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

Item 6  Financial and Strategic Priorities (CT16-17:20)
Item 7  10 Year Capital Investment Programme (CT16-17:21)
Item 9.1 Report on Key Performance Indicators: Quarter 4, 2015/16 (CT16-17:27)
Item 10 Trans-National Education Partnership in Africa (CT16-17:29)
Item 14.5 Report from the Development Trust (CT16-17:32.5)
Item 14.8 Management Report
Meeting of the University Court

Tuesday 6 December 2016
There will be a meeting of the **UNIVERSITY COURT** on **Tuesday 6 December 2016** at **9am** in the Linklater Rooms, Elphinstone Hall.

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

**BUSINESS**

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

**Note:** The papers within each section of the agenda are colour-coded as follows:  
For Discussion: white; Not for Discussion: fawn

**BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION**

1 **9.00am** MINUTES AND SUMMARY OF STRATEGY DAY  
   (enclosed)  
   **Note:** The Court Action Log is also enclosed with the Minutes

2 **9.05am** HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING  
   2.1 Reports on Accidents and Incidents  
   CT16-17:11  
   2.2 Report on Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy  
   CT16-17:12

3 **9.20am** STANDING REPORTS  
   3.1 Report from the Rector  
   CT16-17:13  
   3.2 Report from the Senior Governor  
   CT16-17:14  
   3.3 Report from the Principal  
   CT16-17:15  
   3.4 Report from the President of the Students' Association  
   CT16-17:16

4 **9.50am** GOVERNANCE  
   4.1 Revised Composition of Court: Draft Ordinance and Future Transitional Issues  
   CT16-17:16  
   4.2 Recruitment and Appointment of Senior Governor  
   CT16-17:17  
   4.3 Update on Effectiveness Review of Court  
   CT16-17:18  
   4.4 Report on Governor Appraisal Questionnaire  
   CT16-17:19

5 **10.20am** PRESENTATION ON THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

6 **10.45am** Coffee

7 **11.00am** FINANCIAL AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES  
   CT16-17:20 (to follow)

8 **11.30am** 10 YEAR CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME  
   CT16-17:21 (to follow)

8 **11.45am** ANNUAL REPORT, ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORTS  
   (Separate Annex)

   8.1 Finance Director’s Commentary on Annual Accounts  
   CT16-17:22
8.2 Annual Report and Accounts for Year End 31 July 2016
8.3 External Auditors’ Report & Representation Letter
8.4 Audit Committee Annual Report
8.5 Internal Auditors’ Annual Report

9 12 noon STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RISK
9.1 Report on Key Performance Indicators: Quarter 4, 2015/16
9.2 Strategic Risk Register

10 12.30pm TRANS-NATIONAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP IN AFRICA

11 12.45pm NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS MEETING
Note: The Principal will join for the first half of this session.

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

12 OPERATING BOARD REPORT
13 COMPOSITE REPORT FROM COURT COMMITTEES AND JOINT COMMITTEES OF COURT AND SENATE
14 ROUTINE BUSINESS NOT PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION
15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 28 March 2016 9am-1pm followed by lunch.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

Minutes of meeting held on 4 October 2016

Present: Ms M Chapman (in the Chair), Principal, Sir Moir Lockhead, Professor A Akisanya, Mr C Anucha, Professor N Booth, Professor C Brittain, Mr C Duncan, Professor M Delibegovic (for part of the meeting), Mr J Hall, Professor P Hannaford, Professor N Hutchison, Professor J Kilburn, Cllr J Laing, Mr D MacFarlane, Cllr R McKail, Mrs K McPhail, Ms A Minto, Mr K Murray, Dr N Oren (for part of the meeting), Mr B Paterson, Mr I Percival and Mrs J Shirreffs.

In attendance: Mr D Beattie, Mr A Donaldson, Mrs D Dyker, Mr B Henderson (for minutes to 1-3 ), Mrs C Inglis, Ms J Killin, Professor B MacGregor (for minutes to 1-3 ), Professor J Morrison (for minutes 1-3), Professor J Paterson (for minutes to 1-3), Ms M Paterson (for minutes to 1-3), Mr N Qamar (for minutes to 7-10), Professor M Ross (for minutes 1-3), Very Rev Professor I Torrance and Mr B Purdon (Clerk).

Apologies for absence were received from Professor C Black, Mr D Haywood Professor P McGeorge, Mr B Pack and Mr D Steyn.

NEW MEMBERS

1 The Court welcomed Professor Delibegovic, Mr Percival and Mr Anucha to their first meetings as members of Court, and Ms Killin to her first meeting as the second student representative ‘in attendance’.

STRATEGY DAY

2 The formal meeting was preceded by a series of presentations and discussions regarding the University’s progress against the Strategic Plan and the priorities for delivery in the year ahead. It was agreed that a summary of the key points emerging from the discussions would be prepared as an ‘aide memoire’ for Court members.

3 The sessions covered during the Strategy Day were: People, Learning and Teaching, Research, the Students’ Association’s Priorities for 2016/17, Digital Strategy, Online Education, Internationalisation, and a review of the Aberdeen Sports Village and the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health as two major strategic projects.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

MINUTES

5 The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016 were approved.

6 The Court also noted the updated Action Log (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). It was confirmed that the discussion of the Business School deferred from the previous meeting was included in the Action Log and would be an item for discussion at the next Court.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND井

REPORTS ON ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

7 The Court received and considered a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which provided details of four serious incidents. The Court also received a summary of the
Operating Board’s consideration of the report. The Court noted that the incidents were as follows:

- A patient partner stumbled and fell on the stairs in Suttie Centre.
- A member of IT staff slipped and fell over when turning on a light switch in Arts Lecture Theatre.
- A member of staff slipped and lost her balance, dislocated her ankle and suffered a trimalleolar fracture.
- A student was taken to hospital as a result of self-inflicted injury.

The Court noted the subsequent investigations into the circumstances of each incident and any actions that had been identified as ‘lessons learnt’.

**ANNUAL REPORT FROM HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

The Court received the Health and Safety Committee’s Annual Report for the year 2015/16 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) together with a report on the Operating Board’s consideration of the report. The report provided information on a number of health and safety initiatives that had been taken forward during the year and regarding significant incidents that had occurred. It detailed the following:

- Internal health and safety audits had been carried out at two units, Aberdeen University Student Association and Aberdeen Sports Village;
- The Health and Safety Risk Register had been reviewed and would be further reviewed in academic year 2016/17;
- The University Health, Wellbeing and Safety Policy had been updated and was included separately on the agenda for approval;
- New policies had been adopted on safety tours and the use of mobile phones by staff whilst driving;
- Health and Wellbeing campaigns were held during the year to promote the use of internal facilities, physical activity, good diet and nutrition, cancer awareness and smoking cessation;
- Increased investment of time and resource in providing training and development of online training;
- There had been a reduction of 13% in staff injuries and an increase in near miss reports of 113%. The increase in near miss reporting was attributed primarily to increased awareness of the importance of reporting near misses and as being a positive sign of the University’s improved safety culture. The number of reportable injury accidents to staff during the reporting period was 5, compared to 4 in the previous year;
- There were eight fire incidents logged in the year, compared to 10 in the previous year.

The Court agreed that in future the report should provide more information on the relationship between the gross and net scores within the Risk Register and the key reasons for how each net risk score had been derived.

**GOVERNANCE**

**FUTURE COMPOSITION OF COURT**

The Court received a report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*) from the Governance and Nominations Committee proposing a revised composition of Court. As previously agreed by Court, the Governance and Nominations Committee had considered a proposal for a new composition of Court from the Senate Assessor members of Court. That proposal for a Court of 25 members had, subject to some minor modifications to clarify wording, been accepted by the Committee and was recommended to Court. The proposal was for a Court of 25 members as follows:
Non-Independent Members

- Rector
- Principal
- Two elected members of staff, one from the academic staff and one from the non-academic staff (as required by the HE Governance Act)
- Two Trade Union nominated members of staff (as required by the HE Governance Act)
- Two Student Members nominated by the Students’ Association (as required by the HE Governance Act)
- Four Senate Assessors, consisting of one Senator from each of the three Colleges, and one from the Business School.

Independent Members

- Senior Lay Member (elected as required by the HE Governance Act).
- Twelve independent members appointed by the Court, at least four of whom shall be members of the General Council. Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council will be invited to nominate individuals for consideration for appointment to these positions.

12 The Court noted that the Committee had also received and considered a further proposal from a member of Court for a Court of 25 members, which retained four elected General Council Assessors and four Senate Assessors.

13 The Court noted that appointments to the positions of independent member would be by open advertisement, with notification of vacancies to the General Council membership who would continue to be a key potential pool of candidates for appointment to Court (with the exception of those members of General Council who were current staff or students and who under current rules were ineligible to stand for election).

14 The Court noted that at present General Council Assessors were, as a result of their election to Court, ex officio members of the Business Committee of the General Council. A consequence of the change in the composition of Court which would cease to have elected General Council Assessors, would be that the General Council would need to amend its standing orders with regard to the composition of the Business Committee. The Governance and Nominations Committee had recommended that there be the expectation that at least four of the independent members of Court, being members of the General Council, would also serve as members of the Business Committee of the General Council.

15 The Court noted that it would be important to continue to proactively encourage nominations from the two local Councils for appointment. The Court noted that there were strong links between the Senior Management of the University and the local Councils at elected member and officer level which would be maintained and would ensure the University and the local Councils continued to work effectively in support of the North-East of Scotland.

16 In discussion, it was noted that the Court had been given early sight of the paper and the Convener of the Governance and Nominations Committee reported on the comments that he had received.

17 In further discussion, a member of Court noted his concern that the proposal would remove the election of General Council Assessors and the direct link between Court the Business Committee of the General Council and that the Court should retain elected General Council Assessors. It was, however, noted that the Governance and Nominations Committee greatly valued the need for alumni involvement in Court and that the independent members included a significant number of graduates and could in the future all be graduates. The Court was reminded that in the light of the requirements of the Higher Education Governance Act which increased the number of other members on Court who were elected or appointed by bodies other than the Court, it had identified the need to increase the number of independent members it appointed to ensure it could better address the diversity and skills mix of its
membership. The Court discussed the extent to which elected processes could be amended to include minimum skills requirement for candidates or have diversity quotas.

The Court agreed to:

(i) Approve the proposal for a new composition of Court as set out in the paper;
(ii) Agreed that the required statutory process of consultation on the proposal and the draft Ordinance with Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and through public display for eight weeks, be commenced, following consideration of which the Court would be invited to agree on the proposal for formal submission to the Privy Council.

**Appointment Process for Next Senior Governor**

The Court received a report from the Governance and Nominations Committee (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) with recommendations on the process for the recruitment and appointment of the next Senior Governor.

The Court was reminded that in August the Secretary wrote to all members advising of new information that had been received following the last meeting of Court from the Scottish Government regarding the commencement of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act, in particular its provisions for the appointment and election of Senior Governors. This had clarified that under the timeframe for commencement of the Act intended by the Scottish Government the Court, should it so wish, could legally progress with a recruitment and appointment of a Senior Governor under either the current process as set out in the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance provided that process has been concluded prior to that section of the Act coming into force in summer 2017 or through the early adoption of an election process as set out in the Act. Members of Court were also advised that in light of this new information the Governance and Nominations Committee would consider how the University Court should now progress with the recruitment and appointment of a successor to Sir Moir Lockhead whose current term of office concluded on 31 July 2017 but who had intimated his intention to demit office at the end of 2016. Members were also asked to submit any comments on the proposed approach to the appointment process prior to the meeting of the Committee.

The Committee had agreed to recommend to Court that it should progress with an appointment of a successor to Sir Moir as Senior Governor through a process that complies with current governance best practice for higher education as set out in the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, which includes the open advertisement of the vacancy and interview of candidates through a committee including staff and student members of Court. The Court agreed that the composition of the Governance and Nominations Committee met these requirements and would form the basis for the membership of the appointment committee although it would not be appropriate to include for this purpose the current Senior Governor or the Principal. It was also agreed that as one of the independent members of the Governance and Nominations Committee was unavailable to participate in meetings and the need for gender balance to co-opt Ms Kathryn McPhail as a member of the committee for the duration of the appointments process. The Appointment Committee would, therefore, be composed of:

- Mr James Hall (Convener of the Appointment Committee, Convener of Governance and Nominations Committee and Independent Member of Court);
- Professor Alfred Akisanya (Senate Assessor to Court and Member of Governance and Nominations Committee);
- Mr Chubbe Anucha (President of the Students’ Association and Member of Governance and Nominations Committee);
- Mrs Kathryn McPhail (Independent Member of Court and co-opted member of Appointment Committee);
- Mrs Jenny Shirrells (General Council Assessor to Court and Member of Governance and Nominations Committee);
The Court noted that the Committee had discussed the options available to the Court and noted in particular the short timeframe within which the Court would need to take forward a recruitment process to ensure a successor to the current Senior Governor was appointed prior to the end of 2016. In this respect, the Committee was cognisant of the fact that an electoral process, rules and procedures would take a significant degree of time to develop and implement, that at this stage there was no detailed guidance at a sector level or precedent to inform the development of such processes, and that together with the practicalities of the timeframe involved, there was therefore a significant risk of processes not being subject to appropriate consultation and governance in their development or being robust in their delivery and implementation. The Committee was also cognisant that the Court would over the next three years need to transition to a new composition and membership, which represented a major governance change, and that to attempt to effect both changes simultaneously represented a further significant risk. The Committee agreed that for these reasons the level of risk prevented it from recommending to Court that implementing an electoral process was either an appropriate or practical way forward in the circumstances. The Committee confirmed, however, that the Court should make clear in any advertising material and to all applicants that the term of office was limited to a maximum of three years and that the University would in 2019 seek nominations for the position under the electoral process required by the Act.

The Court was also asked to give consideration as to whether the University should engage professional recruitment consultants to support the process and promotion of the vacancy and noted that tenders received for the provision of such a service were at a fixed fee rates from between £18k and £25k.

The Court agreed:

(i) To progress with the appointment of the next Senior Governor through a process that complied with current governance best practice for higher education as set out in the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, which includes the open advertisement of the vacancy and interview of candidates through a committee including staff and student members of Court;
(ii) To approve the proposed role description, person specification and advertisement for the position of Senior Governor;
(iii) That the University should engage professional recruitment consultants to support the process.

RENUMERATION OF SENIOR GOVERNOR

The Court received a report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) from the Governance and Nominations Committee outlining recommendations regarding the introduction of remuneration for the role of Senior Governor.

The Court noted that the recommendations followed consideration by the Committee of issues that the Court would require to address to comply with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act’s requirements for the remuneration of the Senior Governor. The Higher Education Governance Act required the Court, if requested by the person appointed to the position of Senior Governor, “to pay such remuneration and allowances to the person as the governing body considers to be reasonable (which are to be commensurate with the nature and amount of the work done by the person in the capacity as senior lay member).”

The Court noted that there were very few examples of remuneration of Chairs in the UK HE Sector but that the Committee had taken into consideration examples of guidance on remuneration for governors/charitable trustees from the Scottish Government’s Guidance on Pay for Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB), the Further Education Sector, together with guidance on remuneration from the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). The recommendation in the paper was based on the Scottish Government’s Pay Policy which set daily fee rates based on three bands linked to...
the size and complexity to the NDPB. The Financial Memorandum to the HE Governance Bill had cited the NDPB Band 1 ceiling level of £527 per day to estimate the cost of paying a Senior Governor. This equated to a cost for 30 days annual time commitment of circa £15,810 p.a.

28 The Court noted that the Committee had agreed that if one of the imperatives behind the legislation was to encourage diversity of applicants, then the Court should offer remuneration of the Senior Governor role as a matter of course rather than compelling candidates to request it. The Committee also felt that remuneration strengthened the rationale for a formal appraisal process and accountability of the Senior Governor to Court. The Committee report also noted that at a future point the Court should also consider the issue of whether all governors were remunerated.

29 The Court agreed:

1) To offer remuneration as a matter of course at a daily fee rate of £527 in line with Scottish Government guidance for remuneration of Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

2) That as remuneration of the Senior Governor was a requirement of the HE Governance Act, the Remuneration Committee should become responsible for reviewing the level of remuneration on an annual basis. In addition, as the Remuneration Committee is chaired by the Senior Governor consideration should be given to his or her role in that committee as a consequence of the introduction of remuneration of the role.

3) To introduce a more formal appraisal process for the Senior Governor which would be led on behalf of Court by the Senior Independent Governor.

FINANCE

IMPLICATIONS OF FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARD 102

30 The Court received a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which set out changes to accounting policy under Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 and the new Higher Education Statement of Recommended Practice, which would come in to force for the financial year ending 31 July 2016 and requiring the restatement of the 2014/15 accounts for comparative purposes.

31 The Court noted that the revised accounting standards changed the layout of the primary financial statements and introduced a number of fundamental changes to accounting treatment. At its previous meeting the Court had, following consideration by the Audit Committee and advice from the External Auditors, approved changes to income recognition and fixed asset accounting policies, with all other changes being statutory.

32 The Court noted the impact of the changes on the University’s balance sheet as restated for 2014/15 and that the Operating Board had requested further information on the implications for the University’s pensions liabilities.

DRAFT OUTTURN – 2015/16

33 The Court received a report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) which set out the draft outturn for the year ended 31 July 2016 which was subject to External Audit Review and final adjustment for pension valuations.

34 The Court noted that the Consolidated University outturn, incorporating the Rowett Research Institute Ltd (RRI Ltd) exceeded the budgeted £3 million surplus from underlying operating activities, returning a surplus of £6.07 million. Adding exceptional gains realised during the year of £6.25 million, gave a historic cost surplus of £12.32 million which in previous years would have been the surplus reported by the University. However, the new Accounting standard FRS102 results in significant changes to the presentation of the University’s statutory accounts. The Court noted that the adjustments required under FRS102
represented net costs totalling £19.66 million and the collective impact of exceptional items and the FRS102 adjustments, result in a deficit position for the year of £7.34M.

