice-Chancellor for some years and I felt I had something to offer. I have been responsible for some major changes here and this has given me a valuable insight into what it takes to lead a university through change.

I was surprised when I went to the first meeting of the selection group because there was no academic representation on the panel. I was aware from the 'grapevine' that there was a lot of concern and discussion at the institution about the new Principal because staff knew a lot of change was in the air. At the next meeting I discussed the issue with the chair of governors, pointing out that I would be very uncomfortable with the proposed arrangements. While he said that statutes did not require academic representation, he would consider what I said with the other governors.

I was pleased and relieved when the chair phoned me to say that they had invited some academic representatives onto the selection panel and one would be at the interview stage. The academics made a valuable contribution to the discussion, and afterwards the chair thanked me for raising the issue.

It is important that the selection panel is thoroughly briefed before the process starts, for example by the head of human resources at the institution. The areas to be covered should include:

- an explanation of the process and timetable;
- the importance of equality and diversity and its application to the recruitment process. Importantly, the governors should have an early discussion on how they will pursue equality and diversity objectives;
- the principles of selection: the use of competences, the collection and assessment of evidence of competence;
the responsibilities as set out in the statutes and relevant legal requirements and how these are put into practice. Section 4 outlines the key issues to be addressed if ESAs are to be employed.

The interview panel

Membership of the interview panel may be identical to the selection panel or be a sub-set of it. In this latter case it is recommended that, in addition to governors, consideration is given to the inclusion (in an advisory role – they will not have any say in the final decision) of:

- an independent member who is a serving or recently retired head from another institution;
- the head of human resources and/or the institution secretary/secretary to the board of governors;
- where used, the ESA consultant (as a source of information only);
- a representative of the student body.

Some institutions have elected to source one of their independent members (an Independent Public Appointments Assessor) from the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The recruitment manager

Whether this is the institution secretary, registrar, clerk to the board of governors, head of human resources or some other competent person, they should have delegated responsibility for managing all aspects of the recruitment process.

As well as the advisory role this person will:

- ensure that the process is moving forward according to the plan and that all the different steps are being delivered according to the timescale;
- monitor the risks and any problems arising, keeping them under review;
- act as a single contact and distribution point for communications with all stakeholders (search consultants, selection panel, governors etc);
- ensure that the whole process is properly recorded and documented, including ensuring confidentiality (and in particular enforcing the institution’s policy on data protection, in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act).

Planning

The plan

To allow all the necessary actions to be taken and to provide contingency time for problems (such as not finding a suitable candidate at the first attempt) you must allow sufficient time for the selection process.

Early and systematic planning is crucial given the duration and nature of the process and the commitment demanded of those involved. To fulfil their role, the recruitment manager should draw up a detailed plan that sets out:

- the steps to be achieved, in sequence and with details of any interdependencies;
- timescales and deadlines;
- accountabilities for actions;
- the key risks and actions being taken to mitigate them;
- the budget and resources for the recruitment process.
You should refer to your institution's written procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff, which will be based on equal and fair treatment for all applicants.

**Reflection 2**

**Planning for recruitment (chair of governing body)**

'It was at one of our regular meetings that the Vice-Chancellor mentioned that he would like to retire when he reached 60 in about 18 months' time. We have enjoyed a good relationship so we were able to discuss his replacement in an open way and we both agreed that the process would start as soon as possible.

My experience in industry has made me cautious of leaving important appointments late, with the risk that you rush the job and then don't find someone at the first try. I certainly was not going to compromise if I could not get the best person available.

I worked directly with the head of human resources. She drew up a really detailed plan, showing what needed to be done and by when. Using this we could sort out the selection committee members and pin them down to dates. Our planning paid off. Things went more smoothly than any of us had dared hope and we ended up with a first-rate new Vice-Chancellor who has now taken over.'

**The objective**

Your overall objective will be to recruit the best person possible to lead your institution. The next sections describe the process you could use to achieve your end, but before you start it can save much time later on if you make a few decisions about the final appointment. By having a clear idea of these at the outset it will help set the context for the subsequent decisions and avoid the possibility of difficult negotiations and decisions later on. Topics to be covered:

- The length of the appointment: will it be an indefinite, rolling or fixed term contract?
- What are you going to expect of the candidate in general terms (this will be refined and made more specific in developing the person specification)?
- Are there any particular conditions to be attached to the appointment (such as place of residence)?
- What sort of package will you be offering? How will it be split between basic salary and performance? What other benefits will be offered?

**Your legal obligations**

As an employer recruiting staff you will need to be aware of the requirements that impact on decisions and the approach to recruitment that is adopted. It is not possible to give detailed guidance on the ramifications of all situations but the general obligations are contained in a number of legislative provisions and the settled case law interpreting those provisions.

You will also be able to obtain both general guidance and more specific information from your human resources department, who will be well versed in the legislation as a normal part of their role. In specific situations a governing body may need to obtain advice on legal implications before embarking on a particular recruitment exercise or before deciding whether or not to shortlist a particular candidate.
Key issues

To avoid charges of unfairness, job selections must be made on the basis of suitability for the post: assumptions should not be made about the person's right to work in the UK or immigration status based on colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, or the length of time the person has been in the UK.

Similarly, your process will also ensure all applicants are treated in the same way at all stages of the recruitment process. For example, all applicants should be advised in a standard fashion [and at the earliest possible point in the process] that they will be required to prove their entitlement to work in the UK and comply with the relevant UK Border Agency rules for international appointments.

Your potential talent pool may contain people with disabilities and it is a legal requirement that you make provision in your recruitment and selection process to accommodate their requirements [see also Appendix A].
Specification

Overview
Agreeing the key competences and capabilities required of the role is critical to achieving a successful outcome – as is ensuring their alignment with the institution’s core values and strategic direction and maximising the attractiveness of the job to as wide a pool of talent as possible.

Mission and purpose
The job description and person specification are central to the whole recruitment process and, to ensure the search is made for the right person for your institution, they will be aligned with relevant aspects of the institution’s mission and purpose. To determine the sort of head you need you will want to have a clear statement of the vision for the institution – or how you see it developing with the new incumbent.

You also need a clear view of direction so that you can start to think about the performance outcomes that will deliver what you want. From this you will be able to describe the job and the sort of person capable of doing it.

Job description
Defining the job description is a matter of expressing the defined outcomes in terms of the roles necessary to achieve them. This is an area where your human resources department is able to offer considerable guidance and advice. The job description may be thought of in two elements (although they will not be mutually exclusive):

- parts of the job that refer to the achievement of the specific outcomes. They will spell out in detail particular achievements that will be part of the head’s job. These will be quite closely related to the strategy;

- roles which the head will undertake for the general management of the institution. Many of these will be common to any large organisation. Others will be specific to the institution.

A checklist of the material that may be suitable for inclusion is given in Appendix B.

Person specification
From the job description you will define the sort of person (in terms of skills, experience and knowledge) who can do the job.

To ensure that the talent pool is open to as many people as possible you should keep the description as general as possible. For example, does it have to be someone who has managed higher education institution budgets, or would more general (but equivalent) experience be suitable?

You will also need to take into account any requirements set out in the statutes of the institution. Some heads, for example, are required to be practising members of a particular religion. You may need to seek advice on the precise qualification and what is acceptable in order to establish the criteria to be applied to candidates.

In assembling the person specification it should be possible to read across from the person specification to the job description. You should be able to say ‘attribute X in the person specification is needed to undertake role Y of the job description’.

The descriptions of the attributes should be explicit, allowing the specification to be used as a tool against which to assess the candidates. It should answer questions such as:

- what sort of leadership experience is needed;

- what sort of leadership style the institution is looking for;

- level of qualification required;
what sort of academic record is required (if any);
how well the person needs to understand the higher education sector;
how the person reflects the ethos and values required in the sector generally and in
the institution in particular;
the composition of the current senior management team: the new head may come in
to complement existing skills or to effect significant changes;
what sort of organisations the appointee could have worked for (for example, purely
higher education or more widely);
how much financial and budgetary experience the individual will have had and how
much of the budgetary responsibility will have been discretionary;
what experience the person could have had in stakeholder management, outreach,
community relations, marketing or public relations;
what international experience the individual might have;
how much experience the individual could have had at working with other sectors or
professional groups.

Appendix B provides a list of material suitable for inclusion. Your human resources
department should be involved in the formulation of this specification. They will
understand how the common elements can be structured to create a useful tool to
support the process.

The selection panel will need to spend time agreeing the wording and the descriptions
used and they should certainly expect the ESA (if one is being used) to challenge these
constructively.

Once agreed, the person specification should not normally be changed after the
recruitment process has commenced. If a change of circumstances demands
adjustment then normally the process should be restarted.

Avoiding discrimination

Clearly it is critical that the panel should avoid any form of direct or indirect
discrimination in the formulation of the specification (Appendix A provides a brief legal
commentary on the key issues to address).

This means, for example, that a criterion must be a proportionate means of achieving a
legitimate aim. Your human resources team will be able to advise you on how a job
description or person specification might impact on discrimination law. It is key that the
panel can demonstrate that the requirement in question is essential or adds value and
does not deter potential applicants.

Assessing the attributes

As the person specification is to be used to assess the applicants and measure their
suitability to go forward in the process it is important to ascribe some clear explanation
of how the attributes will be measured.

The attributes should be weighted to indicate the degree of importance. This will be
essential in choosing between candidates offering different strengths. Such weighting
should be relative and not imply that any criterion is purely optional.
Additionally you will need to consider which attributes you will use when sifting from your initial long list. At this stage you will have a limited amount of information (typically from CVs, letters of application and research reports) which will be more suitable for assessing some attributes (for example management experience, academic track record, financial experience) than others (the more personal ones). You will at that stage want to focus on those attributes that can be assessed by the information you have.

The chosen criteria and the weighting given to them will represent attributes which are important to the direction the institution needs to take and to the achievement of the expectations and targets which will be set for the individual.

Appendix B describes a method for recording criteria for the person specification.

To ensure the efficiency and the legality of the selection process the panel will assess the candidate by using methods that:

- are valid – the method is a fair predictor of eventual performance
- are fair – free from unfair discrimination and bias
- do not adversely impact the candidate
- have a reasonable cost.

The suggested approach is based on a collection of evidence about the individual’s performance and behaviour in past roles. This provides the most accurate predictor of future behaviours. Means by which candidates may be asked to evidence or display their attributes include:

- the CV
- application letter
- selection interviews
- presentations
- psychometric testing
- assessment centres.

The use of these different approaches is further discussed in Appendix C.

Confidentiality and prior knowledge

The panel will ideally determine and apply consistently policy and procedures for deciding how they will respond to candidates’ requests for confidentiality. The decisions taken must ensure the equitable treatment of all candidates. The approach to be used needs to be transparent to all involved in the process. For fairness, at no point should any candidate be allowed to exempt themselves from a specified part of the selection process.

In the event that a member of the panel has prior knowledge (or an existing relationship, including a personal one) of a candidate this needs to be immediately disclosed to the panel chair. The chair will then be able to determine whether this knowledge (for example born of personal or professional acquaintance) might preclude the equitable consideration of all candidates and review the panel’s membership accordingly. Any sort of family relationship (including partners) should normally preclude the individual from the selection process.
Overview
The driving principle behind search is the exploration of as wide a field as possible to maximise the talent pool and to ensure that all potential candidates are reached.

Principles for searching
To undertake your search fairly, there are certain principles you will consistently apply:

- The purpose is to obtain the best candidate for the role.
- You should have a clear idea of what you are looking for and stick to it. If you find something which changes your views you will need to readdress the process from the beginning.
- In your search you should think constructively about where to look and explore as many sources as possible to ensure inclusion of all likely candidates.
- You must not do anything that is likely to exclude unfairly (either directly or indirectly) any suitable candidate.
- You should consult widely and especially with your immediate stakeholders to gain advice on sources that may be fruitful.
- You must document your search, as a part of your full record of the recruitment process.
- If you do engage a search agency, you should ensure that they are following these principles and are able to demonstrate their own processes for diversity and equality.

Executive search
It is not for this guidance to recommend the use of the services of executive search agencies (ESAs). However, as many institutions are now making regular use of ESAs in supporting key parts of the recruitment process, this section provides advice on how to make the most out of such a relationship by establishing a common foundation of shared objectives and effective communication. Many institutions have secured such relationships and have shared their insights for this guidance – as have the agencies themselves.

Some searches may be better performed by the institution itself – or you may just prefer to manage all aspects of the process directly.

Using ESAs – points to consider
The following factors have driven the growth in consultant use:

- ESAs will undertake much of the groundwork, such as phoning candidates, undertaking research, conducting preliminary meetings and compiling reports on candidates.
- ESAs may have access to many markets and lines of research as a matter of routine.
- ESAs will impose a discipline on the process. You will need to have a very clear idea of your strategic direction and the sort of candidate you are looking for. A good search agency will expect to challenge the institution and will expose any uncertainties. If the relationship with the ESA is to work, the governors must be ready to accept this.
- By acting as intermediaries, ESAs will allow the institution to put some distance between itself and potential candidates in the early stages of engagement. This makes it easier to disengage if the institution does not want to pursue the candidature.
- Many candidates will only respond to a personal approach and may be missed if reliance is placed on an advert and approaches the institution is able to make.
The users of ESAs also need to recognise that:

- where the field is limited in some way and the institution knows the eligible field (as may happen with certain specialist institutions) there may be no benefit in using an ESA;
- the amount an ESA charges will be significant in relation to the annual salary of the appointee;
- an overhead will be created by the need to manage the relationship with ESAs and provide them with information;
- to be effective, ESAs need to be given a very honest picture of the institution, 'warts and all', and should feed back an objective external view which may be uncomfortable;
- assurance should be sought that, where necessary, the ESA will undertake a new search for each assignment and not draw solely on an established (and possibly recycled) database of possible candidates.

Selecting an ESA

There is an increasing number of ESAs with demonstrable experience of supporting the recruitment of heads of higher education institutions.

As with many procurement decisions it is probably true that several of the ESAs from which you invite proposals will be able to undertake your recruitment satisfactorily.

This is not the place for a handbook on procurement, but the following points may help in thinking about which to choose, assuming that a number of agencies is invited to make proposals.

- Some agencies have their own in-house research facilities which develop expertise with the sector in which they operate. Others will outsource the research function.
- An agency should be able to explain the strategy it will adopt for the search. It should be able to demonstrate that it will be undertaking original work rather than relying predominantly on an existing database of possible candidates.
- The agency should be able to demonstrate that in conducting its searches it adopts sound practices to ensure equality and diversity.
- The agency should show in the way it proposes to research the field, as far as it can at an early stage, that it has an understanding of the institution and any features that will determine the field (for example particular professional requirements).
- It is important that the agency representatives who 'pitch' to the institution are those who direct the work. There should above all be a feeling that the approach and ethos of the consultants match those of the institution.
- Because the field is dominated by a relatively small number of agencies, they will each work with a large number of clients in the sector. The panel will probably wish to discuss with potential agencies any conflicts of interest which may arise through work for other clients and any limitations this may place on the extent of their search services.

Working with ESAs

The relationship between the agency and the recruitment panel should be a close one. The agency will be working on behalf of the panel and in the name of the institution and will at all times be subordinate. As in all relationships, both sides will have to work at it and abide by certain understandings. The recruitment manager should actively direct the relationship for the institution, although clearly the agency will also have to have a close working relationship with the selection panel and particularly the chair.
What the ESA needs from the panel includes:

- a clear idea of the strategic direction of the institution, setting out where the governors want the new head to take the institution;
- an exposition of the candidate specification required to fulfil the role;
- the opportunity to meet people from the institution: senior managers, academics, student representatives etc to develop an understanding of the institution. The agency should establish a good picture of the institution and be in a position to review your requirements and challenge any assumptions the panel has made;
- the nomination of a single point of contact to act as a channel for communications in both directions (the aforementioned 'recruitment manager'); typical tasks include:
  - receiving reports and ensuring they are forwarded to the right people and followed up where necessary
  - arranging diaries and setting up meetings
  - securing and forwarding information from the institution to the search consultants
- an ongoing dialogue throughout the process to ensure progress and resolve emerging issues and any problems;
- consistency of approach throughout (for example not revising specifications as the process progresses);
- honest and constructive feedback on rejected candidates (especially if you want the ESA to give the feedback);
- trust.

In return the panel can expect the search consultants to provide:

- regular reports on progress at intervals determined by the selection panel;
- a clear rationale for their actions and what they offer you;
- consistency of personnel – barring circumstances beyond their control, the people who pitch for the business should in the main be the people who deliver;
- the time to get to know your institution;
- challenge to your assumptions and honesty in expressing their opinions;
- their best endeavours to ensure that they undertake a comprehensive and largely original search to find candidates;
- outright rejection of any attempt by you to ask them to take decisions which are properly yours; you may expect them to help you formulate the questions you need to ask yourselves to make the decision;
- involvement in selection panel meetings (to provide information);
- trust.
Reflection 3

Doing it yourself (head of human resources)

'I am head of human resources for a higher education institution. We are small and very specialised. We needed to appoint a new Principal because of retirement. The chair of governors asked me to join the selection panel she was setting up because she thought my expertise and advice would be needed.

At our first meeting we were talking about the sort of person we would need as a replacement. The current Principal pointed out that his successor would be from a very limited field and it was highly likely that it would be someone known to us already.

Several of the governors suggested using an executive search agency to help us with the recruitment. They came from a business background and for them this was the natural way forward. I was not convinced as the cost would make quite a hole in the college's budget [probably my budget!]. I explained that if we knew the person [and I agreed that this was likely to be the case] there was little point. My team would be more than capable and I explained how we could do it.

I managed to convince the board of governors and they let me go ahead. We used a few well-placed adverts in the specialist journals and with the help of the governors we identified the candidate field. Senior members of the college were delegated to make a discreet approach and alert them to presence of the advert.

We were able to manage the process and have a successful recruitment.'

Reflection 4

Using an ESA (chair of governing body)

'In my business I use search consultants for most senior appointments so it was obvious that we should do the same at the university where I am chair of governors.

I recognise the value of developing a really good relationship with the consultants, as it is such a personal process.

We invited a number of agencies to pitch for the work. I knew none of the people as we chose companies which were specialists in this area. They all did a good presentation and I thought that any of them could have found someone. The final choice was made because we were impressed by the way that the consultant had gone to the trouble of finding out about the institution. We felt that there was a real rapport and that we could work with them because they had a similar set of values to ours.

We were impressed by the amount of time the consultant spent with us getting to know the university. He researched the field and produced a good candidate list. We had a first-class shortlist from which to choose and the decision was a tough one.

While I don't want to overplay the role of the search consultant, I think that finding the best candidate was helped by having a good relationship with someone who understood us.'

Information for candidates

At all times you need to remember that recruitment is as much about selling your institution to the candidate as it is about the candidates selling themselves to you. Providing candidates with comprehensive, concise and, above all, honest information is an essential part of recruitment. While most candidates will undertake some research the collection and presentation of information in a single place will save a lot of time or the part of candidates and present a good impression of the institution. Many candidates will peruse your institution's website, so you should ensure that key information is up to date.
Of course, you will not necessarily want to release all the possible information to all the candidates at once. There may be matters you would prefer to discuss with selected candidates once you have been through the first selection stage.

If you employ an ESA they will help you with the preparation and presentation of the information. However, you should be prepared for a certain amount of work to provide material in a suitable form. The ESA will be able to help with presentation, possibly as a single brochure (rather than a collection of documents) or increasingly as a web-based presence.

A checklist of information you may wish to include in your information pack is given in Appendix D.

**Broadening the talent pool**

Your aim is to appoint the best person possible for your institution. It follows therefore that you will wish to have the greatest number of eligible candidates from whom to choose. Having written the person specification in a way which opens up your potential field, you will wish to ensure that your search is consistent with this open approach.

While the exact form of your search will depend on the institution, there is a number of actions the panel can take to ensure as wide a range for the selection as possible.

- Having set your requirements, do not change them. It is not unknown for institutions to start out with the best intentions but then to revert to ‘looking for someone like the last Vice-Chancellor’ when presented with a wider group of candidates.
- Recognise that skills and experience gained in other fields are valid and valuable. They may bring in an additional dimension that could be significant if you are seeking a change in direction or have specific developmental aims. Increasingly institutions are looking beyond the senior academic pool for candidates.
- Consult widely, including stakeholder and other groups, before finalising your person specification.
- In researching to build up your applicant list, consult (or ensure your search consultants liaise with) stakeholder groups, professional bodies and interest groups related to your institution (especially if it is specialist) to ensure that potential applicants can be identified in less usual places.
- Work constructively and strategically with your search consultant (if you are using one). Their experience with the mechanics of research and with other sectors will be helpful in exploring options.

**Advertising**

Experience in recent recruitments has shown that advertising is a proven means of securing high-quality candidates. Advertising the role provides an important marketing opportunity for the institution.

To ensure their effectiveness you will ensure that your advertisements are placed where they can be seen by all potential candidates. Take advice from stakeholder groups about which media will be appropriate and include a range of media: national and regional (especially in the devolved administrations) press and the relevant web sites. You must also ensure that respondents to advertisements are treated identically to those from other sources.

There is a risk that with the increased use of ESAs some prospective candidates will not respond to advertisements, instead expecting to be contacted. We recommend that you make it clear whether you are using an agency to avoid missing candidates in this way.
Research

Research, which involves directly identifying potential candidates, is an important way of building up candidate lists. The process is resource-intensive and requires a large investment of time by people who have a significant amount of background knowledge.

The quality of the research is highly dependent on:

- the person specification;
- the briefing which the person conducting the research has been given about the institution prior to the start of the research;
- the capability and planning of the person undertaking the research.

Typically, an ESA researcher will spend several weeks on a search for suitable candidates. This capability is commonly cited by institutions as one of the great strengths of ESAs. Agencies should have an infrastructure in place to undertake this work. This will include both the staff (where there is an in-house facility) and the external contacts. They should also have access both to other sectors and to international contacts.

The person undertaking the research will have to make a large number of contacts with both potential candidates and with those with sufficient knowledge and contacts to suggest potential candidates.

If using an ESA you will expect them to explore the following sources. If you choose not to use a consultancy you will have to spend time on a similar search to build up a comparable list. You can use:

- contacts recommended by the institution itself during the scoping discussions for the project;
- contacts generated by the consultancy’s own contacts within the sector;
- significant stakeholders in the institution’s activities, particularly if it has some specialist functions;
- professional groups linked to the institution’s activities;
- international contacts.

There may also be internal candidates in the institution who are potential appointees. Increasingly, institutions are developing formal succession plans and development plans to groom senior managers as potential future leaders.

Reflection 5

Nurturing the talent pool (head of institution)

‘I came to this university from industry and I was surprised at how haphazard the development of senior staff was. It felt as if everything was left to chance and the hope that the right person would somehow rise to the surface. I was fortunate in having a head of human resources who understood my concerns.

We set about working with the senior team to create a succession plan. The university is in the process of creating a more formal development programme to develop our senior staff. I think this is important because to take the institution where the governors and I want it to go will mean having senior staff who understand leadership and management from both a business and academic perspective.

We have used an assessment centre to help the team members create personal development plans. I review these with my direct reports and expect them to do the same with their people.’
Reflection 6

Exploring new sources [head of human resources]

The statutes of our institution require that our Principal has particular religious affiliations. Past appointments have been drawn from a fairly restricted field of people who were well known from the relevant faith community in higher education.

For the last appointment we used a search consultancy. The ESA which won the contract came to the presentation with some good ideas about where we could look for candidates.

They had identified a number of bodies in the same community who might have a view. Between us we approached them and asked their views on the sort of person we could appoint. They had several interesting suggestions of potential candidates which we would not have thought of. As a result we had a really good shortlist.

Approaches to potential candidates

Once potential candidates are identified they have to be approached and sounded out. This does not, of course, apply to those who respond to advertisements, whose interest can be taken as read.

This is clearly something which has to be done with great sensitivity and tact. It is equally important to be clear on the nature of the contact at this stage to avoid raising any expectations. What is said to the potential candidate at this stage has to be carefully thought through.

This is another area where institutions have cited the service offered by ESAs as valuable. Additionally their use allows a certain distance to be maintained between the individual and the institution. The agency will have protocols for these approaches. The intervention of a third party may also mitigate against the raising of expectations that a direct approach might generate.

Applications

The normal practice is for respondents to advertisements to provide a full CV and a covering letter setting out why they are interested in the post. In the application pack the content of the letter should be spelled out explicitly. Typically this will ask:

- why the applicant is interested in the post;
- how they meet the person specification;
- what they would bring to the post.

It is now increasingly the practice for search consultancies to ask approached candidates to provide the same information in the same form as respondents to advertisements. This will ensure that the institution is able to compare candidates on an equal footing.

You will want to ensure that the response you seek from applicants is proportionate and does not make excessive demands on candidates in the early stages. It may be better to limit the requirements in the early stages and indicate any further input by the applicants at later stages.

Candidate list

It is the practice of some ESAs to eliminate candidates they see as obviously unsuitable according to the brief they have been given] before presenting a list to the institution. In other cases the agency will discuss all applicants with the institution, pointing out those who fail to meet basic criteria. The institution should be aware of all the applicants (if only to validate the ESA’s proposals for excluding particular individuals) and will agree with the ESA the approach and criteria to be used.
By the end of the application and research stage the institution will have generated a list of candidates about whom it will have information available through:

- a detailed CV
- a letter of candidature
- any reports produced by the search researcher.

The next stage will be to consider who should move forward onto the shortlist.

Moving from a long list to a shortlist involves the use of relevant information and performing an evaluation against agreed characteristics and criteria to arrive at a shortlist of candidates to call for interview.

The long list

So far your recruitment process has generated a list of people who are interested in becoming head of your institution – the candidate list. If this list is of a manageable length you may decide that your candidate list becomes your long list.

Otherwise, you may decide to go through a preliminary sift to eliminate obviously unsuitable candidates. If your decisions are to be fair and justifiable you need to focus on those attributes for which you have definite information through the documentation you have to hand. At this stage the selection panel will eliminate candidates who fail to meet essential criteria in the person specification, such as evidence of leadership experience, particular requirements in statutes etc.

You will probably not have a target number to achieve as you will when you are shortlisting (though no more than 12–15 is often considered optimal at this stage). If your applicants have been self-critical, you may find that your entire candidate list has the basic qualifications to enter your long list.

Whichever approach you adopt you will at the end be able to move to the more detailed probing to identify a shortlist of candidates to be invited to the final stage.

Identifying the shortlist

This will be conducted by the selection panel (or a delegated sub-group of the panel) using all the documentation provided by the candidates and any other material which has been generated during the process. Only by having all available evidence can the panel confidently take its decision.

To maintain consistency, the first sift must be made on the basis of the defined sub-set of the person specification. As described earlier (section 3), you will have identified these at the drafting of that specification, along with some criteria about the level expected (such as examples of what would be required) and an indication of weighting (such as ‘high/medium/low’ or ‘essential/desirable’).

The criteria chosen for the first sift are based on those which can reasonably be assessed from the information available (CV, application letter, consultants’ report) and will therefore be factual. Typical criteria are:

- leadership experience – heading an organisation of similar size and complexity;
- academic record;
- financial management experience;
- experience of or appreciation of higher education;
- track record of leadership through change.
It is important that all those attending the selection panel have had prior sight of all the papers and have a thorough understanding of the criteria they will be expected to apply.

A recommended approach is for the applications to be sent to those who will attend the sift panel well before the meeting. They will then have the opportunity to read through all the documentation without the pressure of a time-limited meeting. Panel members will find it helpful to use a standard form which to record their preliminary assessment of each candidate according to the agreed criteria. They should come to the meeting with clear ideas about the candidates, which they can then discuss with the other members from a position of knowledge.

The sift meeting itself will be much easier if the members have had the opportunity to make their own assessment beforehand. They will be able to make speedy judgements where there is agreement over the assessment, so that discussion can focus on the differences. The meeting should be supported by a number of other individuals such as the head of human resources, the secretary or registrar and the ESA consultant who can offer high level advice and guidance. The panel may take advice but should not delegate the decision.

The process will take place in several stages:

- elimination of obviously unsuitable candidates;
- assessment of candidates against the highly weighted or essential attributes;
- assessment against lower weighted or desirable attributes.

At the end of the process the panel will have achieved a shortlist of candidates who will proceed to the next stage (often no more than 4–5 people).

If the panel has confidence in the validity of the person specification and the close relation of this to the needs of the institution, then it should be possible to identify a relatively small field.

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**Reflection 7**

**Shortlisting (chair of panel)**

'The selection panel meeting was scheduled to last a day, including a working lunch. My fellow governors were a bit worried that a long, intensive day would impair the quality of the decisions we were taking towards the end of the day. I discussed these concerns with the head of human resources. He suggested that we do what his staff would do in the same situation.

He suggested that the selection panel were sent the candidate applications together with an assessment table his staff designed. Each panel member was asked to look through the forms and make a preliminary assessment of each candidate. They recorded their assessments according to criteria set out in the table.

When we met for the sift we were able to compare our ratings and focus on areas where there was a variation between the governors. The previous work meant that we were all familiar with the candidates and could discuss them from a position of knowledge.

We finished the meeting mid-afternoon. We were all very satisfied with the process and agreed that we had a good selection of candidates.'
Final selection

Getting to know the candidate

It is now common practice to offer the candidates the opportunity to visit the institution and to meet members of staff. The format of such visits varies, but typically will offer:

- one to two days with the institution;
- an opportunity for a tour of the institution and its main sites;
- meetings with the chair of governors and/or members of the selection panel, on a ‘getting to know you’ basis;
- meetings with key groups, such as academic and professional staff and other stakeholders;
- discussions with senior staff about specific issues, for example finance, estates, teaching and research;
- meetings with representatives of the student body. Doubts are sometimes expressed about confidentiality when dealing with students. However, there is no evidence that they are more likely to breach confidentiality than any other group.

A visit will provide the opportunity to explore particular issues which have not previously been raised, such as any problems the new incumbent will be expected to address. The candidates should be given the chance to discuss these in some depth so they know what they could be taking on if they were successful.

The purpose of these visits must be transparent to the candidate. Is it purely a briefing and orientation meeting? Also, will there be any feedback to the selection panel, for example through a confidential briefing to the chair?

Reflection 8

Looking after the candidates (candidate)

'I had a couple of interviews for VC posts before I was appointed to my present post and I have a mixed experience. On one occasion I was taken out for dinner the night before the interview. It all felt rather stilted and I am not convinced they were not checking my table manners. Interviews are stressful enough without this sort of thing and being continually watched.

It was a pleasant change coming to this college. I was treated really well before the interview. I was invited to stay the night before because of the distance I had to travel. I was given a private room with an evening meal in privacy and drink-making facilities in my room. I was asked what newspaper I wanted (although I am not sure whether they were checking on my choice!). I had a private phone and access to a computer. I felt really comfortable and was able to relax and prepare myself for the following day. I felt I was ready to show myself in the best light and in the event I got the job.'

Making the selection

The objective of the final selection is to identify the shortlisted candidate who, in the judgement of the selection panel, is the one most closely matching the needs of the institution.
As stated earlier, selection is a steady accumulation of evidence covering the different attributes. You will need to ensure that your decisions are based on this accumulation. To avoid unfairness and to make the best possible decision, you should steer clear of making decisions based on a single test, but instead look at the candidate in the round.

The final selection process therefore should not be managed in isolation from what has gone before. It provides an opportunity to augment what has been learned so far about the candidates, to fill in any gaps and to test attributes which have not yet been assessed.

- CVs are useful for gaining information about work experience.
- Application letters will, depending on what you specified, give the candidate’s view of their motivation, their understanding of the role and their assessment of how they meet the specification.
- Selection interviews give an insight into the candidate’s presentation and communication skills and their strategic thinking, as well as allowing a check to be made on other aspects. They also provide an opportunity to see the how the candidate behaves and to gain a deeper insight into their values.
- Presentations reveal the candidate’s presentation and communication skills in more formal settings, as well as testing their strategic thinking and giving further knowledge about the values they bring to their thinking.
- Psychometric testing is used more as a confirmation of what is found elsewhere. Personality testing will reveal aspects of the candidate’s character, but it is important to bear in mind that you need to take a balanced view.
- Assessment centres can be used to test the candidate’s performance in work simulation situations.

You will find more detailed descriptions in Appendix C.

The human resources department will have expertise in the methods of selection and will provide guidance on the approaches that can be used and what can be learned. They will help you produce a combination of methods that offer a cost-effective way of learning about the candidate and making your assessment.

Of course, the final decision will be taken by the full group of governors on the recommendation of the selection panel.

**Monitoring**

Monitoring for equality is an essential part of the recruitment process, but separate from selection. As you move through the processes eliminating candidates you will wish to ensure that there is an individual nominated to keep track of the composition of the pool. You should be prepared to examine any shifts which seem to be changing the characteristics in order to determine the causes, such as if one of your methods has introduced bias.
Reflection 9

Written presentations (chair of panel)

'We have usually asked candidates for senior jobs to produce a short presentation as the first part of the interview. We would then ask a few questions before carrying on with the interview. This is a good way of seeing what the candidate is like at public presentation and how they can carry on a challenging discussion. The downside is that we don’t really get a chance to think about what they have said before we ask our questions, so they can get a bit of an easy ride.

For our recent VC appointment we instead asked the shortlist candidates to produce a short paper [no more than four pages] on 'the future role for small town teaching institutions in an international market'. We asked them to send it in a few days before the interview. This gave my fellow governors a chance to read the paper and think about the questions we could ask. My impression was that the questioning was a bit more incisive and thoughtful this time. We will probably use this approach again.'

Selection panel planning and briefing

It is important that the selection or interview panel is properly briefed for the final selection process, and especially for the interview.

This is a contentious area as many of the people on institution governing bodies will be senior managers with considerable experience of making appointments to key posts and may be resistant to the idea that they need further training. However the evidence is that training improves the validity of interviews, even where unstructured.

Reflection 10

Interview planning (head of human resources)

'Frankly, the interviews for the previous Vice-Chancellor were a bit of a shambles. The two longer serving governors who took part in the process told me about the random questioning, the unsystematic order and the complete lack of prior consultation among the panel that had created what one of them described as “an intellectual obstacle race for the poor ... candidates”.

As a human resources professional I found this a bit alarming, not to say leaving us open to challenge if anything went wrong. Fortunately for me the new chair was of the same opinion. As a part of our planning, we decided to do the job properly.

We held a planning meeting for the interview panel. We sat down with the person spec and looked at the particular things we wanted to focus on in the interview – there was no point in going over ground we already had plenty of evidence for, unless there was something we wanted to check. There were some common questions for all the candidates, but we tailored the approach to allow each candidate to show themselves in the best light.

The successful candidate later said to me “That was the most intense grilling I’ve ever had. Doing the job will be easier than getting it”.'
Reflection 11

Panel briefing (chair of panel)

'From previous interviews where governors had been involved I was a bit worried about how they would perform on the Vice-Chancellor panel, where they were a majority. On the other hand they did not respond well when I broached the subject of interview training in a planning meeting.

They were quite happy to have a briefing meeting prior to the interviews so I worked with the head of human resources to build in what she called 'experiential learning'. She facilitated a session where she had the governors sharing their experiences of interviews - what had worked and a few horror stories. We talked about equality of opportunities and how we could ensure we were being fair to all the candidates. That was a bit of an eye-opener as some had rather odd notions about what constituted 'fair'. One thought it was OK to ask female candidates about family commitments as long as we asked men the same question!

I think the interviews went well. The discussion with the candidates went smoothly and there were no awkward moments. One governor admitted that he had found "our little chat beforehand" very useful and much better than all that training I wanted them to do.'

Problems with appointment

No suitable candidate

While working through the recruitment process in a systematic and rigorous manner will go a long way to ensuring success, it is possible that you cannot find a suitable candidate.

This can happen for a variety of reasons. There may have been changes in circumstances which render the initial specification inappropriate [in which case you should restart the process as soon as the change occurs]. Sometimes candidates who appear strong on paper fail to deliver when you probe them more deeply. It may also be the case that the approach taken to candidate search was ill-suited to your requirements.

In these circumstances the only acceptable course of action is to restart the process and reflect upon:

- your original expectations and test their reality in the light of that experience;
- the person specification;
- the criteria and means used for search and subsequent selection.