35 The Court noted that given the impact of FRS102, careful consideration would be required on how to explain and present the information to the University community along with a comprehensive communications plan. In discussion, it was noted that consideration would need to be given in the future as to whether there were implications for the University Superannuation and Life Assurance Scheme.

36 The Court noted that in light of the operating surplus being £3.07 million above target and the subsequent increase in operating cashflow, £1 million would be earmarked to support capital projects in 2016/17 that would improve the University’s competitive position or generate future additional revenue streams. The Court discussed the reasons for the University exceeding its surplus target after in-year forecasts of a shortfall. Further analysis at School level was being undertaken to confirm the University’s understanding of the reasons for this.

OPERATING BOARD REPORT

37 The Court received a report from the Operating Board meeting held on 12 September 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). The principal items of the report that were noted by Court were the Board’s consideration of the following:

- An update to the University’s Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
- An update on the draft outturn for the Financial Year ended 31 July 2016;
- An update on Student Recruitment;
- Updates on progress towards Strategic Plan objectives in respect of People, Learning and Teaching, Research and Internationalisation;
- A report from the Capital Programme Monitoring Committee;
- A report on the progress of the OneSource project.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

38 The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee at its meetings on 24 August and 12 September 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). In addition, the Court approved the following:

Role of Senior Independent Member

39 The Court on the recommendation of the Committee approved the proposed role description for the role of Senior Independent Member.

Membership of Court Committees for 2016/17

40 The Court on the recommendation of the Committee approved the continuing membership of Court Committees for 2016/17, and in particular, the following appointments to vacancies:

- Operating Board: To appoint Professor Nuala Booth to a vacancy for an independent member of Court and that Mr David MacFarlane be co-opted as a member of the Operating Board on a temporary basis with immediate effect.
- Audit Committee: To reappoint Mrs Morag McNeil as a co-opted member for a further term of three years and to reappoint Professor Sir Lewis Ritchie as a co-opted member for a further term of one year.
- Governance and Nominations Committee: That due to the current absence of a member of the Committee to co-opt Mrs Kathryn McPhail on an interim basis to ensure there was an appropriate number of members given the forthcoming role of the Committee in the recruitment and selection of the next Senior Governor.
The Court noted that the Committee had received and considered a nomination for the Benefactor to the University Award which proposed an award to the Moonlight Prowl Committee. The Committee had noted that the nomination had been previously considered and endorsed by the Development Trust’s Stewardship Committee.

The Court, on the recommendation of the Committee, approved the award to the Moonlight Prowl Committee.

The Court noted further reports on:
- The outcome of the Governor Appraisal Exercise;
- The Committee’s consideration of the 2016 Corporate Governance Statement for the Annual Report and Financial Statements and a note of attendance at Court and key Committees for disclosure in the 2014/15 financial statements.

The Court noted a report of the principal items of business considered by the Partnership, Negotiation and Consultative Committee at its meeting on 8 September 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes). In addition the Court approved the following:
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
- Lone Working Policy; and
- Overseas Travel Policy.

The Court received and approved the Annual Report on Institution-Led Review of Quality 2015–2016 for submission to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and approved an Annual Statement of Assurance to SFC confirming that the Court had approved the Annual Report (copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes).

The Court received a report (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) proposing a revised committee structure supporting research and Research Excellence Framework (REF) preparations. The proposals also reflected organisational changes following the devolution of budgets to School level and incorporated recommendations made by the Professional Services Review.

The Court noted that the proposed structure merged the remits and functions of the current Research Policy Committee with those of the Advisory Group for Research Ethics and Governance and the institutional level REF Steering Group. The institutional Research Policy Committee would interact with School Research Committees on matters of strategy, policy, governance and general research performance. The current ethics committees at College level would remain in place and report directly to the Research Policy Committee which will review the activities of the ethics committees regularly. In addition, it was proposed to create Main REF Panel Committees, led by the Deans of Research, to support REF preparations.

The Court noted that to support the creation and operation of a Single Graduate School for Postgraduate Research Students it was proposed to create a Postgraduate Research Students Committee, under the convenership of the new Dean of Graduate School, reporting to the Research Policy Committee.
The Court approved the proposed committee structure, composition and membership and noted these were subject to further approval by the University Senate, to come into effect after the Senate meeting on 2 November.

**PROMOTION AND CONTRIBUTION AWARD EXERCISE 2016 OUTCOMES AND EQUALITY MONITORING**

The Court received an update (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) on the outcomes from the Staff Promotion Committee which met on 30 June 2016. The report included an analysis of the outcomes of the promotions exercise in relation to the equality strands of gender, ethnicity and disability.

**REPORT FROM THE DEVELOPMENT TRUST**

The Court received and noted a paper (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes) providing details of the Development Trust’s performance since its last report to Court on 28 June 2016.

**YEAR END MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Court noted the Management Accounts and Reports for the period to 31 July 2016 (copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes).

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Court noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 6 December 2016 at 9.00am.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT

SUMMARY OF THE ‘3 KEY POINTS’ FROM COURT STRATEGY DAY

Strategic Direction
We should invest in areas of strength/potential excellence and disinvest in areas that cannot achieve growth/excellence.

Income growth and financial sustainability.

We should be more focused in our strategic priorities and reduce the number of initiatives.

We must realise the potential international linkages of the Rowett Institute with the UN Millennium Development Goals and its relevancy to industry, funders and students.

People
We need to foster confidence and a culture of innovation in our staff and in our students.

We need clear and consistent communication with our staff and students on the direction of travel, more celebration of their successes and clarity on the challenges we face and what we need to do to respond to these, particularly with regard to supporting culture change.

Where AUSA and the University have identified common priorities we should work together to deliver on them for the benefit of our students

Learning & Teaching
We need to ensure that we are rigorous in determining which courses and programmes are economically viable, as well as those that are not and which cannot be sustained.

We need to support our students to be prepared to secure their chosen career path and to increase the opportunities for internships, placements or engagement with employers across a variety of industries and sectors.

Research
We need to continue to grow our own future research ‘stars’ but recognise this needs mentoring and leadership from senior academic staff.

Digital Strategy & Online Education
There is a clear link between the Digital agenda, the Internationalisation agenda and the opportunities of online education but these need investment, market research and dedicated staff time to deliver effectively.

Digital technology should enhance staff and student life and not be technology for technology’s sake.

Internationalisation
We should always exercise careful due diligence and consideration of ethical issues of operating overseas campuses or joint ventures/partnerships. We need to see how the Korea model operates before taking forward further overseas campuses.
The Internationalisation agenda remains critical for our future success. To that end we should review the International Strategy targets and determine which geographical countries and areas present the greatest potential for Aberdeen.

**Reporting of KPIs**

We need to consider information on our KPIs at future meetings of this type.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Court Date</th>
<th>Minute Ref</th>
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| December 2015 | 129       | Internationalisation Update            | Clerk      | In progress: Included in the agenda for the June meeting of Court but was deferred to a future meeting due to insufficient time being available.  
Update October 2016: Court agreed at the October 2016 meeting that it should receive a report for discussion at its next meeting in December 2016. Due to recent changes in the leadership of the School this has been deferred. |
| June 2016  | 278 & 280  | Budgets for 2016/17 to 2019/20         | Senior Vice-Principal/ Director of Finance | In progress: Report Scheduled for December 2016 Court |
|            |            |                                         | Senior Vice-Principal/ Director of Finance | In progress: Report Scheduled for December 2016 Court |

The Court:

- Noted that it would receive at a future meeting a report on the projected cashflow and debt profile of the University and options for capital financing through a bond.
| June 2016  | 289     | **Capital Investment Programme for King’s College**  
The Court agreed to endorse the further development of these projects as part of a prioritised and sequenced capital programme, informed by cash-flow analysis and business plans. | Senior Vice-Principal | In progress: Report Scheduled for December 2016 Court |
|-----------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| June 2016 | 314     | **Gender Balance on sub-committees of Senate**  
The Court further agreed that the Senate should be invited to agree that a policy on gender balance also apply to joint committees of the Court and Senate and with implementation commencing as soon as practicable thereafter. | University Secretary | In progress: The issues of gender balance on Senate were considered in November and further work in consultation with the Gender Equality Steering Group is ongoing. |
| October 2016 | Future Composition of Court  
The Court agreed:  
(ii) That the required statutory process of consultation on the proposal and the draft Ordinance with Senate, the Business Committee of the General Council and through public display for eight weeks, be commenced, following consideration of which the Court would be invited to agree on the proposal for formal submission to the Privy Council. | University Secretary | In progress: Report Scheduled for December Court |

List of completed items available on Court Intranet or on request from the Clerk.
CONSIDERATION BY OPERATING BOARD

1.1 At its meetings on 18 October and 15 November, the Board received updates on Health and Safety incidents and the actions taken in response to these.

1.2 The Board noted that the Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing had identified learning points from the incidents and that further work was ongoing to address the issues raised.

1.3 In October the reported incidents were as follows:
   - A student was taken to hospital as a result of self-inflicted injury.
   - A member of staff was driving out of Zoology building car park and was involved in a near miss with a cyclist. Preventative actions have been identified as a result of this near miss.
   - A postgraduate student was taken to hospital as a result of formaldehyde solution being splashed in his eye.

1.4 In November, the Board noted an oral report from the Secretary to the University on two incidents which had occurred since its last meeting:
   - A member of an Aberdeen University Students’ Association (AUSA) sports team had been involved in a fall from the roof of a moving minibus.
   - A fire alarm had been triggered in the kitchen at the Suttie Centre.

1.5 At the November meeting, the Board noted that detailed statistics on the number of self-harm incidents across the student population were to be collected from September 2016. The University had established a Mental Health Working Group to set out a framework to provide appropriate support for students and staff. The Board also received information from AUSA on use of the “Niteline” service, an out-of-hours helpline for students.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT ON ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 There are three serious incidents to report:

- A member of staff was driving out of Zoology building car park and was involved in a near miss with a cyclist. Preventative actions have been identified as a result of this near miss.
- A postgraduate student was taken to hospital as a result of formaldehyde solution being splashed in his eye.
- A student fell from the roof of a minibus and suffered head injuries.

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

2. DETAILS

2.1 On 13th September, a member of staff while driving out of the Zoology building car park was involved in a near miss with a cyclist who was travelling at speed on the pavement. The cyclist was travelling down the hill and appeared to make no attempt to slow down for the junction. The cyclist shot out in front of the car just as the car approached the junction and a collision was only narrowly avoided.

2.2 The number of cyclists on the road has increased with Tillydrone Avenue now a busy through road from Bridge of Don area. The height of the plant growth at either side of the Zoology building car park entrance/exit also hampers car driver’s view to notice potential cyclist/pedestrians early. Plants and hedges on either side of the entrance will be cut down to a height that allows visibility.

2.3 On 22nd September, a postgraduate student in the School of Biological Sciences was working with a formaldehyde solution (15 %). This had had been diluted from 37% to 15% in the fume hood within the lab. The student was using a 5 ml syringe with a needle to remove 0.5 ml from the 15 % stock (in 150 ml serum bottle). The needle detached from the syringe and the liquid sprayed into his face.

2.4 He immediately went to the basin to wash his face. He removed his lab coat. A lab-mounted eye wash application was used with the help of another lab member. The left eye had received the chemical exposure. This was thoroughly washed in the lab and then he was taken to the hospital. At the hospital, the pH of the eye was checked and saline washing continued for 45 minutes. Thereafter the cornea and eye lens was checked and pH checked again. The student suffered no lasting damage to the eye. The lab members were commended for quick response to this incident and very honest reporting of the facts.

2.5 The risk assessment should have been adhered to and the work carried out in a fume hood or the student should have worn suitable eye protection. The specific risk assessment should be reviewed and workers should be familiar with the actual concentrations used and wear suitable PPE. After reviewing the incident at the meeting on October 3rd 2016, University Management Group agreed to make wearing of eye protection mandatory in labs where there is a risk of eye injury.

2.6 On November 4th, while on a trip to a ski competition, a member of the ABDN Snow club climbed on to the roof of the minibus. The conditions were wet and slippery. He slipped and fell on to another car beside the minibus and smashed the windscreen of the car. The student was taken to the medical tent and then transferred to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary where he was examined and released.
2.7 AUSA and the Sports Club have investigated the incident and taken disciplinary and mitigating actions.

3. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no significant resource implications.

4. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

4.1 Risk STRA_2016_04 Health and Safety in the Strategic Risk Register refers.

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 An equality impact assessment is not required.

6. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

6.1 There are no environmental, ethical or social implications or impacts.

7. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

7.1 The University Court is invited to note the matters set out in the paper.

8. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

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

FOI Status: Open
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY AND POLICY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper is to update Court on the development of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Policy. The Strategy is enclosed, the Policy and Action Plan are available on the Court Intranet at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

1.2 The Strategy and Policy were developed by the University’s Mental Health Working Group, chaired by Professor Margaret Ross.

1.3 The Group undertook an audit of mental health and wellbeing services within the University. The results indicated that although the University offers a wide range of support for students and staff with mental health and wellbeing concerns, staff and student awareness of these provisions needed to be addressed. One of the key objectives of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Policy is to foster a shift in culture across the University to one which is open about mental health and wellbeing and which encourages staff and students to discuss mental health and wellbeing concerns.

1.4 The overarching Strategy describes the University’s commitment to tackling mental health concerns and the Policy provides information regarding the responsibilities of the University community in combating mental ill health and creating an inclusive culture in which all staff and students can thrive. An action plan has also been developed, following consultation with the Mental Health Working Group, and using the results of an audit exercise.

1.5 The Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Policy was formally launched at an event held on 9 November 2016.

1.6 The University Court is invited to:

a) note the work undertaken by the Mental Health Working Group;
b) note the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Policy and Action Plan

1.7 Further information is available from Professor Margaret Ross, Vice Principal for People Strategy by telephone on 01224 273180 or by e-mail m.l.ross@abdn.ac.uk or Debbie Dyker, Director of Human Resources by telephone on 01224 273732 or by e-mail d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The University’s Mental Health Working Group was established initially to review the report produced by Universities UK “Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education”. Following two tragic incidents at the University of Aberdeen and general publicity regarding the mental health of students and staff both within the sector and more widely, the Group was focussed on developing a strategy which would encourage enhanced discussion and support regarding mental health issues within the University of Aberdeen.

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 Sustained mental health concerns can be classified as a disability. Disability equality is a key area of Equality and Diversity and the principles of this are embedded throughout the University’s Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020. The University’s mission within the Strategic Plan includes the commitment to “a culture of equality and diversity in which all staff and students thrive”. The values included in the Strategic Plan contribute towards achieving this commitment.
4. DEVELOPING A MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

4.1 The Mental Health Working Group, which comprised staff with experience in mental health and student sabbatical officers, identified that although there were a broad range of support mechanisms for staff and students facing mental health and wellbeing issues there were areas for improvement.

4.2 The discussions at the Mental Health Working Group meetings centred on the need to raise awareness of mental health conditions across the University and to develop a culture in which staff or students would feel supported in seeking assistance for mental health and wellbeing concerns. There was also a significant need to support Personal Tutors, Line Managers and others in spotting the signs of mental ill health and to ensure they were sufficiently trained to be able to undertake this role.

4.3 An Action Plan was developed which would, when implemented, improve awareness and the support offered.

4.4 The overarching Strategy describes the University’s commitment to tackling mental health concerns and the Policy provides information regarding the responsibilities of the University community in combatting mental ill health and creating an inclusive culture in which all staff and students can thrive.

4.5 A number of key actions have already been implemented to support the launch of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy including Mental Health First Aid training, Lunchtime Mindfulness sessions, Coaching and mentoring schemes for staff, reviewing the role of the Harassment Adviser. There are plans to recruit a Mental Health Practitioner in Student Life, a ‘map of support’ will be issued to Personal Tutors along with additional guidance. The Staff and Student Death Protocols have been revised, a Support for Study Policy has been developed to further support students who have mental health difficulties and a Protocol for Responding to the Death of a Student in Private Student Accommodation has been adopted.

4.6 In addition a successful Wellbeing Day was held in January 2016 and plans are in progress for a similar event in January 2017.

4.7 The University entered the ‘Britain’s Healthiest Workplace’ survey and received feedback which is being used to develop targeted actions and events, and an Employee Assistance Programme was launched in early November 2016.

4.8 Additional actions are included in the Action Plan.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No additional resources are being requested at this stage, although staff across the University will be expected to engage fully with the aims of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Policy as well as in the implementation of the Action Plan.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 It is critical for the University to be taking proactive steps to safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of its staff and students and to support the University community to support each other as far as is reasonable. Creating a culture which does not stigmatise mental health issues will serve, to some extent, to mitigate the risks of mental ill health within the University community.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An equality impact assessment is currently being undertaken. Overall it is likely that the results will indicate that there will be a positive impact for staff and students who have mental health and wellbeing concerns.
8. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

8.1 There are no sustainability issues arising from this paper. The implementation of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Policy will serve to contribute to the University’s socially responsible ethos.

9. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

9.1 The University Court is invited to:

   a) note the work undertaken by the Mental Health Working Group;
   
   b) note the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Policy and Action Plan.

10. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

10.1 Further information is available from Professor Margaret Ross, Vice Principal for People Strategy by telephone on 01224 273180 or by e-mail m.l.ross@abdn.ac.uk or Debbie Dyker, Director of Human Resources by telephone on 01224 273732 or by e-mail d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk

[21 November 2016] [v1] [Open]

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

1 STRATEGY AIMS

1.1 The University of Aberdeen strongly believes that safeguarding the mental and physical wellbeing of its staff and students is of paramount importance.