Candidate turns down the offer

It can sometimes happen that when you have chosen your candidate and made the offer they decide they do not wish to take up the appointment. This may be because at the end of the process they decide that this post is not for them or that they are not the person you are looking for. They may have had what they perceive as a better offer.

It is not uncommon to find that more than one of the candidates could be suitable for the post according to your criteria. As a precaution, therefore, it is important that the selection panel should, as well as choosing their preferred candidate, rank any candidates considered suitable for the post. This will give the institution a reserve.
Overview

Having made a substantial investment in securing the best candidate for the position, the institution will have to ensure the new head is effectively supported in their new role.

Appointment

Process

The human resources department will have processes for the appointment of new staff. It is important to adhere to established processes to ensure that everyone understands what is happening. It is particularly important to manage the contacts with the successful candidate to ensure that there is clear understanding on both sides about what is offered and what is expected.

The selection committee will have reported to the governing body with its recommendations and the governing body will have formally approved the decision. Typically, the next steps will include:

- an informal phone call by the chair of governors informing the successful candidate. This does not constitute an offer and no negotiation of terms and conditions should be undertaken;
- the unsuccessful candidates are informed and offered the opportunity for feedback;
- the human resources department is told of the decision and asked to set in train the required steps. In practice the head of human resources will be closely involved in the process and should already have made appropriate preparations;
- the remuneration committee meets to discuss and agree the salary and other benefits to be offered;
- the formal offer is made by letter to the chosen candidate. This will set out the terms of the offer in some detail and act as the basis for any discussion. It is preferable to ensure that all negotiations are done at this stage rather than after the contract has been issued. It may be preferable to arrange a meeting (involving the chair of governors, the head of human resources and the institution’s secretary/registrar) with the candidate, rather than engaging in a lengthy correspondence;
- once there is agreement the contract can be issued;
- arrangements for the handover and induction need to be agreed.

Criminal records and the right to work in the UK

You will need to ensure that your chosen candidate is eligible to work in your institution. You will not be able to make any assumptions as you have a legal responsibility to make diligent checks. The UK Border Agency website gives guidance on the conditions that must be fulfilled.13

Health

Health is a sensitive area because of privacy and data protection issues. However, you will wish to ensure that you are not exposing your candidate to any risk which could affect their health and ability to do the job (subject to any adjustments you will make for disability). You also need to protect the institution from any liability as a result of a condition which subsequently emerges.

Checks may consist of a health questionnaire, followed by an interview with an occupational nursing adviser if there are any points for clarification. A referral to a physician may be necessary if there are further checks required. Your human resource department will have access to appropriate people and procedures.
Salary

The question of salary, including any performance element, is typically a matter for the institution’s remuneration committee. This will be clearly defined in the institution’s statutes (and observations on the role of remuneration committees are examined in the recently published guidance to governors issued by the LFHE[1]).

In setting the remuneration, the committee will need to discuss with the panel the performance requirements for the post. These should have been discussed very early in the process during the compilation of the specification for the candidate.

Performance

You will, as a body of governors, need to have very clear ideas on expected performance. These should be explained to all candidates at the shortlist stage to ensure that they understand what will be expected of them.

The chair of the governing body will wish to go through these again with the successful candidate before confirming the appointment to ensure they are fully aware of the commitment they are making. Performance requirements will vary from institution to institution and may include:

- organisational targets, such as reorganisations, the compilation of the business plans;
- new projects, such as major improvements to estate or new building;
- fundraising activities.

It is important to have realistic expectations of the new appointment and not to create an unattainable list.

Induction and support

The chair of governors should provide a high degree of support for the new head during the settling-in period. Regular meetings will provide an opportunity for both the head and the chair to discuss how the new role is progressing and to sort out any difficulties (on either side) at an early opportunity and before they become major problems. They may wish to agree a period after which a more formal appraisal is given, over and above any more regular assessment. The chair of governors and appointee will need to review regularly the appointee’s progress against the key objectives and performance targets set at the start of his or her appointment and these need to be confirmed in writing by the chair to the new head. The chair will need to inform the appointee of any concerns about his or her performance as early as possible.

Such meetings will be particularly important if the new head is expected to undertake actions that are difficult or controversial in some way (for example undertaking a major reorganisation of the senior management team). Under these circumstances the head will need a high degree of support.

A systematic induction process will help the appointee settle in quickly. Where there are concerns about the appointee’s performance, these need to be supported by evidence and flagged up with the appointee at an early stage. You should seek advice from the secretary, registrar or head of human resources and the governing body, as appropriate.

To give the new head the best start you will need to plan very carefully how they take over from their predecessor. Because of the wide range of circumstances it is not possible to lay down a definitive process for the handover. It will depend on geography (especially where there has been an international appointment), relations with the incumbent, the demands of the new head’s present job etc. However, working out an ordered handover, with adequate briefing, will help ensure the rapid deployment of the new head in a difficult role.
The challenge for the new head will be greater if you have recruited someone from outside the sector. You will need to make sure that you provide more detailed support. One approach is to offer the new head the option of a mentor in another similar institution. The mentor will be able to provide practical support and guidance from the point of view of someone already doing the job.

Additionally, someone from outside the public sector will need to be aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected in public life. At least part of their induction should cover the seven Nolan principles.\textsuperscript{15}

Finally, it may be the case that, despite everything, the institution feels that the new head is not meeting its needs and has to arrange an exit. In such cases institutions must take due account of relevant guidance on severance.\textsuperscript{16}

Reflection 12

Supporting the new head (candidate)

'I was really pleased to be offered the post of Principal but unfortunately I was on six months' notice with my previous employer. They were pretty keen that I saw it out because of a project I was leading and wanted to finish. They recognised the importance of the new job and so they were very good about giving me time to get to know the new university.

My new place helped me during this period. I went for regular meetings with the Principal, who kept me up to speed on all the issues. He sent me a regular stream of key papers so that I knew what was going on and what I would have to deal with. I met other members of the team and sat in on a few meetings, such as faculty management meetings.

By the time I took up the job I felt pretty well-equipped to hit the ground running. I already knew the main players and what needed doing. I am really grateful for the generosity of my predecessor in helping me take over.'

Reflection 13

Not supporting the new head (candidate)

'I knew that relations between the previous VC and the governors were not too good because I know several people at the university and picked up on some of the gossip. That did not stop me from applying for the job, however, as I have always seen the place as having a good academic reputation.

Before taking up the post I spoke to the chair about some induction. She told me to see the VC. However, the VC was not willing to share anything with me, telling me that it would all be mine when he had gone. He sent me a few things I could have found on the website anyway.

When I started the job I was given on my first day a folder of documents with a post-it note with my name and wishing me luck. I found the first three months frankly awful and at one point seriously considered giving up. I felt I was all the time in the dark and trying to form an opinion on the basis of no information. The chair was very apologetic and tried to help but she was as much in the dark as I was on some things. We have worked hard to build up a relationship and I think things have turned the corner, but it is not an experience I would want to repeat.'
Feedback to unsuccessful candidates

Feedback to unsuccessful candidates is an essential part of the recruitment process:

- All the candidates will have invested a great deal of time and commitment in participating and will be entitled to hear an honest account of how you perceived them.

- Constructive feedback that helps an individual develop will enrich the talent pool of good leaders available to the sector. This will help sustain the UK’s reputation for world class higher education, benefitting the whole sector.

- The reputation of your institution in the sector will in itself be influenced by its handling of the feedback process.

Giving feedback to unsuccessful candidates is one of the services that ESAs will undertake on behalf of the institution. However, there is a strong argument that it should be the institution and, in particular, the chair of the panel who should be personally responsible. In the case of internal candidates the feedback should always come from the chair of governors and not be delegated to the search agency.

Apart from the moral responsibility argument, the reasoning is that only the people who were actually involved in the decision-making process can give detailed and contextually sound feedback. Unsuccessful candidates also value direct contact and will usually hold the institution in higher esteem as a consequence. In the experience of those who have undertaken this task themselves there is almost always a positive response provided the unsuccessful candidates feel the information is honest and constructive.

If it is felt appropriate to delegate this task to the ESA, the agency will need clear briefing and the detailed content of each individual’s feedback should be discussed.

In general, feedback should be set against the requirements of the person specification rather than relative to other candidates. It may be necessary to refer to the successful candidate who will have shown a more complete fulfilment of the criteria when an unsuccessful candidate nonetheless could have taken on the role.

The feedback may cover:

- the strengths displayed by the candidate, including aspects of their application which led to their shortlisting;

- the areas [if any] where their performance was judged below the level of the person specification;

- areas for development, including possible ways in which the individual might build their capability, for example by course attendance or gaining different work experience;

- any supportable advice about possible career paths.

It should be made clear at the outset that any information given about judgements made by the selection panel is not up for discussion. It is a very rare experience for a candidate to raise any objections, but if necessary this should be made clear and you cannot enter any debate or justification.

There is sometimes a tendency to suggest that candidates were near misses, by way of consolation. This cannot be true for all candidates and it is not unusual for any attempt to mislead in this way to be discovered. It is better not to enter into discussion about any final ranking.
Review

While you will undoubtedly feel a sense of relief at the successful appointment of a new head of institution, you will want to capture the experience of the appointments process.

As a final step, therefore, it is valuable for the governors to collectively review the experience and record it for their successors.

The review could cover:

■ the process (the recruitment manager will have kept a record of detail);
■ what worked well;
■ what worked less well;
■ what did not work;
■ lessons learned - how you would do it differently in future.
The law on equality is contained in various pieces of legislation. These are shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas for potential discrimination</th>
<th>Relevant legislation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sex, marital status, pregnancy and related areas, gender reassignment | Equal Pay Act 1970  
Sex Discrimination Act 1975  
Employment Rights Act 1996  
Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 2004  
Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000  
Flexible Working Regulations 2003 and 2009 |
| Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin | Race Relations Act 1976  
Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 |
| Disability | Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 |
| Sexual orientation | Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 |
| Religion or belief | Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 |
| Age | Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 |

Additionally employers need to be aware of legislation dealing with criminal convictions and the right to work in the UK through:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;

The institution’s human resources department will be the repository of information about all aspects of equality legislation.

**Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when a specific requirement explicitly excludes a protected group. There are exceptions for ‘genuine occupational requirements’, the definition of which is tightly prescribed. Examples of this are the need for heads of certain institutions to be practising members of a particular faith group. This form of discrimination is rare.

In recruitment the most likely form of potential discrimination is indirect discrimination. This occurs when an employer applies some sort of requirement to all applicants, but this disadvantages particular groups disproportionately. A common example is to ask candidates about family and care commitments. Even if asked of all candidates, it could be seen as prejudicial to women as they tend to be the primary carers. To avoid any challenge the institution must demonstrate that the requirement is both necessary and proportionate.

It is envisaged that legislation will be enacted in 2009 or 2010 unifying the various strands of discrimination, defining a consistent standard of what amounts to unjustified discrimination, and unifying guidance to employers on how best to avoid discrimination and encourage diversity.
The key to avoiding discrimination is the job description and the person specification. Each has the potential to attract the best possible candidates, but at the same time can leave the organisation open to the need to justify a requirement and satisfy the test of legitimacy and proportionality.

You should note that there are certain exceptions that allow institutions to require certain qualifications. In particular, the statutes of some institutions require that its head, and possibly others, are members of particular faith groups.

Further notes giving guidance for employers can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/your-rights/information-for-employers/

**Disability**

Discrimination related to a person’s disability uses a different model to the other strands of discrimination law. In particular it does not encompass indirect discrimination: instead it potentially requires the employer to make a reasonable adjustment to avoid discrimination against a person with a disability. During recruitment these accommodations are:

**Advertising** The job advertisement should expressly make it clear that the employer is committed to a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from people with disabilities. The advert should make clear that information about the vacancy can be supplied in various formats, and that applications can be received in a similar fashion.

**Job descriptions and person specifications** The job description and person specification must avoid specifying requirements that are not related to the position and might discourage a person with a disability from applying.

**Application forms** A person with a disability may need to be enabled to submit an application in an alternative format. Good practice is where an employer – through standard questions in the job application – gives the candidate the opportunity to say whether there are any special provisions or facilities required at interview. It is permissible to ask candidates during the application process if they have a disability and whether there are any adjustments that will need to be made at assessment or interview stage.

**Selection processes** Whether the employer uses assessment testing, psychometric testing or other methods will depend on the institution and the level of appointment. In all instances employers should be aware of the potential for the process to discriminate and to demonstrate potential bias. The emphasis has to be on identifying the potential for adverse impact on the person and, where possible and reasonable, modifying the technique to avoid disadvantage.

**Legislation on pay parity**

In setting the salary level the institution will need to be aware of the legislation which requires employers to pay men and women the same when performing work of equal value (eg in the same job or as determined by an evaluation of the different jobs). In case of heads of higher education institutions the precedent will be set by the previous incumbent. It will be for the institution to establish that, if there are pay differentials they are attributable to a genuine (as opposed to a sham or pretence) material factor that is not tainted by sex discrimination, where this is a consideration.

The most usual factors relied on, though each case will depend on its facts and cannot be assumed to justify pay inequality, are length and level of experience, level of service, degree of skills acquired, the responsibilities undertaken or that the individuals at different points in the grading structure. It may also be possible to point to different economic circumstances affecting the organisation where the comparator was worse at a different time from the appointee.
Criminal convictions

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 a person convicted of prescribed criminal offences set out in tables in the legislation is able, depending on the category of offence, whether or not the person was a young offender, and on the sentence imposed, to treat that conviction as being 'spent' after a specified length of time. In practical terms in a recruitment exercise a candidate would not be required to disclose a 'spent' conviction on an application form and it might be illegal either not to recruit, or to decline to confirm an appointment, where it was discovered that a candidate had not disclosed a 'spent' conviction.

The right to work in the UK

The onus is on the employer to establish that anyone they employ has the right to work in the UK. Under the legislation an employer commits a criminal offence if they employ a person who, for whatever reason, is not entitled to stay and work here. In practice employers seek to avoid this by asking job applicants to provide a national insurance number or to provide passport evidence, or the appropriate documentation. This step is normally taken after appointment and employers may wish in some cases to explore the question prior to that stage being reached. There is a potential area of difficulty and the risk for employers of an allegation that, in seeking to establish a candidate's right to work in the UK, they are guilty of discrimination.

To address this issue the UK Border Agency has published a code of practice 'to give you practical guidance on how to avoid unlawful racial discrimination while also complying with the law to prevent illegal migrant working'. The code sets out in section 7 practical advice to ensure that employers do not consciously or unconsciously discriminate.
Appendix B
Job description and person specification

Job description

The job description will have two interleaved elements.

The first part will describe the particular achievements of the post that are required to deliver the strategic directions. They will refer to specific actions which are also probably associated with targets for the institution and for the post-holder.

They will be closely linked to the performance part of the remuneration package and may include items such as:

- organisational performance – in terms of achievements in research and teaching and institutional sustainability and resilience;
- developing and realising new income streams (fundraising being but one such example);
- creating, maintaining or enhancing relationships with key stakeholder groups such as collaborative providers, business partners, local communities, enterprise agencies and professional bodies;
- reconfiguring the institution and leading through a necessary period of change.

Of course, the head of the institution is also responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation. Therefore the job description will include a detailed picture of the tasks they perform. They will cover areas such as:

- most importantly, the leadership element of the post;
- financial management;
- management and leadership of large organisations;
- performance management;
- stakeholder management;
- representation on various institution bodies;
- strategic planning;
- management accountabilities (both upwards and downwards).

The person specification

The precise list of attributes in the person specification will depend on the particular requirements of the post. The following ‘menu’ of examples suggests some of the requirements a person specification may contain:

- leadership
  - the ability to lead large and complex organisations
  - taking an organisation through a period of considerable change
  - providing visionary leadership to take the organisation forward

- resilience
  - coping with stressful situations
  - ability to work under pressure from a number of sources
  - ability to deal with complexity

- management experience
  - management of large organisations
  - financial management
  - responsibility for a large, complex budget
  - effective management of finance and a track record of securing value for mone
- people management
  - building effective teams and developing people
  - performance management of individuals and groups
  - commitment to equality and diversity
- stakeholder management
  - acting as an ambassador
  - building relationships
  - networking abilities
  - promotion of the institution
- academic standing
  - research record
  - understanding of the higher education sector
  - experience of teaching institutions
- strategic thinking
  - identifying short and long term goals of the organisation
  - creative problem solving
  - results-orientated
- personal attributes
  - verbal and written communication skills
  - interpersonal skills
  - commitment
  - problem solving.

To help the use of the person specification as a selection tool, it is useful to set out the attributes in tabular form.

For each attribute (or sub-attribute if they are broken down) examples of how they might be evidenced or demonstrated are stated. This could be in terms of experience, of particular achievements or of qualifications. These criteria will of course be indicative rather than absolute. They will provide an indication of the sort of level which can be expected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Assessment method</th>
<th>Stage (Long list/shortlist)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic reputation</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>An international reputation in their research field</td>
<td>From CV and academic records</td>
<td>Long list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A significant publication record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic leadership</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Has led an organisation through significant change</td>
<td>From CV</td>
<td>Shortlist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Can formulate strategic plans</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The process of selection is one of gradually gathering evidence to build up a rounded picture of the candidate. No method is in itself particularly effective in terms of validity, but when different methods are used in combination the overall validity of the process is improved.

**CVs**

The CV will give details of the experience the candidate has had. Conscientious candidates will tailor the CV to the particular role for which they are applying by relating what they include to the person specification. They will also set out their achievements in each post they have held rather than just providing a list of predictable responses.

Although it will be a key reference document throughout the process, the CV as a selection tool is most useful at the long list stage. It will allow the selection panel to identify suitable experience and what the candidate has achieved. They will be able to assess and compare candidates and identify areas where in subsequent stages they will need to probe for more information.

The selection panel (either as a group or through a sub-team) should see all CVs submitted. They should not allow the search consultants to make decisions on their behalf.

**Application letters**

The selection panel can specify what they want to see included in an application letter. Typically it will ask the candidate questions about how they are fitted for the post, what they will bring, how they see the institution developing etc.

The application letter is useful at the long list stage. It gives an insight into the candidate’s understanding of the role, their written communication skills and their vision (personal and for the institution).

**Selection interviews**

Interviews are the most commonly used method of selection. They can be highly cost-effective and, if conducted properly, have a low impact on candidates. In terms of validity a lot depends on the way they are planned and carried out. When conducted in an unstructured way they can be one of the least effective means of differentiating between candidates. This will typically be the case when there is limited planning and little tailoring of the questions to suit the elicitation of specific information. Clearly it is not sufficient to meet a few minutes before the interview and parcel out a series of topics around the interview panel.

It is a myth that to be fair or to comply with equal opportunity practice an interview panel must ask all candidates the same questions in the same order. This is not to say that there will not be generic topics to be covered, for which a common starting question will be used. To give each candidate the chance to show their best, however, it is necessary to adapt subsequent questioning to previous responses.

Start with a consideration of the person specification and the information already to hand about the candidate and identify the areas you wish to explore further. These will be critical areas of the performance of the role. Interviews are particularly effective at exploring experience and job knowledge.

Develop questions to explore the candidate’s experience from having done similar things in the past (on the basis that past behaviour is the best predictor of future performance). For example, to explore leadership issues and styles an opening question might be along the lines of:

’Tell me about a time you had to drive through a major change’.
This could be followed by questions which start to probe further, looking at particular aspects such as:

‘What were the main challenges?’

‘How did you deal with reluctance to change?’

‘How did you measure your success?’

The idea is to build up a picture of the candidate’s approach to the area in question. Using this approach, the interview becomes more of a dialogue. The candidates feel more relaxed and are more likely to open up and be honest.

Their approach and reasoning will tell you about how they approach problems and challenges, and also give information about their values, as distinct from the application of skills. You can ask what motivated them to behave in certain ways and what criteria they applied in dealing with the issues. You will want to assure yourself that these are in accordance with the values the institution wishes to promote.

Avoid hypothetical questions [of the form ‘How would you...’]. They invite the candidate to speculate and to tell you what they think you wish to hear. They give little insight into real behaviour.

Although interviews are usually conducted by the board as a whole there is an increasing practice elsewhere in the public sector to use ‘split boards’. For this, the interview panel splits into a number of smaller units for all or part of the interview. Each sub-panel will tackle a particular area with each candidate. They will then come together to pool the results.

This method allows the board to see several candidates at once and to spend more time on each area than would be possible in a full panel. The interviews need to be carefully timetabled and the timing must be rigorously observed for this approach to work.

**Presentations**

A presentation, usually of 10–20 minutes, with or without visual aids, on a chosen topic gives the selection panel the opportunity to test a candidate’s analytical skills, their vision and their communication skills. Beyond this, the way they approach the task and reach their conclusions gives insight into their values, so the panel can see if they accord with those of the institution.

There is a number of ways in which the presentation can be set up:

- The candidate is given a subject in advance of visits to the institution so they can use the meetings they will have as an opportunity to explore issues and present a considered manifesto.
- The candidate is given a subject only a short time (possibly the day before if the selection takes place over two days) so that a more spontaneous reaction is given.

The audience for the presentation can also vary and may be affected by confidentiality constraints. Audiences may include:

- the selection panel only
- the full board of governors
- an invited group of senior staff
- the senate, either as a whole or selected groups
- interest groups, such as particular managers and academics.
Psychometric testing

While psychometric testing is currently only rarely used at head of institution level, it is widely used in other parts of the public sector and it is likely the practice will increase.

Psychometric tests are of two types. **Cognitive skills tests** measure the ability to exercise certain skills, such as linguistic or numerical ability. They are not suitable at the most senior levels.

**Personality questionnaires** are more relevant to appointment at very senior levels. A range of tests is available to assess personality traits and these tests are generally effective as predictors of behaviour and performance. You may wish to consider the use of a personality test as an additional tool in the selection process.

In general you will find that the tests do not reveal information that is totally unexpected but the tests will confirm other assessment methods and provide a framework for the other findings. If they do not (that is, there is a material discrepancy in the findings) this can be a useful basis for exploration in the course of a later interview: the panel can seek to reconcile any major differences between the presenting behaviour and the test results through the interview and the consideration of any other evidence, references etc. While it is unlikely that psychometric test results will of themselves rule out a candidate, a significant unresolved difference between any areas of evidence should prompt a degree of caution.

In all cases psychometric testing must only be undertaken by a qualified practitioner. The human resources department will have information about qualified testers and will recommend suitable tests. Because of the nature of the tests and the outputs from them, it is important that the results are set into a context and a balanced view presented. Therefore the tester should present the results as a report and the selector panel should not be given the raw results.

Psychometric testing represents a cost to the organisation so you will only want to test shortlisted candidates. Timing will depend on the structure of the final selection, as sufficient time must be left to allow the tester to produce a report and give the panel time to assimilate it.

References

While not strictly a selection method, references are an important part of the recruitment process. Their purpose is to obtain external validation of the candidate’s claims about who they are and what they have done.

Following up references is an essential action. You will have to decide how you will do this and inform your applicants how you intend to proceed. A useful approach is to identify a number of specific questions which you can put to the referee. This allows you to focus on particular issues and avoid generalities that can be irrelevant or misleading.

In some cases, for confidentiality reasons, candidates may ask that you only seek references if the candidate makes the shortlist or even the final offer stage. You will have to decide in the light of other evidence.

In recent years there has been a tendency for references from organisations to be limited to confirmation that the individual worked for the organisation and the period of their employment.

Personal references are more helpful. For final references it is important that they are taken by a member of the selection team and not delegated to the search agency, if used. You should also have a clear structure to the conversation and should record what is said.
Your external representative, a current or recently retired institution head, will have access to informal references and contacts about individuals. This sort of information can be problematic as it is often hearsay. It therefore has to be used with great care as a basis for further examination rather than taken in its own right and without verification.

In addition to the usual references it can be helpful to seek references for particular claims made by the candidates. In letters, interview, CVs etc you will be looking for concrete examples of performance. The candidate should be able to cite someone who can verify that the claims are accurate. The chair may ask for this.

**Assessment centres**

An assessment centre provides a means of testing candidates in work-simulation type exercises. They consist of a series of tasks similar to those the post-holder might be expected to undertake. The activities are designed specifically to the role by a qualified practitioner against a series of competences and personal characteristics appropriate to the level of the role.

Assessment centres are now commonly used for some senior appointments and it is likely that in future their benefits will be applied at head of institution level.
Appendix D
The candidate information pack

This pack should provide relevant information regarding the institution, the job itself and the location. You may wish to include, therefore, details about:

- the institution
  - a pen picture of the institution giving an overview
  - the corporate plan objectives
  - the research profile – particular strengths, recent achievements, RAE highlights
  - teaching profile – student numbers, summaries of any assessments, particular strengths or affiliations
  - the estate, including any significant development plans
  - financial summary – turnover, trends etc
  - major external stakeholders – links to the locality, nationally or internationally
  - institutional governance

- the role
  - the responsibilities, including membership of higher education bodies
  - the person specification, setting out essential and desirable attributes
  - the management structure into which the post-holder will be introduced
  - any occupational requirements; for example, the statutes of some institutions require that the head is a member of a particular religion

- the appointment process
  - the overall process, including the sequence of events and how decisions will be taken (for example what the final interview will consist of)
  - opportunities to visit the institution and meet key individuals (if offered)
  - the key dates for receipt of applications and for the selection interviews
  - when a decision will be made
  - how to make an application – CVs, content of application letter, process for submitting and closing date

You should also inform prospective candidates of any measures you will take to make sure their state of health is such that they will be able to undertake the required duties (allowing for any accommodation made for people with disabilities)

- the locality
  - as the appointee will be expected to move to the area, they will want to know something about the environment; this could include a general view of the area, the economic aspects, facilities for recreation (sport, culture, other leisure activities), employment prospects for partners and children, local education, health etc

- the terms and conditions of the appointment
  - the salary: you may wish to leave this open as it may depend on the candidate, but an indicative figure could be helpful as sending a signal to potential candidates
  - other employment conditions that may help the potential candidates decide whether they wish to apply. This might include the availability of accommodation and any fringe benefits, such as health insurance or allowances.
1. The terms 'governing body' and 'board' encompass the governing bodies of post-1992 institutions, the councils of pre-1992 universities, and courts in Scotland. 'Governor' indicates a member of these different bodies; 'chair' is used for the person convening governing body meetings and 'head of institution' for the Vice-Chancellor or Principal. "HEI" is used for 'higher education institution'.

http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-in-he-stats-08

http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-in-he-stats-08

4. Both these professional advisers will add significant value. Together they can advise on the professional, legal and contextual complexities as well as the application of the institution's statutes.

5. The chair should ensure panel members are well versed in issues of senior staff recruitment and the application of relevant legislation. Formal briefing sessions prior to entering into the process are strongly recommended.

6. Additionally, the records may be required in the event of a 'freedom of information' request.

7. These can be found in the introduction to the first report of the Nolan Committee: www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/partment/nolan/nolan.htm

8. Representation for all possible stakeholder groups could lead to an unacceptably large panel. One solution is to delegate individual members of a smaller panel to consult a nominated group of stakeholders and represent their interests.

9. The support such individuals can provide is invaluable as they offer an insight to the panel from someone who has first-hand experience of doing the job. They offer an insight into the role and can provide background information from their own knowledge of the sector. Such people may be invited to ask questions of the candidate but must not take part in the decision-making process.

10. Appendix A offers a commentary on the legal provisions that governors will have to observe.

11. http://www.publicappointmentscommission.cmer.org/1

12. Senior recruitment is a highly sensitive and delicate process, requiring a significant level of political acumen, sound judgement, rapid decision-making, clear advice-giving and a detailed awareness of the legal context as well as the communication and reputational issues associated with the careful management of the appointment process. The recruitment manager will need to exercise all these skills.

13. The human resources department will be an important support for the recruitment process. You will find it helpful to draw on their extensive knowledge of the principles and practices of good recruitment. They will also be able to help with their knowledge of the legal aspects.


15. The report which sets out the principles can be found at www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/partment/nolan/nolan.htm


17. UK Border Agency [2008] Guidance for employers on the avoidance of unlawful discrimination in employment practice while seeking to prevent illegal working
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Universities UK
Woburn House
20 Tavistock Square
London
WC1H 9HQ

telephone
+44 (0)20 7419 4111

fax
+44 (0)20 7388 8649

e-mail
info@UniversitiesUK.ac.uk

web
www.UniversitiesUK.ac.uk

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October 2009
## Composition of the committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Model proposed to GNC on 11th Sept</th>
<th>Possible amendment to model suggested 11th Sept</th>
<th>New Model proposed 20th Sept</th>
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<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>• Convenor</td>
<td>• Convenor</td>
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<td>• Senior Governor</td>
<td>• Senior Governor</td>
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<td>• independent member of Court</td>
<td>• independent member of Court</td>
<td>• 2 independent (preferably) female members of Court</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• President of the Students’ Association</td>
<td>• President of the Students’ Association</td>
<td>2 elected members of staff to Court 1 academic, 1 non-academic (e.g. Mills and Fernandes)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• A Senate Assessor or academic staff member of Court</td>
<td>• A Senate Assessor or academic staff member of Court</td>
<td>4 Senators (appointed by Senate, 2 Arts &amp; SS, 2 Sciences, with gender parity from a range of backgrounds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A member of non-academic staff on Court</td>
<td>• 2 members of non-academic staff on Court</td>
<td>1 student (appointed by AUSA)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 2 academic staff</td>
<td>• 3 academic staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Pro-Chancellor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9 members 3 academics (1 on Court)</td>
<td>10 members 4 academics (1 on Court)</td>
<td>11 members 5 academics (1 on Court)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is the regular report to Court from Operating Board, outlining business from the meeting held on 11 September 2017.

1.2 This paper is provided for Information.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.2 Court is invited to note the report of business from the meeting held within the reporting period.

3 STUDENT RECRUITMENT

3.1 UPDATE ON STUDENT ADMISSIONS

3.1.1 The Operating Board received and noted an Update on Student Admissions. The Board noted that the challenges were around rest of UK undergraduates in the non-controlled subjects (all subjects except Medicine, Dentistry and Education); and home fees postgraduate taught. The international statistics reflected success, particularly in relation to two elements central to the University's strategy, namely recruitment from China and recruitment to Business programmes.

3.1.2 The Board noted that the University had developed online courses for mathematics and English, to enable prospective teacher training students to meet the requirements of the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

3.1.3 Noting the increased use of unconditional offers south of the border, the Board noted that agreed changes to the University's admissions criteria for students from the rest of the United Kingdom would impact applicants for 2018 rather than 2017.

3.2 2018/19 PGT AND INTERNATIONAL UG TUITION FEE SETTING

3.2.1 The Board received and approved proposed 2018/19 tuition fees for PGT and international UG, and in particular:

- approved an overall increase of 5% to postgraduate (PGT) fees, noting four exceptions on the basis of market analysis (as per appendix);
- approved an increase of 2% to undergraduate International Fees;
- noted that the standard full-time fees for PGT applied only to on-campus rates, as the 2018/19 fee rate for online programmes had already been approved.

3.3 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

3.3.1 The Board received and considered a paper on the University's performance in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2017.

3.3.2 The Board noted the reputational benefits of the University's improved performance, with particularly good results in Medicine and Biological Sciences.
4 TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

4.1 The Board received and considered updates on developments in Korea, Qatar and the emerging project in Sri Lanka, as well as a proposal to establish an East Africa Campus based in Uganda. These matters are considered elsewhere on the Court agenda.

5 FINANCE

5.1 DRAFT OUTTURN AND MMRs – YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2017

5.1.1 The Board received and noted the Draft Outturn and Monthly Management Reports for the year ended 31 July 2017. The Board noted that these results might be subject to change, following External Audit review.

5.2 USS PENSION SCHEME UPDATE

5.2.1 The Board received and noted a paper on the recent Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) valuation, including information on the higher education sector and UK pension schemes in general.

5.3 UASLAS PENSION SCHEME

5.3.1 The Board received and considered a paper on the latest position on the funding of the University of Aberdeen Superannuation and Life Assurance Scheme (UASLAS), which made recommendations on future pension provision, addressing the historic deficit.

5.3.2 The Board agreed the need for a more detailed consideration of this topic outwith the current meeting, engaging appropriate members of Court.

5.4 KING’S COLLEGE CAPITAL

5.4.1 The Group postponed discussion of a paper for the establishment of an investment fund to finance future spin out companies. In subsequent email correspondence, it was agreed to revise the paper prior to the next meeting, to take the Board through the conceptual logic of this proposal.

Note by Clerk: Due to the convening of an Extraordinary Meeting of Senate at 1pm, it was necessary to review the agenda to prioritise the most urgent items for consideration. Of the remaining items, only the item on the HR / Payroll Options Appraisal was the subject of discussion within the meeting.

6 HR / PAYROLL OPTIONS APPRAISAL

6.1 The Board received and considered a paper on the Agresso HR/Payroll module of the OneSource Programme.

6.2 The Board noted that following eight incomplete parallel runs, ongoing concerns regarding functionality and validation within the system and an inherently fragile operating system, the Director of Human Resources recommended that no further work be undertaken on the development and implementation of the HR/Payroll Unit 4 Agresso system and that the University should cease the project. It was proposed that the Northgate HR/Payroll system be retained and future development on aspects such as self-service progressed.

6.3 Members of the Board expressed concern that they had not been given prior warning of the University’s intention to withdraw from the project and the recommendation that it write off the considerable investment of both financial and staffing resource in the project to date. Further information was sought on the digital and commercial leadership of the project, an understanding of how this position was reached, and who was accountable. It was agreed to investigate the University’s legal position and to report back with a commercial strategy for maximising its opportunity to recover funds.
7. OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 RECEIVED AND NOTED

7.1.1 The following papers were received and noted:

- Report from the Capital Programme Management Committee
- Report from Digital Strategy Committee
- New Student Orientation, Induction and Training
- Accidents and Incidents Report
- Annual Safety Statistics 2016/17
- People Services Update
- Changes to the Composition of Court

7.2 RECEIVED AND APPROVED

7.2.1 The following policies were received and approved:

- Eye Protection Policy
- Review of Promotions Procedures [Note: Further clarifications to the detailed procedures requested by University Management Group and by the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee are to be incorporated in the final versions for staff. The full text of the detailed procedures are available at: https://365abdn.sharepoint.com/sites/court_intranet/SitePages/Future.aspx]

7.2.2 A revised and updated Internationalisation Policy was received and approved in principle. In subsequent email correspondence, it was agreed to review the tax implications for pensions and provision for private healthcare for staff based overseas.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

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

[20/09/17] [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 11 September 2017. The report focuses on the Committee’s consideration of:

- Recruitment Process for the Appointment of the Next Principal;
- Sri Lanka and Uganda TNE Projects

1.2 This paper is provided with recommendations for approval. The draft minutes of the meeting of 11 September 2017 are available at the foot of today’s agenda in Meeting Squared.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to:

1) Note the key items of business discussed by the Committee, in particular those that are the subject of separate standalone reports on today’s agenda.
2) Note the attached Court and Committee attendance record of members for publication in the Annual Report and advise the Clerk of any discrepancies. Appendix 1.
3) Approve the nomination for the Benefactor to the University Award. Appendix 2.
4) Note the other matters reported for information.

3. RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT PRINCIPAL

3.1 The Committee received a paper which invited it to give initial consideration to the process for recruitment of the next Principal, with a view to informing a wider discussion at Court on 4 October 2017 on how the process should be conducted and the attributes that the University should seek in its next Principal. This is the subject of a separate item for discussion on today’s agenda. The Committee’s discussion is detailed within the draft minutes available at the foot of the Meeting Squared agenda.

4 TNE PROJECTS: SRI LANKA

4.1 The Committee received a paper which outlined the ethical and reputational issues which had been considered with regard to a potential TNE project with a healthcare education partner in Sri Lanka. The Committee agreed that the project could continue to be developed for further consideration by Senate and Court. This is the subject of a separate paper for discussion on today’s agenda.