1.2 The aim of this strategy is to promote the University’s intention to actively support and improve the physical, mental and social health of its community.

1.3 The University recognises that positive health and wellbeing is not just the absence of illness; it combines many aspects including the physical, social, emotional, spiritual, mental and societal.

1.4 The University also recognises that many factors, both internal to the University and external to it, influence the health and wellbeing of the staff and student communities.

1.5 A key aspect of the strategy is the focus on promoting the opportunities for support which the University offers and also raising awareness of wellbeing and mental health. Prevention of mental health problems are critical to any strategy which seeks to support the mental health of staff and students.

1.6 This strategy supports the University in reminding staff and students that discrimination or harassment on the basis of mental health will not be tolerated, in accordance with the University’s Equality and Diversity Policy and Code for Staff and Students.

1.7 This strategy underpins a culture in which staff and students can continue to achieve their goals and reach their full potential.

2 OBJECTIVES

1 Embed a culture of openness regarding mental health and wellbeing issues;

2 Engage with the University community to establish how the University can improve the mental health and wellbeing support available;

3 Increase awareness-raising and communication strategies to promote the wide range of health and wellbeing services available to staff and students within the University;

4 Empower staff and students to recognise and support colleagues and peers who may require help to achieve mental health and wellbeing goals.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 The strategy will be delivered through:

- Awareness-raising campaigns and events for both staff and students;
- Partnership-working across the University;
- Embedding the ethos of the strategy through integrating it within the structures and values of the University;
- Communicating this strategy to the University community and seeking active participation in implementing it.
The University is committed to continuously reviewing and improving the support available to staff and students regarding mental health and wellbeing. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan sets out the actions which the University will take to further enhance those services.

4 UNDERPINNING STRUCTURES

4.1 The strategy will be supported by:

• Strong leadership – senior managers leading by example;

• Regular reviews of implementation and progress by the University’s Mental Health Working Group and the University Management Group;

• Engagement with the University community;

• Engaging with external agencies to ensure that the University’s practice is consistent with best practice by national and sectoral standards and guidance.

5 MEASURING SUCCESS

5.1 The success of the strategy will be measured through:

• Student and staff experience questionnaires

• Student and staff retention

• Sickness and absence data

• Healthy Working Lives accreditations

6 NURTURING STUDENTS

6.1 Improving and supporting the mental and physical wellbeing of students is a key strategic priority for the University of Aberdeen. The University recognises that, while University life is stimulating, exciting and rewarding; for some it can pose challenges.

6.2 The University does offer a range of mechanisms for supporting students through difficult periods. The University will review and monitor the effectiveness of those services and seek to continuously improve the support available to students.

6.3 The University will promote to students strategies which will help them to prevent mental health concerns in themselves and others.

7 STAFF SUPPORT

7.1 The University of Aberdeen is committed to achieving a healthy workforce by placing real value on both physical and mental health.

7.2 The University recognises the importance of ensuring that all staff are able to work in a supportive, professional and caring environment, where they are valued and respected. By applying these values to our work practices the University aims to promote mental and physical wellbeing.

7.3 The University appreciates that many of its staff are juggling busy work and home lives and that achieving acceptable work/life balance is important to maintain good physical and mental health. The University also accepts that mental health issues can be triggered by workplace situations and/or stress and it is the University’s duty to take reasonable measures to preserve and promote the mental health and wellbeing of its staff.
7.4 The University promotes a comprehensive approach to tackling mental health issues arising from the workplace or from personal circumstances by offering prevention strategies and implementing effective and caring approaches to managing staff who experience mental health or wellbeing challenges.

7.5 It is recognised that staff across the University may be supporting students through periods of difficulty and that this can be a source of stress for members of staff. The University will empower staff to manage these situations and will provide support and training for staff managing challenging situations.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

REPORT FROM THE SENIOR GOVERNOR

1 SUMMARY

1.1 This paper is a report to Court from the Senior Governor which is for information.

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

2 FUTURE COMPOSITION OF COURT

2.1 Enclosed separately on today's agenda is a report on the feedback received from the consultation that has been undertaken on the proposal for a new composition of Court. While it is for Court to reach a view on any comments that have been received, I hope that we will be able to reach the final agreement necessary to allow the University to commence the process of seeking Privy Council approval and to focus fully on the many strategic issues that need our engagement and time.

3 VOTE OF THANKS

3.1 As colleagues on Court know, this will be my last meeting as Senior Governor. There are a great many people on Court and in the University who I have had the pleasure to work with to whom I owe thanks for the support they have given me. For my part, it has been both a huge privilege and an inspiration to be a governor and then Senior Governor of one of Scotland and the UK’s ancient universities.

3.2 I joined Court in 2002 and, while without doubt these are challenging times for universities in Scotland, I have reflected recently on the significance of the many major steps forward we have taken over the past 15 years. Most visibly, our campuses at Old Aberdeen and Foresterhill, have been transformed by new buildings like the Library, the Aberdeen Sports Village, the Suttie Centre, the new Nursery and now the Rowett Building. There has been investment in the recruitment of great academic staff and commitment to supporting and fostering the potential of our junior staff. We continue to be a leader and innovator in UK terms in our approach to fundraising. And I am sure it won’t surprise any colleagues on Court when I add that there has been a transformation in our approach to Health, Safety and Wellbeing which is so important in a community of staff and students as big and complex as the University.

3.3 These are all achievements that we have managed within a relatively tight financial envelope compared to some of our international competitors. We should take pride in that but the challenge is to not sit still while others move on. In that sense, I hope Court will continue to recognise that it has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring this University, which is in its sixth century, is sustainable for the long-term. That in my opinion means a commitment to two objectives above all else—financial sustainability and the ability to continue to invest in our future success.

3.4 It has also been an education for me to see close up the difference this University makes to people’s lives, to the community of the North-East of Scotland and to the wider world. Whatever the issue we see before us at Court may be, it is that core mission of transforming lives and the wider world that we are all working towards. I wish my successor, the Court, the Senior Management Team and all the staff and students, every success as you take the University forward in pursuit of that fundamental and most important mission.

4 RECOMMENDED ACTION

4.1 The paper is for information.
5 FURTHER INFORMATION

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

15 November 2016, V1 (Open)

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper is a report to Court from the Principal which is for discussion and information.

1.2 The paper reports on a number of matters which may be of interest to members but which might not otherwise feature on the agenda.

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

2 SENIOR GOVERNOR

2.1 This will be Sir Moir’s last meeting of Court and I know that Court will wish to record its thanks and appreciation for the wonderful leadership he has given us and the contribution he has made to the progress and success of the University in so many ways. On a personal level, I will always be indebted to Moir for the guidance and support he provided to me as Principal on a range of issues, particularly when I first joined the University but, of course, on many subsequent occasions. The Court, the University and I, all owe a debt of thanks to Moir and I look forward to us doing just that at the dinner in his honour on 5 December 2016.

3 PRINCIPAL’S SCHOLARS

3.1 I hope that joining us at the dinner will be some of our 2015/16 Principal’s Scholars award winners. The ten awards recognise undergraduate academic excellence or outstanding contributions to the University and winners receive a bursary of £1,000 from Ede & Ravenscroft. The Scholars will help us at our Open Days and other events to inspire future potential students with their experiences here as undergraduates.

4. RESTRUCTURING IN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES & NUTRITION

4.1 As Court will be aware, the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition have been going through a restructuring exercise over the last few months. In October, after the conclusion of a voluntary severance scheme, regrettably, a small number of staff were identified as being at risk of redundancy. Colleagues in the School’s management team have worked with the staff concerned and I am very pleased that alternative employment opportunities have been found for all those who were at risk of redundancy. This is a positive development, however, regrettably the University and College Union has voted to take strike action and action short of strike regarding the restructuring. I will update Court further at our meeting.

5 SPENDING AND ENTERPRISE BODY REVIEW

5.1 I will report to Court in more detail on how lobbying around the Scottish Government’s spending review is evolving. As Court may also be aware, the Scottish Government has agreed to put the governance of the Scottish Funding Council under the control of one body, together with Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Development International, and Skills Development Scotland. This is likely to have implications for higher education. I look forward to sharing my thoughts on both these matters with you at the meeting.

5.2 At UK Government level, colleagues will be aware of the higher education sector’s continuing concern at the Home Office’s approach to classifying international student within its immigration figures. I was very pleased to see that the Committee of Scottish University Chairs have raised with the Home Secretary their concerns at the negative impact that this has and will continue to have on universities.
5.3 Colleagues will have seen the Prime Minister’s announcement of an increase, from 2020, of £2bn p.a. in research funding linked to industrial growth. This is good news and I will have further information at Court, following a meeting I am Chairing on 2nd December.

6 COMMUNICATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

6.1 A theme we discussed at a number of points during our strategy day was the importance of good communication with staff and students. To help us do that we have been consulting with our staff over recent weeks on how they perceive our communications and how they feel we might enhance the way that we engage with them on a range of issues. I also have conducted a series of my regular open meetings with staff to reinforce key messages around our strategy and the opportunities and challenges that we face. Given that we are living through what are by most standards a fairly complex and unpredictable external competitive environment, it is obviously important that we are clear not only about what we do anticipate the future holds but also be honest about what we do not know at this stage.

6.2 I also enjoyed a recent opportunity to meet with the Students’ Association and to join some of their own open meetings with the student community to take their questions.

7 WINTER GRADUATIONS

7.1 As I write this report we look forward to our Winter Graduation ceremonies. I have no doubt that the ceremonies will once again be joyous occasions where we celebrate not only the success of the students but also the dedication and hard work of all our staff who have contributed to their education and experience here. That hard work also includes all our colleagues who make the graduation ceremonies the well-organised and successful occasions that they are. It is so important that our graduates and their families leave us with very happy memories of this landmark day in their lives.

8 AURORA NETWORK

8.1 Members will recall that at our strategy day, we discussed the importance of international partnerships to our global profile and reach. I was, therefore, delighted to attend recently the launch, in Amsterdam, of the Aurora Network – a new network of nine European universities with similar missions to our own who will work together to enhance education, the student experience and research. In the context of Brexit, it is vital that we are proactive in maintaining our links with leading European universities and I envisage this kind of partnership being a key means through which we can protect our interests in both the European student and research agendas.

9 MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

9.1 As is reported elsewhere on today’s agenda, we recently launched our Mental Health Strategy which has been developed under the leadership of Professor Margaret Ross, Vice-Principal for People. In the context of people being at the centre of all our activities, it represents both an important institutional commitment to highlighting the importance of mental health issues amongst staff and students and to building on the wide range of services, such as our 24 hour staff helpline that we have recently launched, that we are providing to support our community.

10 ACADEMIC SUCCESSES

10.1 I know that colleagues on Court are always keen to know of the successes of our students and staff and I will mention just some of these. Teodora Oniga, a PhD student in physics, was shortlisted for the IOP Jocelyn Bell Burnell award. It is given each year to one outstanding early career female physicist in recognition of their dedication to research, public engagement and encouraging others to study physics. To be shortlisted alongside students from Oxford University and Imperial College shows that our female students are competing with the best in the world.

10.2 I am delighted that our Chair in Plant and Soil Science, Professor Pete Smith, is to be honoured by the European Geosciences Union which is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in Earth, planetary, and space sciences. He will receive the 2017 Philippe Duchafour medal at an award ceremony next year. Also within Life Sciences & Medicine, Professor Neil Gow was recently named the winner of the British Mycological Society’s President’s Award for 2016. Professor...
Gow received the award in recognition of outstanding service and contribution of knowledge to fungal biology and it is further external recognition of the fact his work in this area is truly world-leading.

10.3 I was delighted to learn that the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the National Environment Research Council has recently approved five research grant awards to the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition of £2.1M. This is clearly encouraging for the School particularly because MRC and NERC awards are amongst some of the most competitive and prestigious to win.

11 AWARDS FOR THE ROCKING HORSE NURSERY AND PROJECT SEARCH

11.1 I am also delighted to share with Court the news that the Rocking Horse Nursery has won a national award in honour of its energy efficient design. The nursery won the ‘Large Institution Award’ in the Built Environment category of the Green Gown Awards, which recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives by universities and colleges across the UK. This is great recognition for the University and my congratulations go to all of our colleagues who contributed to the success of the project.

11.2 We are also celebrating that our Project Search team has become the first provider in the North East to receive the Developing Young Workforce Quality Assurance accreditation at Gold level. Project Search is a one year Internship programme supporting young people with additional needs to gain skills and experience to go on to employment. The developing the Young Workforce regional groups were established to implement the findings of the national Commission, chaired by Sir Ian Wood, to better prepare children and young people aged 3-18 for the world of work. Once again, this represents well deserved external recognition for a project that is helping to benefit our wider community.

12 CHRISTMAS EVENTS

12.1 We are all looking forward to our annual ‘switch on’ of the Christmas tree lights at King’s which for many years now has been a popular event with staff and their families. A more recent addition to our University calendar has been our Carol service in Marylebone Parish Church, London. This has been equally popular with alumni based in the south of England and is a great opportunity for us to connect with our graduates.

13 RECOMMENDED ACTION

13.1 The paper is for discussion and information

14 FURTHER INFORMATION

14.1 Further information is available from the Principal ian.diamond@abdn.ac.uk. 01224 272135

[22 November 2016] [Version 1] [Open]
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1.2 The paper reports on a number of matters which may be of interest to members but which might not otherwise feature on the agenda.

1.3 Further information is available from the Student President, ausapresident@abdn.ac.uk.

2 STUDENTS, STUDENT WELLBEING & SAFETY

2.1 Nightline

2.1.1 This year we have seen a focus being placed on mental health issues and strain it places not only students but also on members of staff. AUSA has been working closely with the University, particularly the Mental Health Working Group, in order to move towards creating better mechanisms of care and ensuring that all members within our University community feel comfortable, safe, and supported in whatever they may be going through.

2.1.2 The Nightline service which operates from 8pm-8am every night during term time (and over the Easter break) is a student-run volunteer service in place to support students at the University of Aberdeen.

2.1.3 Thus far in the academic year Nightline have taken 386 calls totalling 6326 minutes and averaging 16.39 minutes.

2.1.4 The graph below is an indication of the ratio of call types Nightline have received for each issue. For each call three call trends have been applied and therefore some of the suicidal thoughts may be secondary to emotional thoughts, for example. Therefore the statistics should be treated with care and used as an indicator.
2.2 **Student Safety**

2.2.1 On October 12th two separate reports were made of a male teen approaching and inappropriately touching two females at Seaton Part near the halls of residence between the hours of 17.00 and 17.30. The male in question is not believed to be a student of the University of Aberdeen.

2.2.2 On November 2nd another incident was reported. AUSA have since released statements in response to both reports; citing the current provisions in place to maintain safety on campus i.e. Critical Arc Safezone App, and requesting an extra security presence around the Hillhead area. Alice McClellan (Sports Officer) and the Sports Union have, as of November 12th, launched self-defence classes for students. Where and when possible AUSA continues to promote the services of the Association and the University both in terms of mental and physical wellbeing.

2.2.3 On November 4th an incident was reported involving a sports club of the University whilst in Edinburgh for a competition. Whilst waiting for a minibus to return the students of ABDN Snow to the hostel from the slopes, a member of the group climbed on top of the minibus’ roof which was also wet due to rain. The student then fell off of the roof and onto a car which was beside the vehicle, smashing the wind screen. The student sustained an injury to the head (it was swollen and bleeding) and upon realising the severity of the situation other members of the group acted quickly and called medics who then took the student to the medical tent.

2.2.4 The student was examined by medics onsite before being referred to A and E. At the advice of doctors in the hospital the student was permitted to leave and members of the group were advised to be aware of any unusual behaviour which could indicate the onset of a concussion.

2.2.5 Following the incident ABDN Snow have been removed from the competition which was part of a BUCS (British Universities & Colleges Sport) fixture. ABDN Snow have filled out the necessary accident report from.

2.2.6 AUSA convened a disciplinary panel to review the current administration of ABDN Snow and provided the committee a list of requirements which were to be carried out in order for the club to continue functioning.

3 **STAFFING**

3.1 The staff team at AUSA has changed dramatically in the last year and this has finally settled down with a new staff structure led by the CEO Margaret Paterson.

**Student Activities Department**

- Activities Development Manager
- Activities Development Coordinator
- Activities Administrator
- Sports Administrator
- Communications and Digital Media Coordinator
- Graphic Designer
- Charities and Fundraising Coordinator
- Events Coordinator
- Advertising and Media Sales

**Representative Services Department**

- Representative Services Manager
- Welfare and Campaigns Assistant
- Academic Rights Advisor
- Student Rep Coordinator
3.2 The staff team reflects the changes in the sabbatical structure adding support for officers which was previously not available. This would be the first time in approximately six years that AUSA would have a full and functioning complement of staff.

4 ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION

4.1 Elections for the AUSA standing Committee positions ran mid-September with a comparatively high turnout to previous years. Of the student body 10.5% took part in the voting process compared to 1.1% seen the year previous, amounting to an increase of 898.4%.

4.2 This follows on from a welcome increase in turnout in the Sabbatical Officer elections where we saw 14.5% of the student population vote in an election which saw a rise of 15.2% in turnout overall. This is a positive step for AUSA.

4.3 These results are so far encouraging and clearly highlight the initial work of undertaken to improve AUSA’s engagement with the student body. Our new Representative Services Department and refined focus within Student Activities can only help to improve this engagement with a hope that the next round of Executive Elections will see a promising increase in voter turnout.