5 TNE PROJECTS: UGANDA

5.1 The Committee received a paper which sought approval, from an ethical perspective, for a proposal to establish a University of Aberdeen campus in partnership with a commercial partner in Uganda. This is the subject of a separate paper for discussion on today’s agenda, however, the Committee discussed in detail the potential risks resulting from corruption in Ugandan society and the country’s attitude to LGBT issues. The separate issue of how many TNE campus based projects the University should pursue was discussed but noted as being a matter for Court to consider.
5.2 The Committee agreed there were significant ethical and reputational risks of operating in Uganda and that these should be highlighted to Court for it to consider. The Committee agreed that Court should note that the Committee considered the key issues to be:

- the risks associated with Uganda’s ranking with regard to corruption;
- Uganda’s attitude to LGBT rights and the implications of these for staff and students;

6 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT DISCLOSURE AND COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE OF COURT MEMBERS DISCLOSURE

6.1 The Committee received a draft of the University’s Corporate Governance Statement, for inclusion in the annual accounts which set out how the institution has applied the principles of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. This is a reporting requirement of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) which as a condition of funding expected institutions to comply with the Principles of the Code and follow closely its supporting guidelines. The Committee also received a benchmarking of the University’s governance compliance with the Code.

6.2 The Committee also received an attendance record of members at meetings of Court and selected key Court Committees during the period 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2017 which would be published as part of the University’s annual report. A copy is enclosed at Appendix 1 and members are asked to review this for accuracy and advise the Clerk of any corrections required.

7 BENEFACTOR TO THE UNIVERSITY AWARD - IN CONFIDENCE TO COURT

7.1 The Committee received a nomination from the Development Trust Stewardship Committee for the Benefactor to the University Award to be awarded to [name redacted]. A copy of the nomination is enclosed at Appendix 2. The Court is being asked to approve the award.

8. FURTHER BUSINESS

8.1 The main items of further business considered by the Committee are listed below. Further information can be found in the minutes.

- Matters Agreed under Vacation Powers;
- Proposed changes to the Committee’s Remit and Composition;
- Schedule of Decision Making and Delegation between Court and Operating Board – this is included as a separate item on today’s agenda.
- Amendments to the Composition of Court Committees - this is included as a separate item on today’s agenda.
- Changes to the Composition of Court Approved by Privy Council;
- Report on the Governor Appraisal Questionnaire/Exercise;
- Potential Development of a Corporate Donor Relationship;
- University support for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Ethical Framework.

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).

18 September 2017 v1 FOI Status: Part Closed (Sections 4 and 5; Section 7 and Appendix; Draft Minutes sections 5 and 6)

Note by Clerk post meeting - Sections 4 and 5 can be published following meeting. Section 7 can be published with redaction, appendix withheld pending notification to recipient.
### Appendix 1

Attendance at University Court and Committee Meetings for the year to 31 July 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>University Court (4 in year)</th>
<th>Audit Committee (5 in year)</th>
<th>Operating Board (8 in year)</th>
<th>Remuneration Committee (3 in year)</th>
<th>Governance and Nominations Committee (5 in year)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ms M Chapman</td>
<td>4 of 4</td>
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<td>Professor Sir Ian Diamond</td>
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<td>Sir Moir Lockhead</td>
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<td>Mr Martin Gilbert</td>
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<td>Mr D Haywood</td>
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<td>Professor J Kilburn</td>
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<td>Professor P Hannaford</td>
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<td>Professor P McGeorge</td>
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<td>Councillor R McKail</td>
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<td>Councillor G Owen</td>
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<td>Councillor J Laing</td>
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<td>Mr A Arthur</td>
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<td>Professor N Booth</td>
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<td>Mr C Duncan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr I Percival</td>
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<td>Mrs J Shirreffs</td>
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<td>Professor A Akisanya</td>
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<td>Professor C Black</td>
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<td>Professor C Brittain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr D MacFarlane</td>
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<td>Mrs A Minto</td>
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<td>Mr A McNiven</td>
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<td>Mr P Milne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Sir Lewis Ritchie</td>
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</table>

* The Secretary is a member of the Operating Board but not a member of the Court, Audit Committee, Remuneration Committee and Governance and Nominations Committee.
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 6 September and reconvened on 19 September 2017.

1.2 This paper is provided for information.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the report from the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee.

FOR INFORMATION

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS REVIEW – OVERSEAS TRAVEL

3.1 A paper was presented providing an update on discussions about the Collective Agreement on Terms and Conditions of Employment and specifically the outstanding area relating to the overseas travel clause.

3.2 It was confirmed that, despite extensive consultation, the clause presented in the paper was the final proposal and that the University would now proceed with the implementation of this.

4. REVIEW OF PROMOTIONS

4.1 A paper on the work of the Promotions Review Working Group was noted and recommendations contained therein were agreed in principle with further work to be undertaken by the Working Group which will be presented to the next PNCC.

5. FRAMEWORK OF ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

5.1 The Committee noted a paper on the work that had been undertaken to develop a new Framework of Academic Expectations. The aim of the framework was to outline expectations across the 3 academic career tracks and levels within each track and to enable schools to specify their own metrics and tailor these to their discipline and school needs. The narrative was based on the National Academic Role Profiles. Discussions on this will continue.

6. TRADE UNION ACT

6.1 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 it was agreed that each union would submit a monthly spreadsheet.

7. STAFFING STRATEGY

7.1 The Committee noted a paper that covered a number of points including FAE and REF, capability concerns, agreeing a policy on settlement agreements and protected conversations.

7.2 There was discussion around the points highlighted. It was agreed that work would be undertaken to development a policy on settlement agreements/severance arrangements.
8. PRE-RETIREMENT LEAVE

8.1 The Committee received a paper discussing the current pre-retirement leave regulations. It was agreed this would be included under any discussions on the 2006 Framework Agreement.

9. FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

9.1 The Committee received a paper requesting that the PNCC consider the introduction of a working group to discuss elements of the 2006 Framework Agreement. In particular both Unite and Unison wished to look at introduction of a 35 hour working week and harmonisation of holidays. It was agreed that a small working group would be convened to look at this.

10. CALL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DILIGENCE REGARDING QATAR PROJECT

10.1 The Committee noted a discussion paper calling for Human Rights diligence regarding the Qatar project. The Aberdeen Branch of UCU requested information on the arrangements for proactive due diligence and meaningful monitoring of partners and contractors in the construction, maintenance and operation of the new campuses in Qatar to ensure that slavery was not used and that the human rights of workers were respected. It was agreed that appropriate due diligence information could now be shared with UCU.

11. IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP WORKING

11.1 The Committee noted a paper from UCU intended to stimulate discussion at PNCC. It was noted there is a meeting scheduled for later in September to discuss the Partnership Working Recognition Agreement further.

12. LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

12.1 The Committee received a paper from Aberdeen UCU intended to articulate the concerns they had in relation to aspects of the leadership and organisational change announced to staff in August 2017. It was noted that further discussion around the appointment of a Principal had taken place at Senate and continues.

13. STAFF SURVEY

13.1 The committee noted a paper from Aberdeen UCU, in which a number of questions regarding the staff survey were raised. The committee noted that the University was currently in discussion with a group of Universities to run a joint staff survey which would enable benchmarking. Further relevant information would be communicated at an appropriate juncture.

14. POLICIES

14.1 INTERNATIONALISATION

14.1.1 The Committee received the revised policy which had been updated to reflect some minor changes. The first clarified that the policy did not apply to staff who undertook externally funded international assignments or who were on sabbatical. The second reflected the change in the Expense and Benefit Policy, effective July 2017, which outlined the expenses that could be claimed in association with business travel. Court is invited to note the changes to the policy.

14.2 OTHER

14.2.1 The Committee also received the following policies which were amended to reflect the structural change with the removal of Colleges: Internationalisation, Protection of Vulnerable Groups, Recruitment and Selection, Staffing Policy against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying in the workplace, Staff/Staff Relationships, Staff/Student Relationships, Time off for Public Duties, Temporary Services, Shared Parental Leave, Volunteering.
15. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

15.1 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 People, d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk, tel 01224 273732.

21 September 2017 [version 1] [Open]
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 Members of the Court are asked to approve the Annual Report on Institution-Led Review of Quality, 2016/2017, attached as Appendix A. The report is required by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as a condition of grant to ensure (i) that provision is of an acceptable quality and (ii) that all institutions have an appropriate strategy for quality enhancement.

1.2 The report has been approved by both the University Management Group (UMG) and Senate Business Committee (SBC).

1.3 The Court is asked to approve the report. If approved, the Senior Governor will be invited to sign Appendix 1 to the report, the ‘Annual Statement of Assurance’ confirming that the Court is satisfied that the institution has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The report is due to be submitted to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) following approval by University Court. It is a requirement of the SFC that the Report is signed off by the governing body of the University. The Court is therefore invited to approve the annual report.

3. **DISCUSSION**

3.1 An ‘Annual Report on Institution-Led Review of Quality’ is required by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as a condition of grant to ensure (i) that provision is of an acceptable quality and (ii) that all institutions have an appropriate strategy for quality enhancement. SFC guidance states that the Report should include the following:

- A list of subject areas that were the subject of internal reviews during the academic year.
- A list of subject areas that were the subject of review by other bodies (e.g. professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs)) during the academic year.
- The ways in which support services were included in the review process.
- The role and nature of student involvement in the review process.
- The outcomes of subject review, indicating whether provision was approved and, if not, what actions are being taken to address issues raised.
- The key messages deriving from and action taken as a result of monitoring and analysis of performance indicators and other collected data.
- Any significant issues relating either to development needs or to the identification of good practice the institution has identified as a result of the review process.
- A forward plan or calendar of future reviews for the following academic year.

3.2 The University’s governing body must provide the SFC with a signed ‘Annual Statement of Assurance’ (Appendix I). This is a statement that confirms that the University’s governing body has considered and is satisfied with the arrangements the University has in place to maintain standards and assure and enhance the quality of its provision.

3.3 The ‘Annual Report on Institution-Led Review of Quality’ must show that the University’s provision is of an acceptable quality and that it has in place an appropriate strategy for quality enhancement.
4. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

4.1 Further information is available from Professor P McGeorge (mcgeorge@abdn.ac.uk or extension 2228) or Emma Hay, Academic Services, Registry (e.hay@abdn.ac.uk or extension 3610).

13 September 2017 [Version 1] [Open]
1 SUBJECT REVIEW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

1.1 INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW

The University of Aberdeen’s process for periodic subject review is termed ‘Internal Teaching Review’ (ITR). A fundamental feature of the University’s quality assurance procedures since 1994, the process has continually evolved to reflect ongoing changes in the external and internal drivers for quality assurance and enhancement. Schools are subject to ITR every sixth year, with the review covering the previous five years. Under the existing ITR process, documentation submitted by Schools includes a Self-Evaluation Document (SED) and an action plan identifying points for improvement. The Final Report resulting from an ITR is a constructive commentary that identifies specific commendations and recommendations. Schools are required to provide a formal Response to the Final Report, considered by the University’s Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). Schools are also required to provide a One-Year Follow-up Report indicating the progress made. All Final Reports and Responses are published on the University’s web pages.

As part of the University’s ongoing wider review of its quality mechanisms, the existing ITR process and associated documentation have been carefully considered and, following extensive consultation, amended for introduction as a pilot exercise in 2017/2018. The process to be piloted follows the introduction of a revised Annual Course Review (ACR) process (introduced in 2012/2013) and an Annual Programme Review (APR) process (introduced in 2014/2015). Designed to allow Schools to draw upon the ACRs and APRs they have completed and the External Examiner feedback received, during the period of review, it is hoped the process will provide for a greater enhancement focus and to reduce the bureaucratic burden of ITR on Schools.

The revised process will ask Schools to submit (i) a Critical Analysis (CA), allowing Schools particular contexts to be set out clearly, and have a clear focus on (i) enhancement and (ii) reflection on effectiveness throughout and (ii) a Curriculum Map detailing how programmes address Subject Benchmark Statements and have changed in line with revised statements. The final report resulting from ITR will consist of two parts; Part A will be a QAC report identifying the QA findings, highlighting good practice, commending initiatives worthy of sharing across the institution or which might be considered institution or sector leading, and highlighting areas for development. Part B will consist of a jointly-devised action plan. Schools will be asked to provide an update on the progress of this plan by way of one year follow up report. The report and action plan will be considered by the QAC and posted to ITR webpages.

1.2 STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW

Students are a central part of the University’s ITR process and to the wider quality processes within the University. The University requires Schools to encourage their students to be involved in the preparation of their SED, and to make the Final Reports and School Responses available to their students. ITR panels meet with all levels of undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students studying within the School that is under review, as well as with students who undertake the role of Class Representative or School Convener.

The University has a longstanding partnership with the Aberdeen University Students’ Association (AUSA), and all ITR panels include a student member of Senate, who is a senior representative from AUSA with
responsibility for academic affairs. This student panel member receives training alongside staff panel members and plays a full role on the panel, usually taking the lead when the panel meets with students. Student members also form part of any Panel considering validation or accreditation as part of our collaborative activities with other institutions.

Under the pilot ITR process for introduction, students will continue to play an integral role in all aspects of the review process, with an even greater emphasis on helping students prepare for their participation in the review.

1.3 INTERNAL REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

ITR includes the review of professional services as a fundamental part of the process. Panels meet support staff from within the School under review and topics addressed by the reviewing panel, cover services provided by the central Professional Services departments such as the Centre for Academic Development (CAD), Student Advice and Support, the Registry, Library, Estates, and IT Services.

Specifically, the SED asks Schools to consider the ways in which they have interacted with the various professional service departments and to comment on whether there is anything further these support agencies could do to assist Schools in promoting high quality learning and continuous quality enhancement. Comments on professional services in ITR reports are considered by the QAC and responses and action plans sought from the relevant areas of Professional Services, as appropriate.

Under the pilot process, the review of professional services will remain an integral part of the process and panels will continue to meet with support staff from the School. Any comments on professional services will be considered by the QAC and responses and action plans sought from the relevant Professional Services department as appropriate.

2 INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEWS, 2016/2017

2.1 REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN IN 2016/2017

During academic year 2016/2017, Internal Teaching Reviews (ITRs) were conducted in the School of Psychology (October 2016) and in the Business School (November 2016).

2.2 SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY, OCTOBER 2016

The ITR panel considered Psychology to be a successful, well-organised and thriving School. The panel commended the quality of teaching and learning in the School, expressing confidence in the rigorous maintenance of academic standards, and the work of the School in ensuring students are well placed to pursue other scientific or professional interests as a result of the transferable skills and knowledge afforded to them during their studies.

The panel observed the commitment of the School in ensuring the continual enhancement of teaching and learning provision, noting the implementation of innovative teaching methods and responsive nature of the School to the needs of the student body. The panel commended the strong relationship between the School and its students and the importance placed on their input and feedback.

The panel also commended the School’s use of a range of teaching methods including (i) traditional methods, such as lectures, and (ii) innovative methods, such as a ‘flipped classroom’ where students watch a recorded lecture before taking part in a workshop-type class, and the subsequent exposure of students to a multifaceted teaching model. The panel noted the positive responses of students to this approach, encompassing a range of student needs and preferred teaching styles. The panel also acknowledged the use of small group teaching across undergraduate and some elements of postgraduate provision. The panel noted mixed feedback from the student body with regards to the success of these and recommended the School take forward their own identified action, to clearly express the function of these groups to students.
The panel commended the introduction of innovative teaching and assessment formats as a means of encouraging group work but also as an effective means of teaching and assessing very large level 1 classes.

The panel commended the open and receptive attitude of the School to amending and aligning course outcomes, teaching methods and assessment. They recommend the continued review of courses in this way.

The panel noted further examples of good practice including the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) scheme operated across levels 1-3 of the undergraduate degree programme and the Psychology Internship Programme providing enhanced work-based learning opportunities.

2.3 BUSINESS SCHOOL, NOVEMBER 2016

The ITR Panel recognised the Business School as being committed to delivering a high standard of teaching and learning and maintenance of academic standards. The Panel acknowledged that the School was facing challenging circumstances, although staff were keen and proactive to resolve issues in an efficient manner, and placed the student’s interest at the forefront of all decisions and processes implemented.

The Panel commended efforts made by School staff, academic and administrative, amongst whom there was evidence of a keen sense of collegiality and support. The Panel welcomed the positive response towards the School from undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students.

The Panel commended innovative teaching practices within the School, for example, the development of online teaching, use of the Thomson Reuters Eikon flagship trading floor and the use of video clips in MS 3055 New Product and Service Development and MS3050 New Venture Creation which provided flexibility for students. The Panel felt that the alternative ways of teaching combined the use of advanced pedagogy and technology.

The Panel recommended that the School undertake a review of the feedback given to students, both hand written and provided on MyAberdeen, to ensure consistency across the School. The Panel commended the School for encouraging other forms of feedback other than Student Course Evaluation Forms (SCEFs). The Panel recommended that mid-term feedback questionnaires be used more widely across the School to ensure consistency.

The Panel commended the School’s engagement with employability skills across all programmes and the strong working relationship with the University Careers Service.

The Panel noted School membership of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Scotland’s Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for the First Year Experience and Student Transitions Enhancement Themes but recommended the School more actively ensures that good practice shared at such events or organisations be brought back and integrated to the School’s teaching and learning practices.

The Panel noted several areas of good practice within the School, however, the Panel noted that these areas of good practice tended to be discipline-specific and there seemed to be limited cross-fertilisation of ideas across the School as a whole. The Panel therefore recommended that the disciplines could work more closely together and share best practice.

2.4 OUTCOMES OF INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEWS

The panels of both ITRs conducted during 2016/2017 were satisfied with the academic standards and the overall quality of learning opportunities provided, and that appropriate systems of course and programme review were in place. There were no significant issues identified in relation to (i) development needs or (ii) the identification of good practice at the institution.
All undergraduate and postgraduate degrees offered by the School of Psychology and the Business School were recommended to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) for revalidation.

Recommendations made by the ITR panels in their Final Reports focus on the enhancement of aspects of provision, and highlight specific areas for commendation or recommendation. Schools are asked to consider these and provide a formal Response, stating relevant actions to be taken or fully considered reasons should the panel’s recommendations be thought to be inappropriate. The Final Reports and School Responses are considered by the University’s QAC, and particular areas of good practice or of concern are reported to the University Committee on Teaching & Learning. During academic year 2016/2017, the QAC reviewed the reports and responses thereto, of the Schools of Divinity, History and Philosophy and Psychology and the Business School together with the one-year follow up reports of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition. The one-year follow-up reports from the School of Psychology and the Business School, reviewed in 2016-2017, will be considered by the QAC in 2017-2018.

The process of the consideration of reports by the QAC and the reporting of particular areas of good practice or concern to the UCTL will continue under the new pilot process.

2.5 FORWARD PLAN OF INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEWS, 2017–2018

During academic year 2017–2018, an ITR piloting the revised review process, (section 1.1 above refers) will be conducted in the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture. The review will take place in March 2018.

Details of forthcoming ITRs can be found in Appendix III.

3 REVIEWS BY PROFESSIONAL, STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BODIES, 2016/2017

During 2016/2017, reviews by professional and statutory bodies were conducted across the University’s Schools as follows:

3.1 BUSINESS SCHOOL

(i) The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) confirmed their continued satisfaction and the agreed extension of accreditation of all undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Real Estate and Rural Surveying in 2016. The next review by the RICS will take place in Spring 2018.

(ii) The Designated Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy, Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy and Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy-Finance were awarded continuing accreditation by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) during 2016. Such reviews are undertaken on an annual basis and will therefore be expected again in 2017.

(iii) The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) approved the Designated Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy, Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy and all joint variants thereof, for continuing accreditation in 2016. As with the ACCA, reviews are undertaken by the CIMA on an annual basis and will therefore be expected again in 2017.

3.2 SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) accredited the Postgraduate Certificate in Into Headship in 2016.

3.3 SCHOOL OF LAW

The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIarb) accredited the LLM in Dispute Resolution in 2016. The accreditation is valid until July 2019.

3.4 SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES AND NUTRITION
(i) As reported in the 2015/16 return, the division of Dentistry has been visited by the General Dental Council (GDC), each year since the inception of the new Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) programme, as is the normal practice for a new programme. The last visit from the GDC to Aberdeen was in May 2016. In October 2016, the division received confirmation that the inspectors recommended that the Aberdeen BDS is sufficient for registration with the GDC as a dentist.

(ii) The MSc in Medical Physics was, in September 2016, accredited by the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM). Initially receiving accreditation for one academic year, this was extended for a further two academic years following the implementation of changes required by the accrediting panel.

(iii) The Association for Nutrition (AfN) last reviewed the MSc in Human Nutrition in September 2016. Further review will take place in September 2017.

Details of the reviews undertaken by Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies in 2016/2017 can be found in Appendix II.

4 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

All Schools are required to provide an account of registrations (including admissions, progression and retention), degrees awarded, course pass rates, and first destinations of leavers during ITR, with course registrations and pass rates considered annually as part of ACR and APR processes. The University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) and Senate consider reports that monitor registration and retention.

The University pays close attention to non-continuation data particularly amongst our full-time undergraduate population. On an annual basis, non-continuation data is analysed in detail and considered by Senior Management and Schools, with regard to level of study, student domicile, incoming qualifications, and entry route (summer school, access, clearing).

The University continues to collect and make extensive use of data from students. These data include survey and focus group data obtained for specific purposes. The University routinely collects data from a variety of sources including the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). Data at individual course level is obtained through ongoing quality enhancement and assurance processes, including the University wide Student Course Evaluation Form (SCEF) and Staff-student Liaison Committees.

The University’s School Planning process led by the senior Vice-Principal also reviews a range of metrics with associated action planning on a quarterly basis with the Senior Management Team (SMT). This includes all relevant QA metrics together with benchmarking data such as degree classification, retention, admission and recruitment. Inclusion of this data and analysis within the ITR process, together with the metrics analysed within the ACR/APR process, meets SFC expectations regarding assuring the quality and standard of our teaching provision without Schools having to provide additional information.

Following review of the outcome of two years of pilots by the Higher Education Academy we also adopted the United Kingdom Engagement Survey (UKES) with level one and level three undergraduates in 2016. To make the best use of these data to enhance the student experience responsibility for the collection and analysis of the NSS, PTES, UKES, and PRES is centralised in the University’s Centre for Academic Development (CAD). The centralisation of such collection and analysis has enabled a consistent approach to the analysis and dissemination of performance indicators, associated staff development activities, and the facilitation of support for evaluation of the student experience and pedagogical research. Targets for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) derived from these surveys are now integrated into the school planning cycle and Heads of School are asked to submit action plans on the basis of the data drawn from these surveys.

Data obtained during 2016/2017 demonstrates greater use of the new grading scale and that the University awarded more First and Upper Second Degrees than ever (85%). The University has the
highest number of graduates either employed or in further study (98%), with our highest number ever going into further study (35.6%), though we need to work hard to overcome challenges around graduate level employment (40.6%). University of Aberdeen graduates do very well against the sector in terms of median salaries. Our non-continuation rate is the best we have achieved (4.7%). We are seeing our highest number apply for and achieve HEA fellowship (82 in 2016). Our NSS scores are also continuing to improve.

5 ONGOING DEVELOPMENT

- Enhancements to the University’s online course selection system, MyCurriculum, and the registration process as a whole.
- Discussions have been initiated across the University’s Committee structure, including the Undergraduate Committee, Postgraduate Taught Committee, Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and University Committee on Teaching and Learning, with regards to the way the University reassesses students who have failed courses. It is hoped discussions will consider alternative forms of resit assessment.
- The University is actively investing in ways of identifying students with known characteristics that might place them at greater risk of non-continuation. A pilot using Unique Insights (an external analytics company) during the first half session of 2016/17 has revealed that our data is not yet robust enough to interrogate more fully, and thus we have agreed to be included in a JISC retention/engagement consultancy pilot with a view to developing our proactive approaches in this area.
- We are investing heavily in developing our portfolio of online programmes across a range of disciplines notably Business, Health, Education and Engineering. These programmes are a mix of fully online provision and more blended approaches and cover postgraduate taught degree programmes and short courses. This is a key component of our recently developed Digital Strategy, and it is hoped will address the needs of many students by offering a more flexible way to study. We are also developing more appropriate support systems to register, induct and support online learners.
- The University is in 2017/18, piloting a Policy on Academic Flexibility, designed for any student seeking to apply for flexibility in their studies as a consequence of their involvement in High Performance Sports.
- The consideration of a proposed policy, setting out guidelines for the recording of Education Activities.
- Actively developing a Learning Analytics policy that will facilitate the early identification of students in need of additional support and opportunities for enhancement of learning.
- The introduction of a Lecture Attendance Monitoring pilot, to aid early identification of students with limited engagement.

*Professor Peter McGeorge*
Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching)
University of Aberdeen

**Further information** is available from Miss Emma Hay, Academic Services, Registry, University of Aberdeen, Regent Building (F18), Regent Walk, Old Aberdeen, Aberdeen, AB24 3FX e: e.hay@abdn.ac.uk t: 01224 273610
On behalf of the governing body of the University of Aberdeen, I confirm that we have considered the institution’s arrangements for the management of academic standards and the quality of the learning experience for academic year 2016/2017, including the scope and impact of these. I further confirm that we are satisfied that the institution has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision. We can therefore provide assurance to the Council that the academic standards and the quality of the learning provision at this institution continue to meet the requirements set by the Council.

Signed for and on behalf of the University Court of the University of Aberdeen,
at: Aberdeen
on: the 4th day of October 2017

by: ....................................................................................................................

[name and designation of the signatory]
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<th>Accrediting Body</th>
<th>Accredited Programme(s)</th>
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| Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) | Designated Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy  
Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy  
Degree of Master of Arts in Accountancy (all joint variants) | 2016/2017              |
| Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) | Designated Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Accountancy  
Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Accountancy  
Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Accountancy-Finance | 2016/2017              |
| Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)     | Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Real Estate  
Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in Real Estate (all joint variants)  
Postgraduate Taught Programmes in Real Estate and Rural Surveying | 2016/2017              |
| CIArb                                                | Degree of Master of Laws (LLM) Dispute Resolution                                          | 2016/2017              |
| Association for Nutrition                           | Degree of Master of Science (MSc) in Human Nutrition                                      | 2016/2017              |
| IPEM                                                 | Degree of Master of Science (MSc) in Medical Physics                                       | 2016/2017              |
| The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)     | Postgraduate Certificate in Into Headship                                                | 2016/2017              |
## SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEWS

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<tr>
<th>School</th>
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THE UNIVERSITY’S ARRANGEMENTS TO MAINTAIN STANDARDS AND ASSURE AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF ITS PROVISION

The University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) has strategic oversight of all aspects of teaching and learning and the wider student experience. This includes responsibility for the assurance of the quality of the University’s educational provision (particularly in relation to the design, implementation, evaluation and review of mechanisms for quality assurance), for the enhancement of the quality of teaching and learning, and for the safeguarding of academic standards. The UCTL is a joint committee of Senate and Court and reports to both regularly. It is chaired by the Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching) and its membership consists of the Deans of Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate provision, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, and the Conveners of UCTL Task Forces (Retention, Feedback and Assessment and Positive Outcomes), with senior representatives from the Directorates of Academic Affairs and Student Life. The UCTL considers reports from three sub-committees, the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), the Undergraduate Committee and the Postgraduate Taught Committee. The UCTL devolves responsibility to the QAC for the operational oversight and monitoring of the mechanisms that assure the quality and maintenance of standards across all taught provision, including postgraduate taught elements of research provision. The regular monitoring and oversight of the operation of these mechanisms by the QAC is reported to the UCTL, and UCTL have overall responsibility for assuring these, implementing any changes to address significant issues and/or to enhance the provision. UCTL then reports on its activity to Senate and the Court, and the Court thereby has opportunity to consider these arrangements and satisfy itself of their sufficiency. The mechanisms include the following:

Internal Teaching Review (ITR) is the University’s system of periodic review of Schools’ teaching and learning provision and the process by which a Schools’ programmes are revalidated. ITR provides a formal opportunity for Schools to reflect on and critically evaluate learning and teaching provision and for the University to satisfy itself that quality and standards are being maintained and that issues are being addressed.

Annual Course and Programme Approval (SENAS): Course and programme proposals are submitted via SENAS forms which are designed to ensure conformity with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), European qualifications frameworks, and QAA guidelines for programme specifications. School SENAS forms are considered to ensure alignment with School policy and resource; QAC reviews SENAS to ensure conformity to institutional regulations and practice, and compliance with the QAA Quality Code and SCQF.

Student Feedback on taught courses is gathered primarily via an annual online ‘Student Course Evaluation Form’ (SCEF) exercise, and twice-yearly ‘Staff–Student Liaison Committee’ (SSLC) meetings. Research student feedback is collected via annual questionnaire and six-monthly monitoring reports and forms a component — along with External Examiner comments — of our Annual Course reviews. Whilst the expected, and minimum, methods for Schools to gather student feedback are the SCEF exercise and SSLCs, Schools are encouraged to consider different and innovative methods to give students the opportunity to provide feedback. Several Schools have courses which make use of mid-term SCEF to identify any issues which could be acted upon before the course ends, whilst others hold student focus groups and informal feedback sessions to allow students to express any concerns or raise issues with the staff throughout the academic year. Large level 1 courses often use Personal Response System (PRS) handsets to get immediate feedback on how the course is going and our School of Education provides opportunities for students across all Education programmes to contribute online to a synchronous student forum via our VLE as a means of eliciting further student feedback.

External Examiners play a major role in verifying standards and monitoring the quality of our provision. Examiners report annually, with their Reports and Responses to them by the Heads of School being considered by the QAC before being returned to External Examiners. Heads of School are asked to consider External Examiners Reports and feedback as part of the ACR and APR exercises.

The University’s Degree Regulations specify the criteria for our awards. Specific assessment policy and practices are set out in the University’s Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) and conform to the SCQF and QAA Quality
Code. The University employs a number of mechanisms related to ensuring the standards of its awards, including clear guidelines in regard to the procedures to be followed in instances of student misconduct (including plagiarism), medical and other extenuating circumstances; and student appeals.
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper invites the Court to approve proposed changes to the composition of its sub-committees to enable memberships to better reflect the new composition of Court, in particular with regard to the new categories of staff members on Court.

1.2 The paper also proposes that the composition of committees be clarified to allow flexibility for the Senior Vice-Principal to serve as an alternate member to the Principal where necessary or to be in attendance where the Principal is not a member of a committee but is regularly in attendance. In addition, it is proposed that the composition of the committees be amended to allow the Student’s Association representation on the committees to be either the President of the Students’ Association or the second Students’ Association member of Court, reflecting the new composition of Court.

1.3 The paper proposes that the process for appointment of both independent members of Court and staff members on Court to committees be revised to require nominees to provide further information on their suitability for and interest in the particular role, for consultation with the Convener of the relevant Committee to be undertaken and to reserve the right to interview nominees if required.

1.4 Subject to approval of these changes, members of Court will be invited to submit nominations for vacancies to the Governance and Nominations Committee. Due to the fact both the recruitment of three independent members of Court and elections of Staff members and Senate Assessors were ongoing, the Governance and Nominations Committee agreed to defer the consideration of appointments to committee vacancies until the full membership of Court is appointed and nominations have been sought. The continuing membership of Court Committees and Court-Senate Committees is however provided for approval at Appendix 1.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The Court is invited to:

1) **approve** the proposed amendments to the compositions of Court committees;
2) **approve** the proposed revised process for appointments to committees and that nominations to vacancies now be sought;
3) **delegate** authority to the Governance and Nominations Committee to approve appointments to committee vacancies on Court’s behalf; and
4) **approve** the continuing Court membership of Committees as set out in Appendix 1.

3. **BACKGROUND: THE COURT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

3.1 The University’s formal governance committee structure is set out for information as Appendix 2. Within this there are four sub-committees of Court: Audit, Operating Board, Governance and Nominations, and Remuneration Committee. There are also three joint sub-committees of Court and Senate: Student Experience Committee, Research Policy Committee and University Committee on Teaching and Learning. The Senate has two direct sub-committees which are accountable to it alone: Senate Business Committee and the Honorary Degrees Committee.

4. **CHANGES TO COMPOSITIONS**

4.1 As the new Court now includes further categories of staff member in addition to Senate Assessors (elected academic and non-academic members; and trade union nominated members), and two members nominated by the Students’ Association, the following changes are proposed to reflect...
this in the composition of the following committees. These are detailed against the pre-existing compositions and memberships in red at Appendix 1, together with vacancies but are summarised in the sections below.

4.2 Governance and Nominations Committee

4.2.1 Staff Membership: To amend the composition which currently includes:

“A non-executive staff member of Court” to instead include:

“A staff member of Court (who is not a Senate Assessor and who may be another elected staff member of Court or trade union nominated member of Court); and
A Senate Assessor;”

Note: This adds a second staff member to the committee, increasing it from seven to eight members.

4.2.2 Student Membership: To amend the composition which currently includes

“The President of the Students’ Association” to instead include:

“A Student Association Nominated Member of Court”

4.3 Operating Board

4.3.1 Staff Membership: To amend the composition which currently includes:

“Two Senate Assessors to Court, to be agreed by the Senate Assessors on Court” to instead include:

“A Senate Assessor;
A staff member of Court (who is not a Senate Assessor and who may be another elected staff member of Court or trade union nominated member of Court.)”

4.3.2 Student Membership: To amend the composition which currently includes

“The President of the Students’ Association” to instead include:

“A Student Association Nominated Member of Court”

These changes do not change the overall size of the Board.

4.4 Remuneration Committee

4.4.1 Staff Membership: To amend the composition which currently includes:

“A non-executive staff member of Court” to instead include:

“A staff member of Court”

4.4.2 Student Membership: To amend the composition which currently includes

“The President of the Students’ Association” to instead include:

“A Student Association Nominated Member of Court”

These changes do not change the overall size of the Committee.
4.5  **Membership of the Principal**

4.5.1 It is proposed that the composition of Court committees be amended to provide that where the Principal is stated as being a member of a Committee in his or her absence the Senior Vice-Principal may act as an alternate subject to the agreement of the Committee Convener.

4.5.2 In addition, it is further proposed that where the Principal is not a member of a committee but is routinely to be ‘in attendance’ (ie Audit and Remuneration Committee), in his or her absence the Senior Vice-Principal may attend subject to the agreement of the Committee Convener. These changes are detailed in Appendix 1.

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](mailto:b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk)).

18 September 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
## MEMBERSHIP OF COURT COMMITTEES AND JOINT COURT-SENATE COMMITTEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court Committee</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>Two independent members of Court (including Convener)</td>
<td>Mr K Murray (Convener)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr D MacFarlane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two external members appointed by Court on the advice of the Governance &amp; Nominations Committee in consultation with the two lay members.</td>
<td>Mr A R McNiven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms L Macfarlan</td>
<td>Vacancy w.e.f 1.11.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NB Committee may also co-opt additional members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal (or Senior Vice-Principal as alternate with agreement of Convener)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and Nominations</td>
<td>Four independent members, one of whom to be Convener (The Convener not to be Senior Governor or Convener of Operating Board). The Senior Independent Member should also normally be a member.</td>
<td>Mr J Hall (Convener)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal (or Senior Vice-Principal as alternate with agreement of Convener)</td>
<td>Mr B Pack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A non-executive staff member of Court (A staff member of Court (who is not a Senate Assessor and who may be another elected staff member of Court or trade union nominated member of Court.)</td>
<td>Mr M Gilbert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Senate Assessor</td>
<td>Professor A Akisanya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>New Vacancy if change to composition agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The President of the Students’ Association A
Students’ Association Nominated Member of Court

Mr L Ogubie

Operating Board

Four independent members of 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 but not being the Senior Governor.

Mr B Pack

Vacancy for Convener and independent member w.e.f 1.08.2017

Ms A Minto
Mr J Hall
Professor N Booth
Mr D MacFarlane

Mr MacFarlane was co-opted on an interim basis due to the long-term absence of another independent member.

Two Senate Assessors to Court, to be agreed by the Senate Assessors on Court. Formerly the composition provided for 3 Assessor members—see opposite.

Dr N Oren
Professor N Hutchison
Professor M Delibegovic

2 Vacancies if change to composition agreed

A Senate Assessor
A staff member of Court (who is not a Senate Assessor and who may be another elected staff member of Court or trade union nominated member of Court.)

The Principal (or Senior Vice-Principal if not otherwise a member of the Board as alternate with agreement of Convener) and one other member of the Senior Management Team.