4.4 Policy Review

4.4.1 With the assistance of the Representative Services Manager and led by Education Officer Liam Fuller, the Sabbatical team have performed an extensive review of current policies. The findings of the review highlighted a number of issues with many of the policies believed to be in place. Many were either;

- Lapsed
- Repeated/conflicting
- Unclear in their resolves, leading to many interpretations

AUSA’s policy review (which is ongoing) has highlighted a significant series of weaknesses in the previous running of our democratic processes. AUSA is however creating a framework to ensure the creation of policy is reflective of the needs of the student membership.

4.5 Student Council

4.5.1 The first meeting of the Student Council took place on October 25th in King’s College Conference Centre (KCC), a change from its previous meetings held in New Kings. The student body would like to thank the Principal in supporting our use of KCC. It is expected that the new location will provide the necessary gravitas and promote a more serious and active session of discussion. The students would also like to thank the Principal for offering his time for open discussion. Members of Council appreciated his participation.

4.5.2 It was passed at the first Council meeting that the new priority campaign for AUSA would be ‘Stop the Job Cuts’ in response to redundancies made in the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences, and Nutrition.

4.6 Cut the Rent

4.6.1 Aberdeen: Cut the Rent was launched by AUSA to tackle high rents in the University’s halls of residence. Over the last five years, the cost of the cheapest halls has increased by 43%, and the average cost of halls comes in at 102% of the standard SAAS student loan. The campaign has been incredibly successful thus far, with over 1300 student signatures on the campaign’s petition to cut and cap the rent, and a great amount of media interest.

5 AURORA NETWORK

5.1 Friday 21st October saw the official launch of the Aurora Network take place at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.
5.2 As part of the network launch a student delegation comprising of two students from each partner university were tasked to prepare a presentation expressing their expectations and ambitions from the Aurora collaboration.

5.3 The student delegates engaged in intensive workshops discussing in depth the issues students and universities face in the current climate of Higher Education, placing this in a global context. The final presentation was well received by Principals and Senior Executives of the partner universities. The Student Council as it came to be known, continues to engage in regular discussion.

6 AUSA UNION BUILDING

6.1 Whilst it has been accepted by AUSA and the University that the Butchart redevelopment is no longer at this time a viable project. The hesitance to generate a plan of operation stemmed from the Association previously having no base timeframe of occupancy [of the Union Building].

6.2 AUSA and the University have been engaged in productive dialogue and the projected minimum term of occupancy currently stands within the period of 5 years. This takes into consideration the prioritised projects within the Capital Plan and the availability of finance and resources. Moving forward we are now in a better position to scale our plans of operation based on the needs of Association.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No request for resource is made in this paper.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 Not applicable to this report.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Not applicable to this report.

10 SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

10.1 Not applicable.

11 RECOMMENDED ACTION

11.1 The paper is for discussion and information

12 FURTHER INFORMATION

12.1 Further information is available from Chubbe Anucha 01224 274250

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Page 4 of 4
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

REVISED COMPOSITION OF COURT: DRAFT ORDINANCE AND FUTURE TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 At its last meeting the Court approved a proposed new composition and agreed that the required statutory process of consultation on the proposal and the draft Ordinance be commenced. This paper reports on the comments that have been received following that process being undertaken and invites Court to consider whether it wishes to amend the proposed draft Ordinance in light of these. Following consideration by Court today, the University will commence the process of engagement with the Privy Council with regard to seeking formal approval of the new Ordinance and composition.

1.2 Under statute, prior to submission to the Privy Council a draft Ordinance must be referred to both the Senate and Business Committee of the General Council for comment and made publicly available for a period of 8 weeks. It should be noted that the period of 8 weeks from the Court’s previous meeting concludes on 2 December which is after the circulation date for Court papers. Any substantive comments received by the University after the circulation of this paper will, however, be reported to Court at the meeting.

1.3 The comments received from Senate are set out at section 4 and those of the Business Committee of the General Council at section 5. The draft Ordinance was made available on the University website and communicated to staff via the ezine. The Chief Executives of Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council respectively were also advised of the proposals with the opportunity to comment. The City Council has responded to confirm it was content with the proposals given the commitment of Court to continuing to seek nominations from the Council to vacancies for independent members.

1.4 A draft Ordinance reflecting the proposal for a new composition of Court is enclosed as Appendix 1. For clarity, a copy of the current Ordinance illustrating the change to existing positions under the proposals is also enclosed at Appendix 2. A summary of the proposal and the issues that have been considered by the Court previously in its development is provided at Appendix 3. The Court may also wish to consider the draft minute of its discussion in October which is enclosed separately in today’s papers.

1.5 The paper also discusses the next steps that will need to be considered with regard to how the transition of the existing composition and membership of Court to the new composition is best achieved. The paper also sets out some of the implications of the new composition for the key sub-committees of Court and it is proposed the Governance and Nominations Committee and Operating Board now give more detailed consideration to these.

1.6 The Court is invited to:

(1) Consider the comments received from Senate and the Business Committee of the General Council, and agree on whether it wishes to make any changes to the draft Ordinance in light of these, specifically:
   - Whether Court agrees with Senate that the term Dean of Court should be adopted for the Senior Governor;
   - Whether Court agrees with the view of Senate and the Business Committee that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors;

(2) Subject to (1), agree that the University commences the process of engagement with the Privy Council towards formal approval of the draft Ordinance.

(3) Note that the Governance and Nominations Committee will consider the process and timeframe to transition from the current composition to the proposed new composition, with a report to the next meeting of Court.
(4) Note that the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Operating Board will be invited to consider in more detail the implications for the future operation of the committee structure.

1.7 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary or Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, 01224 273949, b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Prior to the new legislation the Court had identified that at 28 members it did not comply with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance recommended maximum size of 25 members and nor did its composition provide for a guaranteed majority of independent members. In addition, the Court is committed to improving its gender and diversity balance while also having a greater ability to influence the skills mix within its membership, which at present is inhibited by the significant proportion of elected or externally appointed members within its composition. These considerations led the Court to review its composition against a set of principles as follows:

1) That Court should have a majority of members who are independent of any vested interest in the University.
2) That Court should aim to reflect the diversity of the University community of students and staff it governs, and should therefore target a 50:50 gender balance and a greater ethnic and geographical diversity than at present.
3) That the composition of Court should enable the appointment of members who have the requisite mix of skills and experience to allow Court to fulfill its responsibilities for the effective strategic leadership of the institution and oversight of the management of the University.

2.2 The Act requires a governing body to include:

- a Rector; (as already provided for under existing legislation for the Scottish Ancients only);
- a "senior lay member" appointed in accordance with the election process required by the Act and who may not be a student of, or member of staff of, the University;
- “two persons appointed by being elected by the staff of the institution from among their own number”. The Act allows the governing body to define staff in this context as (i) academic; (ii) support staff; or (iii) all staff ie whether one or two positions are assigned to a particular category of staff. It also permits the governing body to determine the rules governing any election process. It should be noted that while Senate Assessors on Court presently are “academic staff” they are elected by Senate members and not by all academic staff. Furthermore, only Senate members may stand for election as a Senate Assessor. The University’s current processes for electing Senate Assessors does not, therefore, accord with the Act.
- one person appointed by being nominated by a trade union from among the academic staff of the institution who are members of a branch of a trade union that has a connection with the institution;
- one person appointed by being nominated by a trade union from among the support staff of the institution who are members of a branch of a trade union that has a connection with the institution;
- two persons appointed by being nominated by a students’ association of the institution from among the students of the institution;
- such other persons as are appointed by virtue of an enactment or in accordance with the governing document of the institution (in Aberdeen’s case the Rector. Note also the Act removes the position of Chancellor’s Assessor from the 1889 Universities Act. It is, therefore, assumed that should Court wish to do so, a proposal to remove the position of Chancellor’s Assessor in any future composition would be accepted by Privy Council).

1 For information, members of Senate itself are elected by academic staff within the School that they represent.
3 **STATUTORY CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR AMENDMENT OF COMPOSITION OF COURT**

3.1 Notwithstanding the fact the Act requires changes to the Court’s composition, the University will need to seek Privy Council approval for a new Ordinance to both accord with the new requirements of the Act and to make the further changes the Court has proposed. Under statute, prior to submission to the Privy Council a draft Ordinance must be referred to both the Senate and Business Committee of the General Council for comment and made publicly available for a period of 8 weeks – this paper reports on the outcome of that process.

3.2 Subject to Court’s agreement today, the University will commence engagement with the Privy Council on the draft Ordinance. This is a process that can take several months and it is common for Privy Council advisers to seek clarification of proposals and to require drafting amendments to an Ordinance before an application for formal approval of an Ordinance can be made. The Court will be advised of any changes that are required by Privy Council prior to the formal application for approval of the Ordinance being submitted.

4 **COMMENTS FROM THE SENATE**

4.1 The Senate considered the proposals for a revised composition of the University Court at its meeting of 2 November 2016. The Senate also received a motion proposing amendments to the proposals (Appendix 4). The motion set out recommendations regarding the title to be used for the senior lay member, gender equality and the importance of the role of General Council Assessors. In regard to the proposals presented in the motion, Senate noted that the two positions being created for staff on Court were not both for academic staff but rather one would be for an academic member of staff and one for a member of support staff.

4.2 Following discussion and a vote, the Senate gave its support to the proposals in the motion that the term Dean of Court should be adopted for the Senior Governor and that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors. The Senate agreed to forward these to the University Court as representative of the Senate’s view.

5 **COMMENTS FROM THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

5.1 The Business Committee of the General Council considered the proposals at its meeting of 17 November 2016. The Committee agreed to support the position agreed by Senate in so far as, that there should continue to be four elected General Council Assessors.

6 **TRANSITIONAL ISSUES: PROCESS FOR AMENDMENT OF COMPOSITION OF COURT**

6.1 The Scottish Government has confirmed that, subject to Parliamentary timescales, the provisions of the Act relating to the membership of the governing body will come into force during later 2016/early 2017 with a transitional period of around 4 years from commencement ie late 2020/early 2021. This is intended to allow for the time necessary to agree the constitutional amendments locally within institutions and through Privy Council, and for the transition of existing memberships to the new arrangements. Until the draft Ordinance is approved by the Privy Council, the composition of Court will remain as it currently is. However, the views of the Privy Council will be sought on whether the new Ordinance can specify a date from which it will come into force following approval by the Privy Council.

6.2 While formal approval from the Privy Council for the new composition may take some time, the Governance and Nominations Committee will be invited to consider options for transition from the current composition to the new composition at its meeting on 1 February and report to Court in March. Based on the new composition as currently proposed, issues that will need to be considered include:

- Whether there should be a specific date where the new composition commences or a phased transition to avoid a significant change in the membership of Court taking place at one time which would not necessarily be in the interests of good governance. The proposed current working assumption, therefore, is to specify a commencement date for the Ordinance to enable the transition. The draft Ordinance has been amended to specify
commencement six months after formal approval by Privy Council (paragraph 3, Appendix 1). This will require, however, Privy Council advice.

- Arrangements and rules for the appointment of trade union nominated members of Court and for election of the non-academic and academic staff members will need to be developed.
- While some existing members of Court will transition to the new composition under their existing term of office and other positions will cease to exist under the new composition, consideration is required around, for example, how to effect the reduction to the number of Senate Assessors.
- The need to balance decisions around the transition to the new composition with considerations such as opportunities to improve gender balance and ensuring continuity of experience on the Court.

7 TRANSITIONAL ISSUES: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

7.1 The Governance and Nominations Committee has given initial consideration as to whether the proposals will require any changes to the composition of the Court’s sub-committees. The Committee noted that the following issues would need to be considered further subject to approval by Court of the new composition. The Court is invited to comment on these issues and agree that these are now subject to further detailed consideration by the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Operating Board.

- Operating Board: The composition currently includes 3 Senate Assessors, one from each College which would need to be reviewed in light of the proposed new composition which includes a Senate Assessor from the Business School rather than just the three Colleges. The Committee further agreed that following agreement of a new composition of Court, the Operating Board should review its composition more generally. It is proposed that the Governance & Nominations Committee and Operating Board now take forward that review.

- Governance & Nominations Committee: The Committee noted that its composition included one Senate Assessor position. The Committee agreed that given the further constituencies of staff that would in the future be included within the composition of Court, it would be appropriate for the composition of the Committee to reflect that and for the position currently reserved to a Senate Assessor to be for a ‘Non-Executive Member of Staff on Court’.

- Remuneration Committee: There are no immediate issues resulting from the composition of Court changing. It is, however, an opportunity to ensure that the composition adheres fully with the guidelines of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. In addition, given the move to remuneration of the Senior Governor (as required by the HE Governance Act), it has previously been noted that consideration will need to be given as to whether it remains appropriate for the Senior Governor to chair the Remuneration Committee. A review of the composition is, therefore, being undertaken.

- Student Experience Committee: The Committee noted that the Student Experience Committee’s composition included the Rector’s Assessor *ex officio* a position on Court that would be removed under the proposals being considered. Further consideration will need to be given as to whether the Court wishes to retain three nominated representatives or whether an independent member and Rector as members are sufficient.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no immediate resource implications arising from this paper, although the introduction of new election processes for elected staff members of Court will incur some modest expenditure.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 The effective introduction of a new composition of Court mitigates against the risk of non-compliance with the new governance legislation which forms part of the ‘Governance and Core Business Risk’ profile within the University’s corporate risk register.
10 **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

10.1 An equality impact assessment has not been carried out at this stage. The proposals are intended to enable the Court to better achieve diversity across its membership.

11 **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

11.1 Not applicable.

12 **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

12.1 The Court is invited to:

(1) Consider the comments received from Senate and the Business Committee of the General Council, and agree on whether it wishes to make any changes to the draft Ordinance in light of these, specifically:
- Whether Court agrees with Senate that the term Dean of Court should be adopted for the Senior Governor;
- Whether Court agrees with the view of Senate and the Business Committee that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors;

(2) Subject to (1), agree that the University commences the process of engagement with the Privy Council towards formal approval of the draft Ordinance.

(3) Note that the Governance and Nominations Committee will consider the process and timeframe to transition from the current composition to the proposed new composition, with a report to the next meeting of Court.

(4) Note that the Governance and Nominations Committee and the Operating Board will be invited to consider in more detail the implications for the future operation of the committee structure.

9 **FURTHER INFORMATION**

9.1 Further information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary or Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, 01224 273949, b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk.

21 November 2016, (Open)

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ORDINANCE of the UNIVERSITY COURT
of the UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
No < > [COMPOSITION OF THE UNIVERSITY COURT]
At ABERDEEN the < > day of < >
Two Thousand and Sixteen.

WHEREAS the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, section 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part I, paragraph 1, empowers the University Court to amend the composition, powers and functions of the University Court

AND WHEREAS, the University Court deems it expedient to amend the composition of the University Court as constituted by Section 2 of and Part III of Schedule 1 to the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 as amended by the University Court Ordinance No 133:

THEREFORE the University Court, in exercise of its powers under Section 3 of, and paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 2 to, the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 and of all other powers enabling it in that behalf, hereby statutes and ordains:

1. Part III of Schedule 1 to the said Act of 1966 shall be amended so that the composition of the Court shall be 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 10-12 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 10-12 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 10-12 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 of Aberdeen;
(h) The President of the Students’ Association;
(i) A further student representative nominated by the Students’ Association from among the students of the institution,
(k) 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 of Aberdeen or a matriculated student, and at least four of which shall be members of the General Council of the University.

2. On the date on which this Ordinance comes into force, University Court Ordinance No.133 (Composition of the University Court) is revoked.

3. This Ordinance will come into force six months following the date on which it is approved by Her Majesty in Council.
APPENDIX 2

Section 2 of Ordinance 133 showing proposed amendments to Ordinance 133: Composition of the University Court

Additions are in red, deletions scored through.

2. Part III of Schedule 1 to the said Act of 1966 shall be amended so that the composition of the Court shall be as follows:

- the Rector
- the Principal;
- an Assessor nominated by the chancellor \textit{The Senior Governor appointed in accordance with section 8 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016};
- an Assessor nominated by the rector;
- Vice- Principals, not exceeding three in number;
- an Assessor nominated by the Aberdeen City Council who shall be a member of that Council, provided always that no person may serve as such an assessor whilst he/she is a matriculated student of or holds an appointment in the University of Aberdeen;
- an Assessor nominated by the Aberdeenshire Council who shall be a member of that Council, provided always that no person may serve as such an assessor whilst he/she is a matriculated student of or holds an appointment in the University of Aberdeen;
- four Assessors elected by the General Council;
- \textbf{Two persons appointed by being elected by the staff of the University from among their own number in accordance with sections 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016};
- 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 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
- 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 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
- \textbf{six Assessors elected by the Senatus Academicus from among those of its members holding appointments in the University of Aberdeen, of whom at least two shall be readers or lecturers}; \textbf{Four Assessors elected by the Senatus Academicus from among those of its members holding appointments in the University of Aberdeen};
- the President of the Students’ Representative Council Association;
- A further student representative nominated by the Students’ Association from among the students of the institution;
- such persons, not exceeding \textbf{twelve} in number, of whom not more than one may hold an appointment in the University of Aberdeen, as may be co-opted by the University Court who will not be members of staff of the University of Aberdeen or a matriculated student, and at least four of which shall be members of the General Council of the University.
APPENDIX 3

CURRENT COMPOSITION OF COURT

The current composition of Court (28 members), in addition to those aspects such as the position of Rector which are required by legislation, is governed by Ordinance. That Ordinance, approved in 1996, states the composition of Court will be:

(a) the Rector;
(b) the Principal;
(c) an Assessor nominated by the chancellor;
(d) an Assessor nominated by the rector;
(e) Vice-principals, not exceeding three in number;
(f) an Assessor nominated by the Aberdeen City Council who shall be a member of that Council, provided always that no person may serve as such an assessor whilst he/she is a matriculated student of or holds an appointment in the University of Aberdeen;
(g) an Assessor nominated by the Aberdeenshire Council who shall be a member of that Council, provided always that no person may serve as such an assessor whilst he/she is a matriculated student of or holds an appointment in the University of Aberdeen.
(h) four Assessors elected by the General Council;
(i) six Assessors elected by the Senatus Academicus from among those of its members holding appointments in the University of Aberdeen, of whom at least two shall be readers or lecturers;
(j) the President of the Students' Representative Council;
(k) such persons, not exceeding eight in number, of whom not more than one may hold an appointment in the University of Aberdeen, as may be co-opted by the University Court.