Principal
A further member of SMT

Page 2 of 5
Court Committee

Remuneration Committee

Composition: Four independent members of Court (The Convener not to be the Senior Governor)

Membership:
- Mr D Steyn (Convener)
- Mr B Pack
- Mrs K McPhail
- Mr C Duncan
- Mr M Gilbert

Vacancy w.e.f 01.08.2017

The President of the Students’ Association
- A Students’ Association Nominated Member of Court
  - Mr L Ougie

A non-executive staff member of Court
- Mr B Paterson

In Attendance
- The Principal* (or Senior Vice-Principal as alternate with agreement of Convener)
- The Secretary to the University*

*who shall withdraw when the Committee considers his/her own salary, terms and conditions, or severance pay.

Court-Senate Committee

Research Policy Committee

Composition: Convener (VP for Research)

Membership:
- Professor M Campbell

One independent member of Court
- Mrs K McPhail
- Professor S Piertney
- Professor N Mauthner
- Professor D Tetzlaff
- Professor J Schaper
- Dr L Colucci-Gray
- Professor D Pokrajac

Page 3 of 5
Director of Research, School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture
Director of Research, School of Law
Director of Research, School of Natural & Computing Sciences
Director of Research, School of Psychology
Director of Research, School of Social Sciences
Institute of Applied Health Sciences (incl. HERU, HSRU)
Institute of Medical Sciences
Institute of Education for Medical and Dental Sciences
Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health
Deans of Research

Dean of Graduate School

Court-Senate Committee
Composition

Student Experience Committee
Independent Member of Court (Convener)
Rector (ex officio)
Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching)
University Secretary

Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business)
Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Science, Engineering and Healthcare)
Dean of Postgraduate Taught Studies (Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business)
Dean of Postgraduate Taught Studies (Science, Engineering and Healthcare)
Dean of the Graduate School

Director of Academic Affairs
Equality and Diversity Adviser

Membership

Mrs J Shirreffs
Ms M Chapman
Professor P McGeorge
Mrs C Inglis

Professor Hazel Hutchison
Professor Alison Jenkinson
Professor Christopher Kee
Professor Ekaterina Pavlovskaia
Professor Judith Masthoff

Dr R Bernard
Ms J Chalmers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court-Senate Committee</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Librarian (or nominee)</td>
<td>Ms D Bruxvoort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Student Support</td>
<td>Ms A Shipley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Chaplain</td>
<td>Rev M Anderson/Rev D Hutchison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the Students’ Association and student sabbatical officers</td>
<td>Mr L Ogubie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr L MacLeod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms D Connelly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms E Lister</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms K A Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Committee on Teaching &amp; Learning</th>
<th>Vice-Principal (Learning &amp; Teaching (Convener)</th>
<th>Professor P McGeorge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One nominee nominated by the University Court</td>
<td>Mr C Duncan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the Students’ Association (or nominee)</td>
<td>Mr L Ogubie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA President for Education and Employability</td>
<td>Ms D Connelly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans for Undergraduate Study</td>
<td>Professor H Hutchison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professor A Jenkinson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans for Postgraduate Study</td>
<td>Professor C Kee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professor E Pavlovskia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean for Quality Assurance</td>
<td>Professor K Shennan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conveners of UCTL Task Groups</td>
<td>Dr S Tucker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr B Sharlau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr T Baker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT FROM THE SENIOR GOVERNOR

1. Purpose of the Paper

1.1 This paper provides Court with a short report from the Senior Governor. It includes an update on the progress of recruitment for three vacancies for independent members of Court. Interviews of the candidates for the three positions are scheduled for Friday 29 September.

1.2 This paper is for information.

2. Recommended Action

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

3. Welcome to New Members

3.1 I am very much looking forward to welcoming those members joining the Court following the amendment of our composition over the summer. It promises to be, of course, a very important year for us as a Court as we take forward the process of recruiting our next Principal. I recognise that members are joining us from different backgrounds across the University and with different perspectives and experiences that I am sure will enrich our discussions at Court. What I hope we can all recognise is that, regardless of how we came to be on Court, we all have a shared responsibility to take decisions in the best interests of the University as a whole. I look forward to working with you all.

4. Update on Recruitment of Independent Members

4.1 Those members of Court who were in office at the time may recall that in June we reported that we would over the summer take forward the recruitment process for three vacancies for independent members of Court – two current and one with effect from 1 November 2017. The Governance and Nominations Committee had agreed the skill sets of finance/audit, digital technology and international experience should be sought, while also recognising the need to enhance the gender balance and diversity of Court.

4.2 Following Court on 27 June, the University has progressed the recruitment process in consultation with the Convener of the Governance and Nominations Committee and with the support of executive search consultants. Members of the Court at the time and the wider University and alumni community were encouraged to submit nominations for consideration. I am pleased to report that we received a significant number of applications including a healthy number of very well qualified candidates. We are scheduled to interview candidates on Friday 29 September 2017 and we hope that those appointed may be able to join us on 4 October.

5. Further Information

5.1 Further information is available from the Senior Governor, via the Secretary’s Office, 01224 272094.

[20 September 2017] [V1] [Part Closed – Section 4.2 - appointment process ongoing]
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.

Before I move to my usual update to Court on developments within the University, I’d like to acknowledge the many good wishes I have received from members of Court on my prospective retirement. I can assure all members that, with Mike Greaves, we will be working tirelessly to ensure that, while the process for the appointment of my successor is ongoing, the University does not lose momentum.

3. NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

3.1 It has, of course, been a particularly busy few weeks for our staff first because of “Clearing” and then Fresher’s week and the start of the new academic year. It was a particularly busy time for our Student Recruitment and Admissions team who received over 1500 calls on the day English students received their A-level results. We made offers to 229 RUK and International applicants, and each offer was followed up with a personal email from the Head of School and a call from an academic in their discipline. There is no doubt this has helped us to improve our recruitment performance and although it is too early to be definite about numbers, early indications for international PGT students are also positive. These are all results which are thanks to the collective efforts of staff in Professional Services and the Schools.

3.2 I am also pleased to report that registration of our new and returning students and the My Curriculum process has worked very effectively this year with students giving satisfaction ratings of 4.6 out of 5. Again, this is a reflection of the efforts that our colleague have made to ensure the process works smoothly for our students.

4. GRADUATE EARNINGS

4.1 Court may be interested to know that data released last month by the Department for Education reports that many of our graduates can expect to earn significantly more than the sector average for their profession. Indeed, engineering and technology graduates were the top earners in the UK five years after graduation. Their median earnings were £49,000 - more than £17,000 higher than the sector average. The data also indicates that our law graduates can expect to earn £5,923 above average, while the figure for our education graduates is £5,359. Other highlights from the report include five disciplines in which the University is in the top ten in the UK for graduate earnings after a year's employment, with Medicine and Dentistry 1st, Education 2nd, Engineering and Technology 4th, Physical Sciences 9th, and Law 10th.
5. **BREXIT**

5.1 It is encouraging that there has been some clarification now on the UK’s position regarding EU Science programmes such as Horizon 2020. Universities UK has lobbied strongly on this issue and it seems the Government has listened; a negotiating document has been produced which suggests the UK would offer to pay more than £1 billion per year to stay in these programmes. Clearly, this is a negotiating position, but I am pleased that they appear to have the right starting point.

5.2 Unfortunately there is still little I can tell you about rules surrounding residency status after the UK leaves the EU. We have been assured that the UK’s negotiators are taking the issue very seriously and our HR colleagues are continuing to offer support to staff in the meantime.

6. **REF**

6.1 We have had more details from Research England on the rules for the next REF, due to take place in 2020. We now know that 25% of marks will be allocated to Impact, which should be helpful because it is an area where colleagues have been putting in a lot of effort. The situation regarding eligibility and portability of outputs is still unclear but I hope that, by now, colleagues have their outputs at the three-star or four-star level, or have a plan to get there. A lot of work has been done over the summer within Schools to identify and review outputs for REF, and I am grateful to all colleagues who have been involved.

7. **NATIONAL STUDENTS SURVEY**

7.1 The results of the National Student Survey were published in August and I was delighted to see an improvement in our performance. It is clear that some disciplines have changed their position quite significantly with Finance, and Biology leading the way with the greatest improvements, and several disciplines at the top of the table for overall satisfaction: Biology, and Civil Engineering rank equal first in their disciplines across the UK, Economics ranks equal fourth, and Medicine ranks equal third and first in Scotland. More generally, in many categories we do better than the average of Russell Group institutions and, given the importance of the NSS in league tables, it is important that we continue to build on this progress.

7.2 There are two areas in particular where we can focus on making further improvements. This year’s data suggests that while students feel they have enough opportunities to tell us where we can improve and that we value their feedback, they are not always clear on how that information has been acted upon. Secondly, we need to continue to improve on assessment and feedback.

7.3 All Schools will be reviewing their NSS data and performance, together with data from other key league tables. Next month Peter McGeorge will be holding open sessions with staff to explain the background, recognising where we have done well and to explore how we can continue to improve.

8. **WORLD RANKINGS**

8.1 The University has climbed three places in the Times Higher Education world rankings, to 185th overall in the list of more than 1100 institutions and 28th out of the 93 institutions in the UK. The increase in international staff and students led to our International Outlook score rising from 41st in 2016 to 33rd in 2017. Our reputation for high quality research continues to grow, with our research citation impact rank rising 25 places to 131st in the world, and we have been ranked among the top 125 institutions in the world for arts and humanities.

8.2 We were also named the world’s second best university for Oil, Gas and Petroleum engineering in the 2017 CEOWorld Magazine University Rankings.
9. **RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING SUCCESS**

9.1 We have recently had a number of research successes. My congratulations to Dr Matthew Collinson and colleagues in our computing science department who have been awarded £756,000 by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) for research on ways of preventing organisations falling victim to cyber-attacks through phishing emails.

9.2 Professor Michael Keating and his team in Politics and International Relations won one of the largest grants to be awarded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in recent years to study the effects of Brexit on the constitutional dynamics of the UK.

10. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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

[18 September 2017] [V1] [Open]
REPORT FROM THE STUDENT PRESIDENT

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is a report to the University Court from the Student President of Aberdeen University Students’ Association which is for information.

1.2 This paper contains information on matters which may be of interest to members of Court but which might not have otherwise featured on the agenda.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 This paper is provided for information.

3. FRESHERS’ WEEK 2017

3.1 AUSA successfully hosted Freshers’ Week 2017 with a massive turn out of enthusiastic students. On Saturday the 2nd of September 2017, we welcomed our new students from the Aberdeen Airport down to Hillhead Halls where they were helped to settle into their accommodations and hosted with a BBQ session and relaxing music. That continued into Sunday the 3rd of September, 2017 with registration.

3.2 And officially, the Freshers’ Week kick-started with a Welcome event on Monday the 4th of September, 2017 where the Principal Ian Diamond delivered a welcome speech to the students and all the sabbatical officers did also welcome our new students presenting our different official remits and programs.

3.3 The key events that formed part of the Freshers’ week were in no particular order, Sports Fayre, Societies Fayre, Food and Drink Fayre, Scavenger Hunt, Campus Tour, Pub Quiz, Glow Run, BBQ sessions and host other events which were neatly spread across the work till the 10th of September, 2017. I think it is interesting to know that the events attracted the attention of the media as STV happily covered the Societies Fayre on Wednesday the 5th of September, 2017.

3.4 It is worthy of note also that preceding the Freshers’ Week, we received the local students at Hillhead halls on the 31st August, 2017.

4. UNION BUILDING

4.1 The University approved the occupation of the whole ground floor of the Hub by the Students Association. Based on that, offices have seen relocation to create more students relaxation space in the Union building and have a clearly marked out student-centric environment.

4.2 The second phase of this development, which will include the current cafe, bar and Infohub areas, will be determined by the students in focus groups which the Association will be running soon. The target time of realisation for the new space is December 2017.

4.3 Again, worthy of note is the fact that the Association now has a building at the Hillhead Halls for the purpose of fully engaging the large student community there. The spaces there are for clinics to be run by the sabbatical officers and also bookable by the Societies as well as student Groups/Forums. It was opened during the Freshers’ Week 2017.
5. **CAMPAIGNS AND SURVEYS**

5.1 Among other campaigns, the Association currently continues the ‘Cut the Rent’ Campaign aimed at addressing accommodation challenges students face on campus. All geared to improve students experience on campus. And the campaign continues to record significant interests from students.

5.2 The Communities Officer has led campaign to prevent restrictions on HMO properties within the city. This has involved encouraging student participation in the City Council’s HMO Overprovision consultation, lobbying local councillors, media engagement, and providing a deputation at the August Full Council meeting. Almost 400 students filled out the consultation, making up the majority of respondents, with 96%+ rejecting any HMO Overprovision policy. The City Council has now resolved not to introduce an HMO Overprovision policy at this time.

5.3 Also, the Association is running a survey to gather information on library operation especially with regards to closing time of our main Library. The available responses for now, favour a 24-hour Library. It is an on-going survey. Full details of the final outcome of the survey will be made available to Court. Again, we are confident that the outcome of the whole process will have significant impact on students’ experience.

6. **EVENTS AND WORKS**

6.1 In conjunction with the Student Engagement team of the University, the Association will be holding a Health and Wellbeing Day on the 12th of October, 2017.

6.2 Plans are being developed to hold a Student Talent demonstration day. The event will feature various skills such as singing, choreography, comedy, tricks, spoken words, poetry and others. The main aim is to engage the student community and give a platform for hidden talents.

7. **NUS CONFERENCES**

7.1 The Association is very active at the National Union of Students (NUS). We attended the Lead and Change Conference of the NUS UK in Nottingham and The Gathering of the NUS Scotland in Glasgow on 17th August 2017. Key issues facing the student community were discussed and training received to enable better services to students.

7.2 The Education officer attended the QAA enhancement themes conference with Dr Sally Middleton to present a poster on the Articulation Day that was held in King’s Conference Centre. Students from Further Education College attended with current advanced entry students, academic staff, to join lectures and other activities. The Education officer equally went to Edinburgh University to take part as a leader in the MasterCard Foundation Scholars program. The MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program at Edinburgh supports the brightest and best African scholars with great potential but few educational opportunities. Through the generous support of the Foundation, Scholars will be provided with the opportunity to become leaders within their communities and to improve the lives of countless more when they return home to Africa. She attended the program with Dr Bruce Scharlau and two other students.

8. **COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

8.1 With our Representative Services Manager and Media & Communications Coordinator working assiduously, AUSA are in now at the verge of launching a more comprehensive website as part of our communications plans. The aim is to ensure students gain all the necessary information with greater simplicity while maintaining an outlook that meets global standard.

8.2 Likewise, AUSA now works in collaboration with the Receptions at Foresterhill Campus to communicate the Associations’ events to students over. This is addition to regular weekly visit to the Campus, by at least one sabbatical officer. The aim is to increase student engagement there. Similar visits are made to Hillhead Halls.
9. **STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2017**


9.2 The first Student council for this academic year is billed to hold on the 26th September, 2017.

10. **UPDATE ON CRIMINAL COURT CASE**

10.1 Hearing and trial of the criminal case against the former CEO of the Association has been fixed for the 4th of December, 2017 at the Aberdeen Sherriff Court. The Association has been in contact with the police on the development of the case.

10.2 It is worthy of mention that we met the case on resumption of office. It is a case of an alleged fraudulent misappropriation of funds against the former CEO of the Association. Currently, the Association has tightened up every loophole to permanently lay to rest such ugly incidences.

11. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

11.1 Further information is available from the student president, Lawson Ogubie (ausapresident@abdn.ac.uk, ext. 4250).

[20/09/17[v1] [Open]
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper is to provide an update on health, wellbeing and safety and annual safety statistics:
- The work on the implementation of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy continues.
- The University took part in Britain’s Healthiest Workplace Survey for the second year running.
- The annual safety statistics show:
  - There has been a reduction in the number of reportable injuries to staff from six in the previous year to four.
  - There has been a marginal increase in the total number of injuries from 133 to 136.
  - The number of near miss reports have declined from 128 to 113.
  - The number of recorded injuries to undergraduate students has decreased whereas the number of injuries to postgraduate students has increased.

1.2 This paper is provided for information.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

2.1 The University Court is invited to note the update on health, wellbeing and safety and the annual statistics and trends.

3. **DISCUSSION**

3.1 **Health and Wellbeing**

3.1.1 In October 2016, under the leadership of the Vice Principal for People Strategy, the University Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Strategy was launched. A number of initiatives have taken place since the launch, including the roll out of the Employee Assistance Programme called PAMASSIST. The implementation of the Strategy continues across the staff and student areas. As part of the Strategy, Staff Wellbeing Coordinators have been recruited and trained. Their role and remit will be promoted to Schools and Directorates over the coming weeks. The Scottish Mental Health First Aid training run by the University has now been delivered to approximately 100 members of staff including personal tutors. This will help support the Strategy, raise awareness of mental health issues and encourage staff to speak about mental health and to get help.

3.1.2 A Health and Wellbeing Day for students is planned for October 12th and is being delivered by the Student Engagement team. Various agencies are taking part from outside of the University as well as many internal support services and facilities. This will take place during the National Mental Health Week. A number of sessions are planned for staff and students during the week to raise awareness and on mindfulness, resilience, mental health first aid and showcase all of the University support services.
3.1.3 The University took part in Britain’s Healthiest Workplace Survey for the second year running. The annual survey developed by Vitality Health is produced and run in partnership with the Financial Times, Rand Europe, the research consultancy, the University of Cambridge, and Mercer, the human resources consultants. This year, 31,950 employees from 167 organisations participated in the survey, covering large, medium-sized and small companies — defined as those employing more than 1,000 people, between 250 and 999, and less than 250 — from across the public and private sectors. The results this year show that the University is in the top quartile and ranked 4th amongst the large employers as follows:

- Nomura
- Johnson & Johnson
- Arqiva
- University of Aberdeen
- United Utilities
- Skanska UK
- Siemens Rail Automation
- NATS
- CH2M HILL
- Pinsent Masons
- Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
- Mott MacDonald
- Wrightington Wigan & Leigh NHS
- Foundation Trust
- Dell Corporation
- Aggregate Industries

3.1.4 This year 321 University employees took part in the survey compared with 167 last year. By taking part in the survey, each individual received a confidential personal report on their health and wellbeing and contributed to the overall assessment for the University. A feedback session with the organisers is arranged for early October to run through opportunities for the University to improve the Health and Wellbeing of staff. The high level summary of the results compares the University with the Sector and Top 5 organisations as follows:

### UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN’S ORGANISATIONAL DASHBOARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>YOUR RESULT</th>
<th>SECTOR BENCHMARK</th>
<th>TOP 5 ORGANISATIONS</th>
<th>YOUR 2016 RESULTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term health</td>
<td>Vitality Age gap (in years)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term work impairment</td>
<td>Days lost per employee per year</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work engagement</td>
<td>% low engaged</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determinants of health, productivity and engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle health</td>
<td>% with insufficient physical activity</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% not eating a healthy diet</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% current smokers</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% exceeding alcohol guidelines</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% sleeping less than 7 hours per night</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical health</td>
<td>% obese</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% with severe musculoskeletal problems</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% with 1 or more chronic conditions of lifestyle</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>% with moderate or severe symptoms of depression</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% with 1 or more work-related stress factors</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% with a lot of financial concerns</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee characteristics</strong></td>
<td>% male</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average income</td>
<td>£37,533</td>
<td>£31,457</td>
<td>£66,789</td>
<td>£37,404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.5 In response to this survey, we will have fuller feedback from the organisers to help focus our actions on key indicators and to encourage and widen the participation in the survey in 2018.

3.2 **Annual Safety Statistics 2016/17**

3.2.1 There were 136 injuries recorded in the year (133 in 2015/16), 88 were injuries to staff (87 in 2015/16) representing a marginal increase in actual numbers. There were 48 injuries in the year to contractors, members of the public, students and visitors (46 in 2015/16) representing an increase in actual numbers of two.

3.2.2 The breakdown of all injuries by units or departments is shown below. Increases in number of injuries were seen in some areas and decreases in some, there were zero injuries in 12 areas.

3.2.3 There were increases in minor injuries recorded in Medical Sciences, Medicine and Dentistry, Biological Sciences and Campus Services.

3.2.4 The top three causes of injuries were glass/sharps (21%), falls on the same level (15%) and contact with hazardous substances (7%).
3.2.5 The data broken down into groups or jobs types is shown below. In the year 20% of the injuries were sustained by undergraduate students, 19% by technical staff, and 13% by administrative staff:

3.2.6 There were increases in the number of injuries to postgraduates, domestic staff, catering and maintenance. Some of these increases are small and could indicate better reporting and not worsening safety management.

3.2.7 The long term trend in staff injuries is as follows. The severity of injuries is reduced with four reportable injuries in the year compared with six in the previous year. There have been fewer near miss reports in the year.
3.2.8 There were four injuries to staff that were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive as follows:

- A member of cleaning staff fractured her arm when she fell on the floor she was cleaning with a scrubbing machine.
- A member of cleaning staff trapped her finger between machine and bench worktop when using a scrubber dryer to clean the floor causing bone fracture and finger nail being pulled.
- A graduate trainee was exiting the University office and as he stepped off the pavement, he rolled his ankle, hearing a ‘crack’. He sustained a sprained ankle.
- A staff member tripped over her ankle on the path between steps at the IMS building. She suffered a broken bone in the foot and was treated at the hospital.

3.2.9 There were three injuries to Students/Public/Contractors requiring transportation to hospital for treatment and reported to the Health and Safety Executive as follows:

- Our security van was in collision with a motor bike. The rider had jumped the red light and was seriously injured.
- A postgraduate student suffered serious cuts to hand when using a scalpel blade and was transported to hospital for treatment.
- A postgraduate student used a hedgehog replicator instead of a multi-channel pipette. The ethanol being used was ignited resulting in melting of the plastic petri dish causing burns to his hands.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Naveed Qamar, Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing (01224 272783, naveed.qamar@abdn.ac.uk).
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
THE NEW UNIVERSITY COURT

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is to inform the Court of:

- the role of the Court.
- the role and responsibilities of Court members as governors and charity trustees.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The paper is for information.

3 NEW COMPOSITION OF COURT

3.1 The Privy Council approved the new composition of Court on 19 July 2017. The Court’s composition is now 25 members and with a majority of independent members is fully compliant with both the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and the new membership requirements of the Higher Education Governance Act. The new composition is as follows:

(a) The Rector;
(b) The Principal;
(c) The Senior Governor appointed in accordance with section 8 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
(d) Two persons appointed by being elected by the staff of the University from among their own number in accordance with sections 10 and 11 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
(e) A person appointed by being 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, in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
(f) A person appointed by being 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, in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
(g) Four Assessors elected by the Senatus Academicus from among those of its members holding appointments in the University;
(h) Two persons nominated by the Students’ Association from among the students of the University in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016; and
(i) Such persons, not exceeding twelve in number as may be appointed by the University Court, who will not be members of staff of the University or a matriculated student, but at least four of whom shall be members of the General Council of the University.

3.2 Note that future appointments to the position of Senior Governor will require to be through an election as required by the Higher Education Governance Act. This does not, however, impact upon the appointment of the current Senior Governor.
4 CHANGES IN CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

4.1 The following categories of membership are new within the composition:

- the two positions for members elected by staff. Court has agreed there should be one position for academic staff and one for non-academic staff. These elections concluded on 15 September with the election of Dr Martin Mills (Academic) and Mrs Jenny Fernandes (Non-academic) respectively.
- the two positions for members nominated by trade unions. The University and College Union (UCU) has appointed Dr David Watts to the academic staff member position and Unison and Unite have agreed upon a joint nomination, Mr Brian Paterson, to the non-academic staff member position.
- a second student member of Court nominated by AUSA, who is Ms Kendall Anne Smith, AUSA Welfare Officer.

4.2 Under transitional arrangements it was agreed by Senate and Court that there would be new elections for the four Senate Assessor positions to commence as members of Court from 1 October with two elected by Senate from Science, Engineering and Healthcare and two elected from Arts, Social Sciences and Business with a requirement for gender balance. Those elections will conclude on 27 September.

4.3 There are two vacancies for independent members of Court with a third vacancy arising from 1 November 2017. The recruitment process for these positions commenced earlier this summer and interviews are scheduled for 29 September with a panel chaired by the Senior Governor.

4.4 A list of the current membership of Court is attached at Appendix 1. The current gender balance of the new Court is: 12 Male, 7 Female, with 6 vacancies (two of which are required to be female and two male) and a further vacancy (incumbent male) from 1 November 2017.

5 ROLE OF COURT

5.1 The Court is the University’s governing body and as such its principal role is to develop and agree the University’s strategic vision and to oversee the management of the revenue, property and other resources of the University. The Court has a number of corporate and legal responsibilities, not least as the employer and, because the University is a charity, as the board of charitable trustees. The Court’s Statement of Primary Responsibilities articulates in more detail its role and responsibilities (and a copy of this is provided as part of a separate paper on today’s agenda regarding the role of Court and Operating Board), although it will necessarily delegate much of the detailed work to its sub-committees. More information is available at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/court-information.php

6 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COURT MEMBERS

6.1 Each Court member is responsible, collectively with fellow governors, for the effective leadership of the University in all its aspects. That translates into more specific responsibilities of which the following are key:

- To play an appropriate part in furthering the values of higher education and the mission of the University of Aberdeen in particular;
- To ensure that the Court exercises efficient and effective use of the resources of the University, maintains its long-term financial viability, and safeguards its assets, and that proper mechanisms exist to ensure financial control and for the prevention of fraud;
- To exercise oversight in respect of the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource functions delegated to the authority of the Principal as chief executive;
- To ensure that Court conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Members must at all times regulate their personal conduct as members of the Court in accordance with these standards;
- To establish constructive and supportive but challenging working relationships with the University employees with whom they come into contact, whilst recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management;

- To act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate;

6.2 Members of Court are also formally Trustees of the University as a charity. Under Charities Law Trustees have duties and responsibilities in law as a charity trustee as follows:

(1) A charity trustee must, in exercising functions in that capacity, act in the interests of the charity and must, in particular—

(a) seek, in good faith, to ensure that the charity acts in a manner which is consistent with its purposes,

(b) act with the care and diligence that it is reasonable to expect of a person who is managing the affairs of another person, and

(c) in circumstances capable of giving rise to a conflict of interest between the charity and any person responsible for the appointment of the charity trustee—

(i) put the interests of the charity before those of the other person, or

(ii) where any other duty prevents the charity trustee from doing so, disclose the conflicting interest to the charity and refrain from participating in any deliberation or decision of the other charity trustees with respect to the matter in question

6.3 In effect, this means no member of the Court is present as a ‘representative’ of a particular sectional interest and mandates are not recognised. Each member, does of course, bring his or her own particular expertise and background to the work of the Court, and all members are equal and free to express an opinion on that basis. However, it is a main principle of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance that “All members shall exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the Institution as a whole rather than as a representative of any constituency”.

6.4 Members on appointment are also advised of their obligations to abide by the Court’s Code of Conduct which includes the Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life.

7 Further Information

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

18 September 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
COURT MEMBERSHIP AND PERIODS OF OFFICE 2017/18

Note: This reflects the composition of Court as per the new Ordinance approved by Privy Council on 19 July 2017.

Composition: 25 Members under Ordinance No 145

Rector
Ms Maggie Chapman (01.01.15 to 31.12.17)

Principal ex officio
Professor Sir Ian Diamond (w.e.f. 01.04.10)

Senior Governor and Chancellor’s Assessor (The position of Chancellor’s Assessor will cease with effect from the date when the next Senior Governor is appointed through election. There will continue to be a Senior Governor within the composition of the new Court)
Mr Martin Gilbert (01.01.17 to 31.12.19)

Academic Staff Member
Dr Martin Mills (15.09.17 to 31.07.20)

Non-Academic Staff Member
Mrs Jenny Fernandes (15.09.17 to 31.07.20)

Academic Trade Union Nominated Member
Dr David Watts (1.08.17 to 31.07.20)

Non-Academic Trade Union Nominated Member
Mr Brian Paterson (1.08.17 to 31.07.20)

Senate Assessors (4) – Election Pending on 27 September 2017

Vacancies

Two Students Nominated by the Students’ Association (2)
Mr Lawson Ogubie (01.07.17 to 30.06.18)
Ms Kendall Anne Smith (24.07.17 to 30.06.18)

Independent Members (12)
Mr David MacFarlane (01.08.12 to 31.07.15 and 01.08.15 to 31.07.18)
Mr James Hall (29.09.10 to 29.09.13 and 30.09.13 to 30.09.16 and 01.10.16 to 30.09.19)
Mrs Kathryn McPhail (01.08.10 to 31.07.13 and 01.08.13 to 31.07.16 and 01.08.16 to 31.07.19)
Ms Anne Minto (01.08.15 to 31.07.18)
Mr Ken Murray (01.11.11 to 30.10.14 and 01.11.14 to 31.10.17)
Mr David Steyn (01.08.11 to 31.07.14 and 01.08.14 to 31.07.17 and 01.08.17 to 31.07.20)
Mr Iain Percival (01.10.16 to 19.07.17 as General Council Assessor and 20.07.17 to 30.09.20 as Independent Member)

Mr Colin Duncan (02.05.12 to 30.09.14 and 01.10.14 to 19.07.17 as General Council Assessor and 20.07.17 to 30.09.18 as Independent Member)

Mrs Jennifer Shirreffs (01.10.12 to 30.09.16 and 01.10.16 to 19.07.17 as General Council Assessor and 20.07.17 to 30.09.20 as Independent Member)

Professor Nuala Booth (01.10.14 to 19.07.17 as General Council Assessor and 20.07.17 to 30.09.18 as Independent Member)

2 Vacancies, with a further vacancy with effect from 1 November 2017.
1. **PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 This paper invites the Court to note a schedule of decision making between Court and Operating Board.

1.2 The paper follows on from the consideration by Court in June of the Effectiveness Review of Court and has been considered by the Governance & Nominations Committee. In response to the Review, the Court agreed a high level articulation of it and the Operating Board’s respective roles. As part of this the Court agreed that it should be more strategic in its focus and to achieve that, streamline its business and empower the Operating Board and the Executive to take more decisions. The Court agreed it should receive a schedule of delegation setting out which matters were delegated to the Operating Board for decision and those which were reserved to Court.

2. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

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

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 In June, the Court received a paper on the recommendations of the Court effectiveness review which focused on what the respective roles of Court and the Operating Board should be. The paper had 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.

3.2 The Court approved the high level articulation of its role and that of the Operating Board, and that a more detailed schedule of decision making authority between the two would be developed on this basis. This would 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 effectiveness review had recommended.

4. **ROLES OF COURT AND OPERATING BOARD**

4.1 The high level articulation of Court’s role and that of the Operating Board which was agreed is:

“the role of Court is to develop and agree strategy and the Operating Board should monitor the delivery of that strategy.”

4.2 The Court’s Statement of Primary Responsibilities (Appendix A) reflects this and sets out in more detail its role and the matters that as the governing body it is ultimately responsible for. In discharging those responsibilities, the Court delegates some of its authority to committees as set out in their respective remits (although Court as the governing body will remain ultimately responsible for any decisions made by sub-committees on its behalf). In this regard, and as agreed by Court in June 2017, the following articulation specifies items of business which will always require approval or discussion by Court. Also set out is the remit of the Operating Board which should be considered to be the matters that the Court has delegated authority to it for (any changes to that are in red).

**MATTERS RESERVED TO COURT FOR APPROVAL/DISCUSSION**

- to approve the University’s Strategic plan and receive reports on Key Performance Indicators;
- to approve the annual report and annual financial accounts;
to receive reports from the Audit Committee and to approve the appointment of internal and external auditors on the Committee’s recommendation;
- to approve the University’s budget;
- to approve the University’s borrowing commitments;
- to approve the University’s Capital Plan;
- to approve proposed expenditure outwith the agreed revenue and capital budget with a value over £5 million;
- to approve annually the University’s Risk Appetite and consider reports Risk Management;
- to approve the establishment of new campuses whether overseas or in the UK;
- to approve major academic re-organisations of the curriculum on the recommendation of the Senate;
- to approve the annual Institution-led Review of Academic Quality;
- to approve significant academic restructuring of the University in consultation with the Senate, in particular changes to the Schools as the formal academic governance and management structure of the University;
- to approve the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council;
- to approve the appointment or dismissal of the Principal;
- to approve the appointment or dismissal of the Secretary to the Court;
- to approve the removal of a member of Court from office in accordance with Resolution No 288 Procedure for Removal of Members of Court;
- to approve the Senior Staff Pay policy on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee for implementation by the Committee at an individual level;
- to approve Ordinances and Resolutions following consultation with Senate and the General Council
- to approve, on the recommendation of the Governance and Nominations Committee, the appointment of independent members of Court, changes to the remits and compositions of sub-committees and appointment of the membership of sub-committees;

NB: This does not preclude Court from discussing or seeking reports on any matter it deems relevant that are not specified here or delegated to committees.

Remit of the Operating Board/Delegated Business from Court

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.

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
- to approve proposed expenditure outwith the agreed revenue and capital budget with a value between £1 million to £5 million;
- 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;

5 Further Information

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

18 September 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open
UNIVERSITY COURT STATEMENT OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- 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.

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

SUPERVISORY OBLIGATIONS

- 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.

- 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

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

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

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

CONTROLS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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.
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 11 September 2017

1.2 This paper is provided for information.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The Court is invited to note item 3 of this report.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 An extraordinary meeting of Senate was called by Senators to discuss ‘leadership and governance’ following the Principal’s announcement of his retirement. Following discussion and a vote the Senate agreed the following should be communicated to Court:

i. Given the Principal's leadership role of the University and chairing of Senate, it is only appropriate that Senate has a significant say in both the procedure and actual selection of the next principal. This will ensure that the next Principal has the full confidence and support of the University.

ii. Senate calls upon Court and the Governance and Nominations Committee to fully consult with Senate over the matters in (i) above.

iii. The composition of the procedure and selection panel should be subject to approval by Senate prior to Court approval.

iv. As part of the selection process Senate strongly recommends to Court and the Governance and Nominations Committee that all the candidates who are shortlisted for appointment give a presentation to a meeting of Senators and a suitable selection of representatives of support staff and of all the campus trade unions. Senate also hope that the candidates might be able to meet colleagues informally, perhaps by holding a reception immediately after the candidates' presentations. Senate also recommends that the short list contain an equal number of male and female candidates.

v. There will be a regular standing item at each Senate updating Senators on the progress of recruitment.

vi. Senate notes that most principals and vice chancellors are now paid far beyond any other university staff. Senate notes that the British Government has commented unfavourably on the high salaries paid to principals and vice chancellors. Senate calls on Court to be mindful of such circumstances, and with a clear concern for the public reputation of the University, to exercise genuine moderation in setting the salary of the next principal.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Professor Michael Greaves (m.greaves@abdn.ac.uk or extension 2017) or Dr Rachael Bernard (r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk or extension 3388)
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER VACATION POWERS

1 PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is to advise Court of decisions taken under the delegated powers that Court agreed could 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 At its last meeting the Court agreed that during the vacation period between the June meeting of Court and this meeting of 4 October 2017 matters requiring decision during that time could be taken under the standing delegated authority procedures for decisions required between meetings, 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 DECISIONS ON MATTERS RELATED TO GOVERNANCE

The following two items were agreed under vacation powers under provision (iii) above.

4.1 Membership of the Governance and Nominations Committee

1) That for the meeting of Governance and Nominations Committee on 11 September, Mrs Kathryn McPhail be appointed on an interim basis to the current vacancy on the Committee for an independent member of Court. It was noted that further consideration of an appointment to the vacancy on a permanent basis would be undertaken once the present round of recruitment of independent members to three vacancies on Court concluded.

2) That Professor Mike Greaves, Senior Vice-Principal, be a member of the Committee on an alternate basis to the Principal (ie in circumstances where the Principal is unavailable).
4.2 Campaigning Rules for Staff Elections to Court

4.2.1 Voting in the staff elections to Court was due to commence on 25 August under rules agreed by the Court in June. Following the close of nominations in July, on the recommendation of the Secretary as Returning Officer, it was agreed to provide candidates with some additional brief guidance on their conduct and the forms of campaigning that were permissible before voting commenced. This was intended to ensure that the election was conducted in a manner that was fair and consistent to all candidates without wishing to make the process overly bureaucratic. The rules were based on the guidance that is provided to candidates in the election of the Rector.

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).

20 September 2017 v1 FOI Status: Open