PROPOSAL AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRENT COMPOSITION

The proposal approved by Court in October for further consultation was for a Court of 25 members as follows:

**Non-Independent Members**
- Rector
- Principal
- Two elected members of staff, one from the academic staff and one from the non-academic staff (as required by the HE Governance Act)
- Two Trade Union nominated members of staff (as required by the HE Governance Act)
- Two Student Members nominated by the Students’ Association (as required by the HE Governance Act)
- Four Senate Assessors, consisting of one Senator from each of the three Colleges, and one from the Business School.

**Independent Members**
- Senior Lay Member (elected as required by the HE Governance Act).
- Twelve independent members appointed by the Court, at least four of whom shall be members of the General Council. Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council will be invited to nominate individuals for consideration for appointment to these positions.

The implications of the proposal for the current composition of Court are:

- The removal of the position of Chancellor’s Assessor as required by the Act. The Act specifically provides for a Senior Lay Member. The position of Chancellor’s Assessor was peculiar to the Scottish Ancients and not found in most other universities.
- The removal of the position of Rector’s Assessor. The Court had noted previously the fact that the Act would increase the number of student members to two, and that at present the Rector’s Assessor could in theory be a student.
- The removal of the three positions for Vice-Principals.
- The removal of the Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council Assessor positions but with a requirement that the Court seek nominations from the two Councils for all independent vacancies.
- A reduction in the number of Senate Assessor positions from six to four, to be drawn one from each College and one from the Business School.
- The removal of General Council Assessor positions but with a requirement that a minimum of four independent members appointed by Court are members of the General Council.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SENATE AND STAFF MEMBERSHIP

Currently the Court has six Senate Assessors with current practice being to appoint two from each College. The Court can also, and currently does, choose to appoint a non-academic staff member. There are, therefore, seven non-executive staff members within the composition of 28. The Court has agreed that the addition of four further non-executive staff members without any other amendment to the composition would increase the size of Court to an unwieldy size and would not provide for an independent majority. The Court also noted that the method of election of Senate Assessors would not meet the requirements for the election of two staff members of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act.

Following extensive discussion at Court, the Senate Assessors were invited to develop a proposal. Taking into account the considerations set out earlier in this paper and the changes to the composition of Court required by the legislation, the Senate Assessors recommended a Court of 25 members with a reduction in the number of Senate Assessors from six members to four. It also recommends that practice be for the four Senate Assessors to be drawn one from each College and one from the Business School, reflecting the new academic structure (although to avoid the need for future amendment should structures change the Ordinance is drafted to specify four Senate Assessors).

The proposal means there is a reduction in the number of Senate Assessors by 2 but an overall increase in the number of staff members from 7 to 8 and therefore an increase in the proportion of staff members within the overall composition of 25. The proposal also has the effect of reducing the proportion of Senior Management members from 4 in 28 to 1 in 25. The Senate Assessors proposal was also informed by a benchmarking of academic representation on the governing bodies of other UK and international research-led universities.

GENERAL COUNCIL AND LOCAL COUNCIL ASSESSORS

One of the overriding considerations for Court has been the need to increase the proportion of members it appoints and so have greater control over the diversity and skills mix within its membership required for the effective operation of a modern university governing body, equipped to fulfil its responsibilities. The proposals to remove the four General Council Assessor positions elected by the General Council and two local authority appointed members are driven by these considerations.

The Court, however, recognises the importance of links with the alumni community and local Councils. The proposal, therefore, retains a requirement that a minimum of four independent members appointed by Court are members of the General Council and a requirement that the Court routinely seek nominations from the two local authority Councils for all independent vacancies.

With regard to the General Council membership on Court, the majority of the current independent members appointed by Court are graduates and the University routinely looks to its network of graduates for suitable candidates for Court who may be more likely to wish to ‘give something back’ to their alma mater. In recognition of that fact, of the enduring importance of links with alumni but also of the constraints of the Act on the extent to which the Court can determine its diversity and skills mix, the proposal represents a modification to the current model for alumni engagement on Court.

Appointments to the positions of independent member would be by open advertisement, with notification of vacancies to the General Council membership who would as at present continue to be a key potential pool of candidates for appointment to Court (with the exception of those members of General Council who were current staff or students and who under current rules were ineligible to stand for election).

The Business Committee would continue to represent the views of the General Council within the governance processes of the University as it currently does. The Court noted that at present General Council Assessors were, as a result of their election to Court, ex officio members of the Business
Committee of the General Council. The Court has noted, therefore, that a consequence of the change in the composition of Court would be that the General Council would need to amend its standing orders with regard to the composition of the Business Committee. The Court agreed to recommend there be the expectation that at least four of the independent members of Court, being members of the General Council, would also serve as members of the Business Committee of the General Council.

With regard to the removal of local Council Assessors, the Court has agreed that it will be important for Court to continue to proactively encourage nominations from the two local Councils for appointment. The Court has also noted that there are strong links between the Senior Management of the University and the local Council at elected member and officer level which would be maintained and would further ensure the University and the local Councils continued to work effectively in support of the North-East of Scotland.
APPENDIX 4

Motion on the proposed revised ORDINANCE of the UNIVERSITY COURT of the UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN No < > [COMPOSITION OF THE UNIVERSITY COURT] by the Senatus Academicus to be conveyed to the University Court.

Proposer: Scott Styles
Seconders: Nir Oren, Colin North, Murilo da Silva Baptista

1. Senate welcomes the proposed changes to the composition of Court in the light of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. Senate especially welcomes the retention of the position of Senate Assessor. The reduction in number of the Senate Assessors from six to four is entirely reasonable in the light of the creation of two court positions for persons directly elected by all academic staff and by the creation of two positions for persons appointed by the Trade Unions in accordance with sections 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. In the interests of consistency of terminology Senate thinks it would be desirable to use the term “assessor” to designate these Court members who are elected by staff and appointed by the trade unions. Senate also invites Court to consider whether a more elegant designation to the office described in Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 s.1 as “the senior lay member of the governing body” than the currently proposed style of “Senior Governor” might be adopted, eg “Dean of Court” as Dean is a term which has a long academic provenance as设计ating a significant leadership role.

2. Senate also notes that the University is committed to promoting gender equality wherever possible including in the composition of Court membership but that the currently proposed Ordinance makes no provision for this. Senate believes that, wherever possible, gender equality provisions be contained with the ordinance.

3. However Senate regrets the loss of the position of Assessors Elected by the General Council. Our alumni play a highly significant and important role in the life of the University. Alumni often held in terms of research collaboration, mentoring, work experience, employment, and by no means the least, in terms of funding raising, where the contribution of alumni is very significant. Given this importance Senate believes that it is highly desirable that the Alumni retain their own directly elected representatives. The appointment of 4 graduates by Court is not an adequate replace for elections as a means of encouraging the bond between Alumni and Alma Mater. However, Senate also notes that the cost of holding paper ballots is very high and therefore Senate suggests that Court maintain the position of four elected General Council Assessors but provides that they be elected by an online ballot.

4. In order to promote the above objectives Senate requests that Court amend the proposed revised ordinance 1 in the following ways (a) that Four General Assessor positions be retained, (b) that the four Senate Assessor and Four General Council assessors be composed of equal numbers of men and women and (c) in ordinance 1 (k) the number of appointed independent members be changed from 12 to 8 and that all words after “matriculated student” be deleted and replaced with a provision regarding gender equality:

The changes proposed by Court are underlined to the current ordinance are shown below underlined, the changes proposed by Senate to the proposed Ordinance are shown below in bold.

1. Part III of Schedule 1 to the said Act of 1966 shall be amended so that the composition of the Court shall be as follows:

(a) The Rector;

(b) The Principal;

(c) The Dean of Court and Senior Governor appointed in accordance with section 8 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;
(d) **Two Staff Assessors** Two persons appointed by being elected by the staff of the University from among their own number in accordance with sections 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;

(e) A **Trade Union Assessor** 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 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;

(f) A **Trade Union Assessor** 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 10-12 of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016;

(g) Four **Senate** Assessors elected by the **Senatus Academicus** from among those of its members holding appointments in the University of Aberdeen;

(h) The President of the Students' Association;

(i) from among the students of the institution, A further student representative nominated by the Students’ Association.

(k) **Independent Court Members** Such persons, not exceeding eight twelve in number as may be appointed by the University Court, who may not be members of staff of the University of Aberdeen or a matriculated student, and at least four of which shall be members of the General Council of the University;

(l) **Four General Council Assessors, two men and two women**, elected by the General Council from among the graduates of the University but who may not be paid members of staff of the University of Aberdeen or a matriculated student of the University of Aberdeen. The election shall be conducted by means of an electronic ballot.
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT

RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF NEXT SENIOR GOVERNOR

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper provides Court with update on the progress of the recruitment and appointment process for the next Senior Governor. At the time of circulation of Court papers, the process had concluded the advertisement and longlisting phase, with shortlisting due to take place during the week of 28 November and interviews on 5 December. For this reason, the recommendation of the Committee for Appointment of the Senior Governor will be tabled at the meeting of Court on 6 December 2016.

1.2 A copy of the person specification and further particulars for the role of Senior Governor that were agreed by Court are attached. Appendix 1.

1.3 The paper outlines the steps that have been taken to advertise the vacancy and to encourage diversity in applications. It also reports on the work undertaken by the recruitment consultants to identify potential candidates up to this point.

1.4 The Court is invited to:

- Note the report on the progress of the recruitment process to date;
- Note that subject to the conclusion of formal interviews of shortlisted candidates, that a recommendation for appointment if appropriate will be tabled at the Court meeting on 6 December 2016.

1.5 Further Information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary, c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, tel 01224 272094.

2 Background

2.1 In October the Court agreed that the following process for the appointment of the next Senior Governor be undertaken:

(i) To progress with the appointment of the next Senior Governor through a process that complied with current governance best practice for higher education as set out in the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, which includes the open advertisement of the vacancy and interview of candidates through a committee including staff and student members of Court;
(ii) To approve the proposed role description, person specification and advertisement for the position of Senior Governor;
(iii) That the University should engage professional recruitment consultants to support the process.

2.2 This decision was based on the understanding that the Court could follow such a process to appoint a Senior Governor (as opposed to early adoption of the electoral process set out by the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act) provided the appointment was made before the Act came into force in summer 2017.

2.3 Following the decision of Court in October, the University took forward the appointment of Saxton Bampfylde as recruitment consultants to lead on the recruitment process, which included complying with the necessary tender processes.

2.4 The Appointment Committee is:

Mr James Hall (Convener of the Appointment Committee, Convener of Governance and Nominations Committee and Independent Member of Court);
Professor Alfred Akisanya (Senate Assessor to Court and Member of Governance and Nominations Committee);
Mr Chubbe Anucha (President of the Students’ Association and Member of Governance and Nominations Committee);
Mrs Kathryn McPhail (Independent Member of Court and co-opted member of Appointment Committee);
Mrs Jenny Shirreffs (General Council Assessor to Court and Member of Governance and Nominations Committee);

3 Recruitment Process

3.1 Following their appointment in mid-October, Saxton Bampfylde undertook consultation meetings with members of Court and all members of the Appointment Committee to inform their search process. Over 160 individuals were approached by the recruitment consultants during the course of the research as both sources and candidates.

3.2 In addition to the search process taken forward by Saxton Bampfylde, as agreed by Court the following steps were undertaken:

- Advertisement of the position in the Sunday Times and Scotsman (Online).
- Advertisement through the following websites in addition to the University and Saxton Bampfylde webpages:
  - Public Appointments Scotland;
  - Women on Boards;
  - Non-Executive Directors;
- Communication to staff, students and alumni and inviting nominations for consideration;

4 Timeframe

4.1 The current Senior Governor will demit office as of 31 December 2016. The position for a new Senior Governor is tenable for a period of three years, commencing 1 January 2017. Following the commencement of new legislation for the governance of universities in Scotland, reappointment to the position for a second term will be consistent with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act.

4.2 Saxton Bampfylde were appointed on 10 October following closure of the tender cooling off period. The public advertisement and promotion of the vacancy commenced during the week of 24 October and closed on 7 November. A longlisting meeting of the Appointment Committee was held on 15 November. At the time of writing, the following meetings of the Appointment Committee are scheduled:

  Shortlisting Meeting: Tuesday 29 November 2016
  Interview of Shortlisted Candidates: Monday 5 December

5 Term of Office and Remuneration

5.1 The position is tenable for a period of three years, commencing 1 January 2017.

5.2 The time commitment is currently estimated to be some 25 to 30 days per year. It is expected that at least half of this time commitment will involve being available in person in Aberdeen, including attendance in person at a minimum of four meetings of the University Court, two meetings of the Remuneration Committee and three meetings of the Governance & Nominations Committee.

5.3 Remuneration at a daily rate of £527 is offered. Reasonable expenses will also be reimbursed in line with the University’s Expenses and Benefits Policy.
6 CHANCELLOR’S ASSESSOR AND COMPOSITION OF COURT

6.1 Currently there is no position within the composition of Court of 28 members specifically for a Senior Governor. This is instead simply a role that one of the independent members of Court is appointed to by Court. Recent practice has been that the Chancellor’s Assessor position on Court has, subject to the agreement of the Chancellor who appoints that individual to Court, been the ‘space’ within the composition of Court to which the Senior Governor is appointed or, if already a member, to which their membership translates. The individual appointed to the position of Senior Governor will, therefore, be recommended to the Chancellor for appointment as Chancellor’s Assessor. The person would, following the commencement of the proposed new composition of Court become a member of Court as Senior Governor, a position which would be formally part of the revised composition of Court

7 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

7.1 This paper is not directly relevant to any specific targets within the University’s Strategic Plan, however, the position of Senior Governor is of fundamental importance to the governance and leadership of the University in setting strategic direction and oversight of the delivery of that strategy.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The position of Senior Governor is remunerated and the estimated annual cost based on annual time commitment of 30 days is circa £15,000. The costs of the recruitment and search process, including advertising, are approximately £20k.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 The Court has previously considered the risks of the recruitment process. It approved a process that mitigated against those risks by including independent, student and staff members of Court to exercise oversight of the recruitment process and steps to ensure transparency in the promotion and advertisement of the vacancy internally and externally

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 An equality impact assessment of the role description, person specification and advertisement was previously undertaken. Adjustments were made to the wording of the person specification and advertisement to mitigate against the risk of indirect bias against women in terms of the experience required and through the proposed use of women specific professional advertising networks. Further text was added to the advertisement emphasising the diversity of the University community and promotion of the vacancy in online ethnic minority and disability networks was undertaken.

10.2 As agreed by Court, equality monitoring of applications is being undertaken. A report will be provided to Court and made publically available in keeping with the future requirements of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act.

11 SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

11.1 There are no issues to note in relation to sustainability and social responsibility.

12 RECOMMENDED ACTION

12.1 The Court is invited to:

- Note the report on the progress of the recruitment process to date;
- Note that subject to the conclusion of formal interviews of shortlisted candidates, that a recommendation for appointment if appropriate will be tabled at the Court meeting on 6 December 2016.
13 Further Information

13.1 Further Information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, University Secretary, c.inglis@abdn.ac.uk, tel 01224 272094.

15 November 2016 (V2) (Closed until appointment process is concluded)

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Appendix 1

Role

The Senior Governor is responsible for the leadership of Court, for its effectiveness, its conduct and for ensuring the University is well connected with its stakeholders, including its staff and students.

Principal Duties & Responsibilities

- Responsible for the leadership of Court and that the necessary business is carried on efficiently, effectively, and in a manner appropriate for the proper conduct of public business;
- In the absence of the Rector or with his or her agreement, to chair meetings of the Court;
- To ensure the Court exercises efficient and effective use of the resources of the University for the furtherance of its charitable purposes, 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 ensure the Court sets the strategic direction of the University, through an effective planning and risk management process, and that the performance of the University is adequately assessed against the objectives approved by the Court;
- To ensure that Court acts in accordance with the instruments of governance of the University and with the University's internal rules and regulations.

Delivery of the Role and Responsibilities

The Senior Governor plays a central role in setting and maintaining excellent standards of governance and ensuring the Court discharges its responsibilities. He or she specifically will:

- Establish a constructive and supportive but challenging working relationship with the Principal while recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management, and avoiding involvement in the day-to-day executive management of the University;
- Act fairly and impartially at all times in the interests of the University as a whole, using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate;
- Command the respect of Court and facilitate the conditions for all members to work together effectively, contributing their skills and expertise as appropriate, and will seek to build consensus among them;
- Lead the process of the appointment of the Principal;
- Be responsible for appraisal of the performance of the Principal;
- Secure the recruitment of an effective group of governors;
- Ensure that there is effective evaluation and feedback on the performance of Court, its Committees, and individual governors;
- Ensure that the Court conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

In addition, the Senior Governor will play a representative role in the life of the University, including:

- Being a member of the Scottish Committee of University Chairs;
- Generally, representing the University internally and externally with key stakeholders, including attendance at events;
• Using personal networks and influence to advance the cause of higher education generally, and 
  the University of Aberdeen in particular;

• Involvement in the promotion of philanthropic giving.

Person Specification

The successful candidate will bring the following experience:

• An individual of stature with a distinguished record of successful leadership at a senior level 
  within a large and complex public or private sector organisation, and extensive experience of 
  the legal, financial, business and risk management issues associated with such organisations;

• Experience of chairing board meetings and ensuring the smooth conduct of business;

• Professional experience or knowledge of financial and commercial decision making;

• Experience of leading or monitoring the delivery of large scale organisational change, capital or 
  IT projects;

• Extensive knowledge of corporate governance issues and standards in public life;

• Experience in the higher education or charitable sectors is desirable but not essential.

Candidates will also demonstrate the following attributes:

• The ability to identify and focus on key strategic and financial issues;

• The ability to evaluate and monitor the performance of the University in a constructively critical 
  manner, whilst mindful of the boundary between governance and management;

• A network of contacts in the business and political communities of Scotland and beyond and an 
  understanding of the environment within which the University operates;

• A commitment to furthering the values of higher education and the mission of University;

• The ability to lead and command the respect and trust of others from a wide variety of 
  backgrounds;

• A highly skilled communicator, with a proven track record of being effective at a senior executive 
  level;

• The ability to establish a challenging but constructive and effective working relationship with the 
  Principal;

• An excellent facilitator, who exercises diplomacy, sensitivity and has the ability to influence 
  outcomes and resolve conflict.
EXE
EXTERNALLY FACILITATED EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW OF COURT

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Court previously agreed that it should conduct an externally facilitated review of its effectiveness. The terms of reference for the review that were previously agreed by the Court are provided below. Subsequent to that decision, the University took forward a tender process for the appointment of the external facilitator and recently appointed the Good Governance Institute to lead the process. This paper provides Court with an update on the expected process that will be undertaken by the Good Governance Institute.

1.2 The review will comprise:
- Semi-structured interviews with all members of Court, members of Senior Management and other stakeholders;
- A 360° effectiveness review survey and skills audit of members of Court;
- Observation by the Good Governance Institute of the 6 December meeting of Court and selected other key committees;
- A review of the Court’s key governance documentation and procedures.

A report will be presented to the meeting of Court on 28 March 2017 for discussion.

1.3 The Court is invited to note the paper and that representatives of the Good Governance Institute will be observing the meeting on 6 December.

Further Information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, Secretary to the University or Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Main Principle 16 of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance outlines the requirement for effectiveness reviews. Compliance with the principles of the Code is a condition of Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funding. Main Principle 16 reads:

"The governing body shall keep its effectiveness under annual review. Normally not less than every five years, it shall undertake an externally-facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness, and that of its committees, and ensure that a parallel review is undertaken of the senate/academic board and its committees. Effectiveness shall be assessed both against the Statement of Primary Responsibilities and compliance with this Code. The governing body shall, where necessary, revise its structure or processes, and shall require the senate/academic board of its Institution to revise its structure and processes accordingly."

3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 This paper is not directly relevant to any specific objectives or targets within the University’s Strategic Plan however effective governance underpins the successful achievement of the University’s Strategic Objectives.

4 TERMS OF REFERENCE

4.1 The terms of reference agreed by the Court for the review are as follows:

The Court has over the past three years considered in depth a range of governance issues in response to the new Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. These reviews have focused on ‘compliance’ or ‘processes and procedures’ and a consideration of the size and composition of Court which is now being revisited separately in light of the HE Governance Act. Given the extent of these past reviews and the ongoing review of the size of Court the scope of the Court
effectiveness review should be restricted to focus on the outcomes of an effective governing body and the ‘value added’.

The overall objective of the review is to evaluate against governance best practice the effectiveness of the Court as a governing body and to make any recommendations for improvement. The review will focus on the outcomes of effectiveness and how the Court ‘adds value’. Specific issues for consideration may include:

- The effectiveness of Court in meeting its responsibilities for strategy and monitoring institutional performance.
- The distinction between governance and management in the operation of the Court and the need for constructive challenge by the governing body is understood and accepted by both members and the executive, and is undertaken both appropriately and effectively.
- The engagement of Court and its members with the wider University community of staff and students.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The costs of the review are being met from existing budgets. The appointment of GGI followed a competitive tender process. Value for money was a key criteria in evaluation of the tenders.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The undertaking of a review is a key part of the University's governance arrangements and will meet the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, mitigating against the risk of non-compliance with an SFC condition of grant.

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Any issues relating to Equality and Diversity will be covered within the scope of the review.

8 SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

8.1 Not applicable.

9 RECOMMENDED ACTION

9.1 The Court is invited to note the paper and that representatives of the Good Governance Institute will be observing the meeting on 6 December.

10 FURTHER INFORMATION

10.1 Further Information is available from Mrs Caroline Inglis, Secretary to the University or Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court.

Mr Bruce Purdon
Clerk to the Court
21 November 2016 (V1) (Open)
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

SUMMARY REPORT OF GOVERNOR APPRAISAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper reports on the responses to the Governor Appraisal Questionnaire. The paper is for information. The paper was originally provided to an earlier meeting of Court but members requested an opportunity to discuss the outcome of the questionnaire.

1.2 The questionnaire was issued in early August to the 24 non-executive members of Court in office during 2015/16 with a response date of 19 August, with reminders and an extension issued to Friday 26 August. (17 of the 24 Members completed the Questionnaire). Members were asked to answer a series of statements on their role, Court procedures, and Governor Development by using a ranking from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

1.3 A summary of responses, including comparison with 2015, 2013 and 2012, is enclosed. (Note: It was agreed in 2013 to move to a biennial questionnaire, hence there is no data for 2014). In overall terms one question Q B1 had an average rounded score of less than 4, while Q B6 was scored 3.5. There were five further questions where the average before rounding was below 4 and these are discussed further below at section 2.

1.4 The key issues that have been highlighted by the responses overall relate to:

1) Agenda management and effective conduct of Court business/discussion. This is evidenced by the responses and comments to Questions B1, B2 and B5.
2) Whether there are adequate opportunities for Court members to meet and canvass opinion with one another. Q B6

1.5 Further issues that were noted from individual responses are set out at section 3. Although not a consistent issue, a small number of members felt that Court papers were too long and that the information was not always summarised and presented as effectively as it could be. The University will consider options to improve the presentation of information to Court and ensure the issues raised are also considered as part of the externally facilitated effectiveness review of Court.

1.6 Any issues raised by governors which relate to them specifically and which are considered to need further discussion will be brought to the attention of the Senior Governor as appropriate.

1.7 Further information is available from Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Committee, b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk 01224 273949

2 KEY GENERIC ISSUES

2.1 One question had an average rounded score of less than 4 being B1 (score of 3.1), while B6 was very close to having an average rounded score of less than 4 (score of 3.5). There were five further questions with an average before rounding of less than 4. These were:

A5 3.9
B2 3.6
B3 3.9
B5 3.7
B7 3.8

2.2 B1 The Court uses its time effectively – time available is allocated to the most important issues.

2.2.1 Av Score was 3.1, with 12% disagree/strongly disagree with the statement, 24% agree/strongly agree with the statement. The average score in 2015 was 3.6 and 3.8 in 2013.
2.2.2 A significant number of members expressed the view that the time for discussion of key issues at meetings of Court had been inadequate. A number of members felt the agendas were crowded. Some members questioned the need for a presentation at the start of the meeting and felt this time early in the agenda would be better focused on key issues, with a presentation (if at all), held later in the agenda. A number of members highlighted the importance of the role of the Chair in regard to time management of the agenda and in managing the number of members contributing to discussion of agenda items. Some also felt members themselves had to focus the contributions they made to discussions. These issues were also referred to in responses to QB2 and QB4.

2.3 B6 There are adequate opportunities to meet and canvass opinion with fellow Court members.

2.3.1 Av Score was 3.5, with 12% disagree/strongly disagree with the statement, 59% agree/strongly agree with the statement. The average score in 2015 was 3.6 and 3.7 in 2013.

2.3.2 The outcome is broadly similar with 2015 and 2013 but remains one of the lowest scoring sections of the questionnaire and has not improved although the score in 2012 was 3.1. However only two members disagreed with the statement. While only a few members added comments, it was not clear whether members simply had no view positive or negative on this question, felt there should be more opportunities provided by the University, or as some comments suggested, this was a statement that members did not currently engage extensively with one another on issues privately or by e-mail outside of meetings. Some members noted that their location limits their opportunities to meet in person.

2.3.3 It should be noted that in response to the 2013 result in relation to this question, the University sought the views of Court members on how best to facilitate further opportunities for members to interact and as a result it was agreed to introduce Court visits or tours in the afternoons following meetings. As is discussed further below, the uptake of these tours has been low and consideration might be given as to whether these continue or are instead replaced with a social event for non-executive members the evening before meetings of Court.

2.4 A5 I have a sufficient understanding of the key strategic issues facing the University and the Court is adequately informed of progress against these to enable me to undertake my role as a Court member effectively.

2.4.1 Av Score was 3.9, with 0% disagree/strongly disagree with the statement, 71% agree/strongly agree with the statement. The average score in 2015 was 4.0 and 4.3 in 2013.

2.4.2 The outcome is very close to 2015 with 79% of responses agreeing with the statement and no respondents disagreeing.

2.5 B2 The issues I feel are important are discussed at meetings of Court.

2.5.1 Av Score was 3.6, with 6% disagree/strongly disagree with the statement, 65% agree/strongly agree with the statement. The average score in 2015 was 3.9 and 4.1 in 2013.

2.5.2 While the outcome is similar to 2015 many members linked their responses to this question with their responses to B1 in the sense that because of issues with time management of the Court agenda, discussion of important issues on the agenda has been insufficient.

2.6 B3 The need for constructive challenge is understood and accepted by both governors and the executive.

2.6.1 Av Score was 3.9, with 6% disagree/strongly disagree with the statement, 76% agree/strongly agree with the statement. The average score in 2015 was 3.8 and 4.3 in 2013.

2.6.2 The score has improved marginally on 2015 and the majority of responses agreed with the statement and only one disagreed.
2.7 **B5** The meetings and business of Court are effectively conducted and in a way which encourages an appropriate degree of transparency and engagement and in which I have confidence.

2.7.1 Av Score was 3.7, with 6% disagree/strongly disagree with the statement, 71% agree/strongly agree with the statement. The average score in 2015 was 4.0 and 4.4 in 2013.

2.7.2 Many of the comments made with regard to this statement were linked back to responses to B1 with regard to how meetings were conducted and agenda management.

2.8 **B7** There are adequate opportunities to see management in action and to assess performance.

2.8.1 AV Score 3.8, 6% disagree/strongly disagree, 65% agree/strongly agree. The average score in 2015 was 3.6 and 4.1 in 2013.

2.8.2 The score has improved on 2015 and as only a few members provided comments with regard to this question it is difficult to offer insight into whether there are issues to be considered further. The majority of responses agreed with the statement and only one disagreed.

3 **Further Issues for Consideration**

3.1 A number of individual points were noted in the comments sections from members including:

- One member felt Court should move to full use of an electronic board papers system and stop circulating printed papers.
- Format of papers – three members felt the papers for Court were too long and two members felt they did not always effectively summarise key information for members. One member suggested that presenters should present only key information in bullet point format in a powerpoint slide, supported by shorter papers with an appropriate executive summary and the decision the Court was being asked to make.
- One member was concerned that only a very small number of members took up the visits to academic departments that were organised to coincide with Court and the impression this formed with staff.

4 **Next Steps and Follow Up Actions**

4.1 It is suggested that the issues raised should inform the forthcoming effectiveness review of Court and any recommendations it may make.

4.2 The issue of agenda and time management at Court meetings was, however, a consistent concern and the University will review the structure of the Court agendas. The Rector has been briefed on the issues that have been raised. A further option would be to extend the duration of meetings of Court.

4.3 The University will also consider how it can shorten papers and improve the presentation of key information for governors.

4.4 Other actions that could be taken forward are:

- Invite Court to consider whether in principle it would wish to cease using hard copy papers and move to the use of electronic board paper systems.
- Introduce a social event before each meeting of Court, potentially the evening before meetings, either for all members of Court or for non-executive members of Court.
- Discontinue the practice of arranging tours of academic areas after each meeting of Court.

5 **Resource Implications**

5.1 Not applicable at this stage.

6 **Risk Management**

6.1 Not applicable.
7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Not required.

8 SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

8.1 Not required.

9 RECOMMENDED ACTION

9.1 The paper is for information.

10 FURTHER INFORMATION

10.1 Available from Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Committee, b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk 01224 273949

Mr Bruce Purdon
Clerk to the Court
21 November 2016 (V1) (Open)

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 I have a clear understanding of my individual responsibilities as a Court Member.</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 I have a clear understanding of how my role as a Court member differs from that of management.</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 I have sufficient opportunities to contribute to the development of the University's strategy.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 I have a sufficient understanding of the key strategic issues facing the University and the Court is adequately informed of progress against these to enable me to undertake my role as a Court member effectively.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION B: COURT PROCEDURES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1 The Court uses its time effectively - time available is allocated to the most important issues.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 The issues I feel are important are discussed at meetings of Court.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3 The need for constructive challenge is understood and accepted by both governors and the executive.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4 There is appropriate opportunity to participate in discussion at Court meetings</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5 The meetings and business of Court are effectively conducted and in a way which encourages an appropriate degree of transparency and engagement and in which I have confidence.</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6 There are adequate opportunities to meet and canvass opinion with fellow Court members.</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7 There are adequate opportunities to see management in action and to assess performance.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B8 There is effective communication with Court members.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B9 I am encouraged to actively engage in the business and life of the University outside of Court meetings.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION C: GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 My individual training or development needs in support of my role as a governor are being met.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 My skills and expertise are being used effectively by the University either on Court, within the wider committee structure or through other means.</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† No Questionnaire was issued in 2014
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER - UPDATE

CONSIDERATION BY OPERATING BOARD

1.1 At its meeting on 15 November, the Board received a Strategic Risk Register Update.

1.2 The Board noted that the paper provided an update on management of the University’s ten strategic risk areas, in line with the University’s commitment to report to Court via Operating Board on a biannual basis.

1.3 Three risks were highlighted as either having a high (over 18) net score or having increased significantly in score since the previous reporting period.

   These were noted to be:
   • Financial Sustainability
   • Internationalisation
   • Student Recruitment

1.4 The Board agreed that these risks were the areas of highest priority.
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This paper provides Court with an update on management of the University's ten high-level strategic risks, which make up the new institutional Strategic Risk Register.

1.2 The report provides a general update on risk, with key points to note, before focusing on the Strategic Risk Register, which has recently been updated following a comprehensive review undertaken by Risk Owners and Managers. The report gives the current risk score for each strategic risk, benchmarked against the risk scores set in May during the previous reporting round. For risks where there has been a significant increase in score, or where the score sits on or above 18 (the tolerance threshold for reporting) additional information is provided.

1.3 Further information can be obtained from Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk; ext. 3792) or Iain Grant, Policy Advisor (i.grant@abdn.ac.uk; ext.2776).

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 In January 2016, the University Management Group (UMG) and the University's Audit Committee agreed a change of approach to risk management across the University. This involved developing a new Strategic Risk Register with the creation of ten, high-level strategic risks, designed to reflect priorities outlined in the institutional Strategic Plan 2015-2020, by focusing on the key areas of University business considered most critical to its success.

2.2 Audit Committee (via UMG) and University Court (via Operating Board) each received an initial report on the new risk management arrangements in June 2016. The report submitted to each body included a copy of the agreed risk scores for each new strategic risk. It was agreed that reports would be submitted to each of these groups bi-annually, in both June and December each year. The level of detail submitted to each group would vary as appropriate.

3. **GENERAL UPDATE – KEY POINTS TO NOTE**

3.1 Variants of this report were taken to the University's Senior Management Team (SMT) (25 October 2016), Audit Committee (3 November) and Operating Board (15 November). Both SMT and Audit Committee also received additional information; SMT received a copy of the full institutional Risk Register, and Audit Committee received full details on each risk judged to be on or over the reporting threshold. Each of these groups was content with the University's management of these risks to date.

3.2 In addition to the new Strategic Risk Register, the University has also developed a new Risk Management Framework to reflect the wider changes made to its overarching approach to risk management. The Framework was considered and endorsed by UMG in September 2016, and replaces the previous institutional Risk Management Policy and Guidelines, which are now superseded. The Framework will serve as an institutional reference point, and as its principal guide to risk management, and it will apply to Schools, Professional Services, and on capital projects. A copy of the Framework can be accessed at the following link: [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/Risk_Management_Framework_Complete_Final_Version.pdf](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/Risk_Management_Framework_Complete_Final_Version.pdf).

3.3 At School level, the risk management process will be fully integrated as part of the School planning process, with risk registers designed to align with and support delivery of the key objectives listed in School plans. Over course of December and January, colleagues from the Directorate of Planning will be meeting with each Head of School and School Admin Officer to advise on the implementation of new risk management arrangements at School level. This will require Schools to revise previous risk registers to reflect School plans, using the new institutional...
template. Schools will be expected to manage risk via School Executive Committees, reporting via the School planning process, as noted above.

3.4 Across Professional Services, all units will be asked to transfer their existing risk registers into the new template, and to continue using risk management as a standard management tool, taking care to ensure that all risks identified at operational level align with the relevant strategic risks.

4. **Strategic Context**

4.1 The University’s ten strategic risk areas are aligned with, and designed to support delivery of the objectives which underpin the institutional Strategic Plan (2015-2020).

5. **Strategic Risk Register**

5.1 Table 1, below, lists the ten strategic risks (in alphabetical order), and shows both previous and current net risk scores. This makes for ease of identifying which risks have breached the Reporting Threshold; defined in the Risk Management Framework as the point at which further information must be given outlining why the increase in Risk Score has occurred, and what mitigating actions have been taken in response. The Reporting Threshold is breached when a risk score has either increased significantly (meaning both impact and likelihood have increased by at least one), or where the current/net risk score sits at 18 or above. As shown in Table 1, this currently applies to three risks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Risk Area</th>
<th>April 2016 Net Score</th>
<th>Oct 2016 Net Score</th>
<th>Significant Score Increase / Threshold Breach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equality and diversity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial sustainability</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Yes (stable but on tolerance threshold of 18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and Core Business Risks</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Sustainability</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes (over 18 and likelihood increased by one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Performance and Impact</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Recruitment and Retention</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Experience</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Recruitment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes (impact up from 3 to 5, likelihood 5, down from 6 which was previously too high)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Table 2, below, provides a brief narrative for each of the three risks identified above, for which there has been either a significant increase in score since the previous reporting period, or where the net score exceeds the tolerance threshold of 18. The table states in-brief why the risk score is high or has significantly increased, and it also highlights key mitigating actions.
### Table 2: Management of High-Scoring Risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Area</th>
<th>Reason for High or Increased Score</th>
<th>Mitigating actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Financial Sustainability| The retained net score of 18 is due to ongoing uncertainty within the financial environment, linked to student-based income, SFC funding, the potential impact of Brexit, and external factors outwith University control. | • Undertake full appraisal of potential impact of Brexit and develop mitigating actions;  
  • Undertake full appraisal of potential impact of cuts to SFC funding and develop mitigating actions;  
  • Finalise 10-year capital plan & cash-flow to demonstrate & underpin long-term financial sustainability;  
  • Continued programme of identifying operational efficiencies and business improvement savings.                                                                 |
| Internationalisation    | This is attributed to falling short of international student recruitment targets, notably for PGTs.                                                                                                                                 | • Continue to explore and support work in new markets, like Egypt, based on return of the 2015/16 activity.  
  • Continue to build on the work done in China, notably improved servicing of agent network & expanded events attendance. Also launch alumni mentoring scheme, as part of the establishment of the alumni chapter  
  • Expand 1-2-1 English language support programme to support conversion activity.  
  • Embed new Study Abroad partnerships in both USA & China.                                                                                                                                  |
| Student Recruitment     | Student recruitment at PGT and PGR level has not been in line with expectations. In addition, there is increased uncertainty on the potential impact of Brexit on student recruitment, notably for Home/EU. | • Undertake full appraisal of potential impact of Brexit and develop mitigating actions;  
  • Develop individual strategies and plans for student recruitment according to student categories, i.e. Home/EU, RUK, International;  
  • In relation to the above, develop detailed marketing plans for PGR and PGT students.                                                                                                        |

6. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

6.1 Court is invited to:
- Consider this report and to pass comment as appropriate.

7. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

7.1 Further information can be obtained from Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning ([hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk)) or Iain Grant, Policy Advisor ([i.grant@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:i.grant@abdn.ac.uk@abdn.ac.uk)).

IG/Planning/2 November 2016

[17 November 2016] [1] [Open]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previously considered by</td>
<td>25 October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>3 November 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit Committee</td>
<td>15 November 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further approval required</td>
<td>6 December 2016</td>
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</table>
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT FROM THE OPERATING BOARD

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report summarises items considered at the meetings of the Operating Board held on 18 October and 15 November 2016, including:

- An update on the Contextual Environment of Higher Education, from the Principal;
- Student Recruitment, including plans to balance the student population in future years;
- Financial Planning, including:
  - The Annual Report and Accounts for 2015/16
  - The Budget for 2016/17
  - Restructuring Exercise Updates
  - Management Reporting;
- Staffing Updates;
- Reports from the Capital Programme Management Committee;
- Updates on the Korea Campus Project.

1.2 The following items were also presented to the Board and papers on these matters are included elsewhere on today’s agenda along with a summary of the Board’s discussion of these:

- Health and Safety: Updates on Accidents and Incidents;
- Risk Management: Strategic Risk Register Update
- Transnational Education: Partnership Activity in Africa

1.3 All of the papers referred to in the report are available on request from the Clerk to the Operating Board.

1.4 Court is invited to note the items discussed by the Operating Board at its recent meetings.

1.5 Further information is available from Mrs Ruth MacLure, Clerk to the Operating Board (telephone 01224 273239; email r.m.maclure@abdn.ac.uk).

2. **CONTEXTUAL ENVIRONMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**


3. **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

3.1 In October, the Board received an update on Student Admissions for 2016/17 (OB16:19). This was followed in November by a report on the Student Population 2016/17 (OB16:28) when the Director of Planning was in attendance to present an analysis of the student population at the end of the third week of teaching and the impact on budgets.

3.2 The Board noted the key points of the report as follows:

- The overall student population had grown by 1.4% in line with plans
- The Undergraduate (UG) population had grown by 3.2%
- The Postgraduate Research (PGR) population had decreased by 5.5%
The Postgraduate Taught (PGT) population had decreased by 5.1%
Whilst the full-time population had grown by 1.7%, the part-time population had decreased by 8.8% overall
The proportion of EU students had decreased for PGT and PGR but increased at UG level
The UG population was within Funding Council limits for the full-time Scots/EU population, but under-enrolment was forecast in the following controlled subjects:
  - Clinical Dentistry
  - Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) Primary
  - PGDE Secondary
The movement in the student population had created a fee shortfall of £2.1m and the intention was to mitigate this shortfall by targeted reduction in Professional Services and School budgets.

4. Population Planning

4.1 In November, two further papers were presented to the Board, on the University's Undergraduate Student Population Planning Strategy for 2017/18 (OB16:29) and on the strategy for the recruitment of UK and EU undergraduates (OB16:30). The Board approved the recommendations made in the papers to ensure that the University would achieve its strategic recruitment targets by 2020.

4.2 The Board requested further information on the relationship between entry tariff and retention, to be presented to a future meeting.

Financial Planning

5. Annual Report and Accounts

5.1 In November, the Board received the Director of Finance's Commentary on the Annual Accounts 2015/16 (OB16:32) and the draft Financial Review section of the Annual Report and Accounts 2015/16 (OB16:33), noting that the documents had been subject to robust scrutiny at the Audit Committee on 3 November.

5.2 The Board noted a summary of the financial position as stated in the 2015/16 Annual Accounts, noting that this was the first year in which the accounts had been prepared under Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 and the revised Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

5.3 Noting the intention to make further amendments to the presentation of the document, the Board accepted the recommendation of the Audit Committee that the Annual Report and Accounts proceed to Court.

6. Budget Update 2016/17

6.1 The Board received a Budget Update 2016/17 (OB16:36) at its November meeting.

6.2 The Board noted an analysis of the projected outturn for 2016/17 against budget. There was a forecast shortfall in academic fees and School-specific savings; equivalent savings had been identified within School budgets, Professional Services and other budget items.

6.3 The Board queried whether it was sustainable for the University to continue to make savings when so many cuts had already been made. In response, the Principal reported the potential for further efficiencies while improving effectiveness. This was to be achieved through work with other partners and some of the resultant savings were to be reinvested in priority areas.

6.4 A member of the Board recommended that pensions should not be treated as exceptional items within the University's budget, as they were part of the University’s costs. The Board noted that it had already requested an update on pensions for presentation to its February meeting.
7. **Restructuring Exercise**

7.1 The Board received updates on the Restructuring Exercise within the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition (OB16:21 and OB16:34).

7.2 The Board noted that following confirmation of the savings achieved via voluntary severance, it was determined that compulsory redundancies would be required. At the time of the November meeting, out of an original 23 members of staff identified as being at risk of redundancy, six members of staff were still in this position after mitigation activities by management in the College of Life Sciences and Medicine. The Board commended continuing efforts to offer suitable alternative employment to these individuals.

8. **Management Reporting**

8.1 The Board had received the Year End Monthly Management Reports (MMRs) by separate circulation, and in October were invited by the Director of Finance to submit suggestions of areas for inclusion in future MMRs.

8.2 In November, the Board noted proposals to refine the production and presentation of management information for senior management, Governors and third parties. The Board agreed the need to concentrate on the provision of key information which would add value to decision-making processes.

9. **Staffing Updates**

9.1 The Board received a Staffing Update at each meeting (OB16:20 and OB16:31).

9.2 The Board noted that:

- A 24 hour helpline was now available to staff.
- The Mental Health Strategy had been launched on 9 November 2016.
- The School of Natural and Computing Sciences had been awarded Athena SWAN Bronze accreditation in September 2016, and the institutional submission was on track.
- National pay negotiations were ongoing. The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) had confirmed that its members had voted in favour of action short of a strike, but with only 26 members within the University this was not expected to have significant impact.
- The University was taking forward a review of Technical Staff in partnership with colleagues from Unite, the technical staff trade union.

10. **Capital Programme**

10.1 The Board received and considered a report from the Capital Programme Management Committee (CPMC) (OB16:37).

10.2 The Board noted that land sales at the former Rowett estate were critical to the future funding of capital projects, but that market conditions were not currently in the University’s favour. The Board considered that this risk should be flagged to the Audit Committee.

11. **10-Year Capital Investment Programme**

11.1 The Board received an advanced draft of the update intended for Court in December on development of the 10-year Capital Investment Programme (OB16:38).
11.2 The Board noted that the paper recommended immediate initiation of the Science Teaching Hub Project and included proposals for the prioritisation and sequencing of other projects, including the University’s Digital Strategy. The paper included a breakdown of projected costs for the programme and a return on investment calculation for the Science Teaching Hub project. Project Brief documentation was also provided within the appendices for the Science Teaching Hub and Law School relocation projects.

11.3 The Board queried detail within the cash flow documentation and sought further information on the University’s plans for the capital repayment of leases. It was agreed to include a Board member in further development of these aspects of the paper.

11.4 The Principal indicated that the University would take a view outside of the meeting on whether or not to proceed to Court in December with an updated proposal. The Convener queried the implications of delay and the Board noted that the University intended to progress the implementation of its Digital Strategy but would take the opportunity to reflect on other aspects of the Investment Programme, including the funding strategy.

11.5 The Board took the opportunity to congratulate the University on its Large Institution Award in the Built Environment category of the Green Gown Awards (which recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives by universities and colleges across the UK) for the Rocking Horse Nursery building.

INTERNATIONALISATION

12. KOREA CAMPUS PROJECT

12.1 The Board received updates on the Korea Campus Project (OB16:23 in October and an oral update from the Vice Principal for Internationalisation in November).

12.2 In October, the Board noted that a recent visit to the Korea Campus by the Vice Principal had provided the opportunity to take stock of the state of readiness of the campus and to better understand the general economic and industrial position in Korea. It had been concluded that the current timetable was unrealistic and that further information was required on the viability of the proposed offering in the current economic climate. The Vice Principal was in discussion with the Korean authorities and the University’s Korean partners to propose an alternative delivery plan, in order to best ensure the long-term success of the project. The Board agreed that this strategy was appropriate and looked forward to receiving a further update on progress at its next meeting.

12.3 In November, The Board noted that the University awaited details of the restructuring of the Korean shipbuilding industry, upon which course provision had been predicated. The Vice Principal had written directly to the Korean Ministry and the University’s Korean partners to seek face to face discussion of matters which required clarification before the project could progress.

12.4 The Board noted that the Korean authorities had indicated that they were content with the proposal to delay opening of the campus. The University was proactively developing alternative plans to commence activity in the region.

12.5 The Board agreed the need to set an end date, by which time certainty should be achieved from the Korean authorities. An appropriate date was agreed to be 31 December 2016.

13. RECOMMENDED ACTION

13.1 Court is invited to note the items discussed by the Operating Board at its recent meetings.
14. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

14.1 Further information is available from Mrs Ruth MacLure, Clerk to the Operating Board (telephone 01224 273239; email r.m.maclure@abdn.ac.uk)

22 November 2016 Version 1 (Open)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Board/Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Previously considered by</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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</table>
SUMMARY

This paper brings together reports to Court from sub-committees that have met recently. The unconfirmed minutes of all meetings are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

This report will be treated as routine business and is not proposed for discussion unless members request otherwise and notify the Clerk one clear day in advance of the meeting.

For Information

The following Committee reports are included for information:

13.1 Audit Committee
13.2 University Committee on Teaching and Learning
13.3 Partnership, Negotiating & Consultative Committee
13.4 Student Experience Committee
13.5 Research Policy Committee

Further Information

Further information is available from Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, Tel.: 01224 273949 or b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper reports on business considered at the most recent meetings of the Audit Committee held on 29 September and 3 November 2016. The paper is for information. The unconfirmed minutes of these meetings are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

1.2 The Audit Committee received five Internal Audit Reports, as detailed at 2 below. Four reports were graded Medium Risk overall by the Internal Auditor, while the other one was graded Low Risk.

1.3 In September, the Committee received and approved a new Risk Management Framework, followed in November by an updated Strategic Risk Register.

1.4 In September, the Committee received an update on the progress of the OneSource projects, followed in November by the Internal Auditor's report on the Student Lifecycle Project Post-Project Evaluation (2.5 below refers).

1.5 The Committee maintained an interest in actions taken following the whistleblowing case involving the Aberdeen University Students’ Association (AUSA).

1.6 In November, the Committee received an update from the University on the implementation of recommendations made in the High Risk Internal Review of Freedom of Information Governance and Procedures.

1.7 At the November meeting, the Committee received the Annual Accounts for 2015-16 alongside Annual Reports from the Internal and External Auditors and its own Annual Committee report. These appear in a separate section of the Court agenda.

1.8 Further information may be obtained from Mrs Ruth MacLure, Clerk to the Audit Committee (01224) 273239 or r.m.maclure@abdn.ac.uk.

For Information

2. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

The Audit Committee received and approved Internal Audit Reports, as follows:

2.1 Internal Audit Review of Key Financial Processes: Treasury Management

2.1.1 The Committee received the Internal Audit Review of Key Financial Processes: Treasury Management from PwC, the Internal Auditor.

2.1.2 The Committee noted that the report had received an overall rating of Medium Risk and contained three Medium and three Low Risk recommendations. The Medium Risk findings concerned: inconsistent use of bank reconciliations; cash flow preparation and review; and over-reliance on a single member of staff.
2.2 Internal Audit Review of Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) Annual Reporting

2.2.1 The Committee received the Internal Audit Review of Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) Annual Reporting from PwC.

2.2.2 The report had received an overall rating of Low Risk and contained one Medium Risk and one Low Risk recommendation. The Medium Risk recommendation concerned a lack of reconciliation of source data to input data.

2.3 Internal Audit Review of External Relations

2.3.1 The Committee received the Internal Audit Review of External Relations from PwC.

2.3.2 The report had received an overall rating of Medium Risk and contained three Medium Risk and three Low Risk recommendations. The Medium Risk recommendations concerned: the need for greater collaboration in order for the strategy to be effective; a lack of clear and measurable targets within External Relations’ operational plans; and a lack of monitoring against delivery of the External Relations Strategy.

2.4 Internal Audit Review of Institution and School Strategic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

2.4.1 The Committee received the Internal Audit Review of Institution and School Strategic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from PwC.

2.4.2 The report had received an overall rating of Medium Risk and contained one High Risk and one Medium Risk recommendation. These concerned: an inefficient and manual-intensive KPI measurement system; and high reliance on one member of staff to collate and analyse data.

2.5 Internal Audit Review of OneSource Programme: Student Lifecycle Project Post-Project Evaluation

2.5.1 The Committee received the Internal Audit Review of the OneSource Programme: Student Lifecycle Project Post-Project Evaluation from PwC.

2.5.2 The Committee noted that the report had received an overall rating of Medium Risk and contained two Medium and one Low Risk recommendations. The Medium Risk findings concerned: (1) a lack of monitoring of progress against expected benefits and Key Performance Indicators: and (2) an ineffective plan to respond to excessive user queries during course selection.

2.5.3 The Committee noted that the University had learned from the problems experienced in the first year, leading to an improved experience for new entrants in 2016. However, a different set of issues had arisen in respect of timetable clashes affecting second year students. These problems had been resolved and would not affect the next cohort of students.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 Having received and approved the Risk Management Framework in September, in November the Committee received and approved an update on management of the University’s ten high-level strategic risks, prior to the six-monthly risk management report to Court.

3.2 The Committee noted that the report provided an overview of all ten strategic risk areas plus detail of those risks which had breached the agreed reporting threshold i.e. where a risk score had either increased significantly (both impact and likelihood had increased by at least one) or where the current / net risk score was 18 or above.
3.3 The Committee noted that Internationalisation and Student Recruitment were the two highest-scoring risks and requested further information on the University’s efforts to improve in these areas. The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from the Vice Principal for Internationalisation at its next meeting, to include Student Recruitment and Transnational Education activity.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVIOUS INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Committee continued to receive reports to monitor progress of the implementation of previous Internal Audit recommendations, with particular reference to “High Risk” reports.

4.2 AUSA

4.2.1 The Audit Committee noted that a new Chief Executive of AUSA had taken up appointment and was aware of the background. Incoming sabbatical officers had received training. The University Secretary had withheld the AUSA disbursement, pending receipt of financial reports. Final year-end management accounts for the Students’ Association had not yet been received by the University.

4.2.2 In November, the Committee requested receipt of the AUSA Accounts at its next meeting in January 2017.

4.3 FOI

4.3.1 The Committee received updates from the University on the Review of Freedom of Information Governance and Procedures.

4.3.2 In November, the Committee noted the recent appointment of a new University Data Protection Officer who was to lead in the area of Freedom of Information. The University’s performance level had now reached a level deemed “good”, using the Scottish Information Commissioner’s self-assessment tool.

4.3.3 The Committee requested a further update at its next meeting.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no immediate resource implications arising from the content of this paper.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Risk Management is considered within the context of each Internal Audit Review. The Committee has a standing responsibility to monitor Risk management arrangements and section 3 above details its recent consideration of the new approach to risk management and reporting.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Not applicable.

8. SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

8.1 There are no environmental, ethical or social implications or impacts of this paper.

9. RECOMMENDED ACTION

9.1 The Court is invited to note the report of business considered at the most recent meetings of the Audit Committee held on 29 September and 3 November 2016.
10. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

10.1 Further information may be obtained from Mrs Ruth MacLure, Clerk to the Audit Committee (01224) 273239 or r.m.maclure@abdn.ac.uk

11 November 2016 [version 1] [Open]

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT

REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper provides a short update for information on the main items of business considered by the University Committee on Teaching & Learning (UCTL) at the meetings held on 28 September and 13 October 2016, which may be of interest to the University Court. These focus on the introduction of a Support for Study Policy, degree classification, UK student recruitment and various items related to collaborative provision. The draft Minutes of the meeting are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

1.2 This paper is for information. No action is required.

1.3 Further information may be obtained from Rachael Bernard, Deputy Academic Registrar (01224) 273388 or r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk

FOR INFORMATION

2. SUPPORT FOR STUDY

2.1 The Committee approved and agreed to forward to Senate a new Support for Study Policy which it is intended will sit alongside existing disciplinary procedures. The Policy outlines the University's approach to supporting students who may be struggling with their studies due to health issues.

3. Degree Classification

3.1 The University Committee on Teaching & Learning (UCTL) approved, for its part, a proposal to extend the practise of using both the Grade Spectrum and Grade Point Average systems for degree classification for two further academic years. Members of the Committee noted that as a consequence of some courses not yet using the new Common Grading Scale (CGS) in its entirety, it would be difficult to ensure that students would not be disadvantaged by use of only the new Grade Point Average system. The Committee noted concern as to the resource implications of classifying using two systems for two further academic years; the Committee noted that the Postgraduate Committee were of the view that continuing to use two systems was not necessary for postgraduate taught students. The Committee, however, agreed that until the CGS was being used fully, classification using both methods would be required to ensure that no students were being disadvantaged.

3.2 UCTL agreed to recommended that the Senate be asked to approve the recommendation that the Dual Classification of degrees continues for a further two academic years

4. UG ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND HOME FEES RECRUITMENT

4.1 The Committee discussed proposals regarding Undergraduate entry requirements and home fees recruitment, specifically regarding the proposed publication of minimum and typical entry requirements.

4.2 The Committee noted the concerns regarding the UK's exit from the European Union and the potential effect this could have on undergraduate recruitment. The Committee noted that EU students currently have the same fundable status as Scottish students, however, as the Scottish Government may change this, the University must take action in regards to its recruitment strategy of Scottish students. The Committee noted the uncertainty posed by Brexit and the
University’s statement that for academic year 2016/17 EU fee status will remain equitable to home fee status but such status cannot be confirmed for future years.

4.3 The Committee noted their agreement regarding the publication of minimum and typical entry requirements as proposed.

5. Delivery Partners

5.1 The Committee received the proposed handbook in respect of National and International Delivery Partner activity. The Committee, for its part, approved the handbook and agreed that it should be passed to the Senate for approval.

6. Collaborative Provision: Transnational Education International (TNE)

6.1 The Committee received the report in respect of a University led visit to Lancaster University Ghana (LUG) in addition to a cover paper providing background information regarding the University’s proposed relationship with a delivery partner to deliver transnational education. The Committee noted the work of the panel in observing how LUG operated, the quality of the infrastructure on-site and meeting with staff and students. The Committee noted the panel’s perceptions in regards to the spirit of the campus, strong links with the University of Lancaster, extra-curricular activities of LUG students, engagement with local community and the positive experiences of their student population and their interaction with the University of Lancaster Students’ Association. The panel expressed to the Committee their confidence in the ability of such a model in providing an equivalent student experience to that provided in Aberdeen.

6.2 On the recommendation of the panel and the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), the UCTL were content to approve the Quality Assurance model, if appropriately resourced, as proposed and evidenced by the University of Lancaster in partnership with TNE at LUG.

7. Collaborative Provision: Interactive Design Institute (IDI)

7.1 The Committee received a report in respect of a Quality Assurance Committee Panel visit to the Interactive Design Institute Ltd (IDI) regarding the potential to develop existing Aberdeen courses for online delivery and to deliver those courses as franchised provision to students in the UK, EU and internationally, leading to awards of the University.

7.2 On the recommendation of the Panel and the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), the UCTL were content to approve the Quality Assurance model for IDI to deliver University of Aberdeen programmes.

8. Validation Agreement with Persona Training and Development Ltd

8.1 The UCTL considered the report from a validation review undertaken with Persona Training and Development Ltd (Persona). Persona provide professional training and development in the field of personal development and person-centred counselling for which they have developed and delivered a number of professional programmes for counsellors and psychotherapists. At the request of the School of Education, the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) had considered a proposal to validate the Persona programme, ‘Psychological Wellbeing, Counselling and Psychotherapy’, to lead to a PgDip/MSc of the University of Aberdeen. On the recommendation of the QAC, the UCTL agreed that the Persona programme should be validated by the University.

8.2 The Committee recommended to the Senate that, on academic grounds, the Persona programme should be validated by the University, with immediate effect for a period of three years, to lead to PgDip and MSc awards of the University of Aberdeen,
9. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct resource implications associated with this paper.

10. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

10.1 There are no risk management implications associated with this paper.

11. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

11.1 Not applicable.

12. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

12.1 Not applicable.

13. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

13.1 The Court is invited to note the contents of this report.

14. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

14.1 Further information may be obtained from Professor Peter McGeorge (01224) 272248 or mcgeorge@abdn.ac.uk or Dr Rachael Bernard (01224) 273388 or r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk.

[17 November 2016] [version 1] [Open]

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

PARTNERSHIP, NEGOTIATING AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper reports on issues arising from the most recent meeting of the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee held on 16 November 2016. The draft minutes of the meeting are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

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

1.3 Further information is available from the Clerk to the Committee, Catherine Cook, HR Specialist Services Partner, email: c.cook@abdn.ac.uk telephone (01224) 273413 or Mrs Debbie Dyker, Director of Human Resources, d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk tel 01224 273732.

For Information

2. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REVIEW

2.1 The Committee received an oral update on the Professional Services Review. Mrs Inglis advised that there had been positive work continuing with the work streams and the required financial savings would be delivered this financial year. There was discussion around potential impact on workloads and it was agreed that this would be highlighted through the application of the workload model.

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS REVIEW

3.1 The Committee noted a paper on the review of terms and conditions. It was also noted that UCU had provided further comments on the Intellectual Property policy.

4. CAPABILITY

4.1 The Committee noted an update on the number of staff in the Capability process. The numbers had reduced and this was due to a number of factors, some employees had successfully come out of the process and were now progressing well, some people in the process had left through voluntary severance. It was noted that the process still required further engagement from all relevant parties.

5. PROMOTION REVIEW

5.1 The Committee noted a paper on the Promotions Review. The working group had met to review the changes made to the promotions process in the previous year and the reception of the changes had been broadly positive. It had now been proposed to anonymise applications to remove the possibility of unconscious gender bias. It was agreed an application would be anonymised up to the point where role analysts assessed the applications, as it would be very difficult to do beyond that stage. Staff would be asked to complete their applications so that their gender was not revealed.

6. UPDATE ON SOUTH KOREA

6.1 The Committee noted an oral update on the project in South Korea. Professor Kilburn said the project had not moved forward substantially as the circumstances in Korea had changed significantly. The University was now in discussion about what could be done differently to ensure we were targeting an appropriate market.
7. PLANS FOR RWANDA CAMPUS

7.1 The UCU raised a number of questions about the proposals for a campus in Rwanda. Professor Kilburn responded that plans had been discussed in detail recently at Senate. There would be a further paper with full details for approval at Senate in January. There was further due diligence to be done, and approval by Court and from the Governance & Nominations Committee would be required.

7.2 There was discussion around the ethics and morality of working in Rwanda. It was noted that it was hoped that working in these countries would help to build capacity and provide support, which was positive and beneficial and the underpinning reason why many Universities were positive about working in these countries.

8. 35 HOUR WORKING WEEK

8.1 The committee noted a paper presented by the Unite union and the request that PNCC considered the introduction of a 35 hour working week for all staff. The majority of staff in grades 5 – 9 were working an average 37.5 hour working week, however there were some areas where staff were working a 35 hour week and this raised moral and equal pay issues. It was agreed that further modelling on the cost implications of this proposal would be taken forward.

9. UCU DECLARATION OF DISPUTE RE COMPULSORY REDUNDANCY

9.1 UCU advised that they had taken advice from their National Executive and that they were balloting members on Industrial Action and awaited the outcome of the ballot.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this paper.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 There are no risks arising directly from this paper.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

11. SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

11.1 There are no issues relating to sustainability or social responsibility arising directly from this paper.

12. RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

13. FURTHER INFORMATION

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

Catherine Cook
HR Partner
21 November 2016 (Open)

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper provides a short update for information on the main items of business considered by the Student Experience Committee (SEC) at its meeting on 17 October 2016. These focus on:
   i) Aberdeen University Students’ Association’s Priorities for the year ahead
   ii) the Remit and Composition of the Committee; and
   iii) Health, Wellbeing and Safety matters.

1.2 The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

1.3 This paper is for information. No action is required.

1.4 Further Information may be obtained from Christina Cameron, tel: (01224) 274189 or email c.cameron@abdn.ac.uk.

For Information

2. ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION: PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

2.1 The Committee received a presentation from officers of the Students’ Association on their priorities for the year ahead under the common theme of “Protect, Support and Represent Our Students”.

2.2 It was noted that the Committee would help and support AUSA in their priorities to improve the student experience.

3. REMIT AND COMPOSITION

3.1 The Committee received and considered an updated Remit and Composition. It was agreed that the composition should be updated to include the new Deans as follows:
   - 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

3.2 The Committee also agreed that additional representation from Alumni Relations was required, and that representation for international/transnational students should be considered.

4. HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY

4.1 The Committee received and considered the updated Health, Wellbeing and Safety policy.

4.2 The Committee received and considered the updated Mental Health Strategy, Policy and Action Plan, and noted their support for the policy and the action plan.

5. DIRECTORATES OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT LIFE, AND THE ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

5.1 The Committee noted the regular update reports of the Directorates of Student Life and Academic Affairs, and also that of AUSA.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Not applicable
7. **Risk Management**

7.1 Not applicable

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

8.1 Not applicable

9. **Sustainability & Social Responsibility**

9.1 There are no environmental, ethical or social implications or impacts of this paper.

10. **Recommended Action**

10.1 The Court is invited to note the business discussed at the October 2016 meeting of the Student Experience Committee.

11. **Further Information**

11.1 Further Information, including copies of the reports mentioned above, may be obtained from Christina Cameron tel: (01224) 274189 or email c.cameron@abdn.ac.uk.

Christina Cameron  
Clerk to the Student Experience Committee  
7 November 2016 (Open)

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper provides a summary of the key items considered by the University’s Research Policy Committee at meetings which took place on 3rd October and 14th November 2016. This report is for information only.

1.2 Additional information is available from the minutes of the meetings, available online at www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet.

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

2 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND REMIT

2.1 At its meeting on 4 October 2016, Court received and approved proposals for a revised committee structure supporting research and REF preparations (Item 8.2 Changes to Committee Structure Supporting Research CT16-17:10.2). It has also been approved by the University Senate at its meeting on 2 November 2016 (SEN16:09). The new structure reflects the organisational changes following the devolution of budgets to School level and incorporates recommendations made by the Professional Services Review.

2.2 The Research Policy Committee met under the revised remit and membership for the first time on 14th November 2016. Main REF Panel Committees have met for Physical Sciences & Engineering, Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences. A meeting for the Main REF Panel Committee for Life Sciences & Medicine has been scheduled for December.

3 RESEARCH APPLICATIONS AND AWARDS, RESEARCH INCOME & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

3.1 The Committee noted that 2015/16 saw a decline in applications. Leaving aside the application for Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services (RESAS) funding for the Rowett block grant, the biggest reduction in applications was among European funding bodies, with applications to the European Research Council (ERC) having declined by £10m. The reasons for this reduction, which predated the Brexit vote, included a change in the application procedure which no longer allows outline applications, and poor alignment of our research strengths with recent health calls. There have been discussions between Research & Innovation and the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition about how this may be addressed.

3.2 Research council applications have declined compared to the previous year, but the value of awards has remained stable. In terms of success rates, the University of Aberdeen now performs above sector average. This was attributed to the Intention to Submit process which subjected applications to peer review before submission.

3.3 Overall awards for 2015/16 have remained static, and are below the level required to grow research income in line with strategic expectations. The orderbook similarly showed the same level of committed research spend for next year as in previous years. It was emphasised that levels of awards and income had been maintained against a backdrop of falling staff numbers (a reduction of 16% since 2014).

3.4 The Committee discussed major funding opportunities that could enable growth in research income. These included the CityDeal and the RCUK Global Challenges Fund. These will be explored and promoted among researchers.
3.5 At the November meeting of the Committee, it received applications and awards data relating to the first quarter (Q1) of the new financial year (2016/17). Q1 applications and awards figures indicate a higher volume of applications - £46.7m in 2016/17 compared to £33.5m institutionally for Q1 2015/16. Applications for the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition show an increase in value of £5m compared to Q1 in 2015/16 and showing similar volumes to Q1 in 2014/15.

3.6 Awards also show an increase: £8.4m at the end of Q1 for 2016/17 compared to £7.9m at the end of Q1 in 2015/16. 7 out of 12 Schools show higher award levels than at this point compared to the same point in 2015/16, notably the School of Biological Sciences (£2.2m 2016/17 compared to £622k in 2015/16) and the School of Natural and Computing Sciences (£1.1m compared to £604k).

3.7 The Committee noted that, while this was encouraging, current levels of grant performance fell below the requirements of the Strategic Plan 2015-20. It received and discussed a detailed operational plan setting out proposals on how the University will support growth in high quality applications and research income through the Grants Academy and other related measures.

3.8 The Committee received reports on knowledge exchange activities and noted the information provided. The University of Aberdeen has been awarded £100,000 for an Impact Accelerator Account by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) which will have to be dispersed within the current financial year. A website containing relevant information and how to apply is almost complete, and a call for proposals will be issued very soon.

3.9 The Committee was briefed on the CityDeal project, a regional initiative with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the Robert Gordon University, Scottish Enterprise and Opportunity North East (ONE). Under the auspices of the CityDeal a number of sandpit events had been held recently, including workshops on decommissioning, subsea engineering and Big Data. Decommissioning could offer funding opportunities in South East Asia, and there were existing links to Brazil.

4 GRANTS ACADEMY

4.1 The Aberdeen Grants Academy concept was proposed as one of the recommendations made by the Professional Services Review, which was published in May 2016 (Recommendation 16). This recommendation has been worked up into a detailed proposal, and presented to the Research Policy Committee at its meeting on 3rd June 2016. The proposal was received positively by the then members of the Committee. The detailed proposal has been discussed and approved by the Research Policy Committee at its meeting on 14th November 2016 and was presented to the University Management Group for approval on 21st November 2016. It has also been discussed in detail with Heads of School and School Directors of Research who welcomed the proposals and are keen to work in partnership with Research & Innovation to deliver the different parts of the Grant Academy.

4.2 The Grants Academy will provide targeted support to individual researchers and research groups throughout the life cycle of their research projects. It will combine administrative support provided through Research and Innovation and other Professional Services with peer support provided by the academic community. It will consist of various elements including sandpits to support the development of ideas and projects, grant writing workshops, rebuttal support, support for delivery of outcomes and outcomes management. Some elements, such as the Intention to Submit process and Fellowship traffic light process, have already been in place in parts of the University for some time and have produced encouraging results, including higher than sector average success rates for Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and BBSRC in 2015/16. The Grant Academy will ensure that good practice is adopted across the institution, and support is targeted to strategic funding calls.

4.3 It will refocus existing support and provide additional elements of support targeted to specific funding programmes, such as the Research Council UK (RCUK) Global Challenges Research Fund and Newton Fund, to enable us to achieve the strategic targets for research income over the coming years.
5 RESEARCH ETHICS AND GOVERNANCE

5.1 At its meeting on 14th November 2016, the Research Policy Committee received reports from the Chairs of the research ethics committees in the Colleges of Arts & Social Sciences and Physical Sciences, and from the Research Governance Manager within the College of Life Sciences and Medicine.

5.2 The Committee agreed the following tasks, to be completed within the current academic session:

- Monitoring of completion of online ethics training by academic staff and postgraduate research students
- Revision of the Research Governance Handbook in the light of organisational changes, and additional regulatory and statutory requirements
- Continuation of School ethics health checks on a rolling basis – detailed proposals will be brought to the next meeting of the Research Policy Committee

6 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

6.1 The Research Policy Committee received a report on the Stern Review of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) summarising the main recommendations. A consultation exercise on the assessment framework setting out the broad rules for the next REF is expected later this month. The SFC have confirmed that this will be delivered on time, with responses requested by the end of January 2017. Once received, it will be disseminated and discussed with Schools and academic colleagues.

6.2 The first REF information sessions at Panel level have taken place for Panels B, C and D (date for Panel A is to be confirmed). Further sessions for discussion of the REF consultation paper will be scheduled for December/January. A training session for School Administrative Officers took place on 1 November; further sessions for administrative staff on REF preparations and the use of Pure will be arranged as required. Meetings to review progress in REF preparations took place for each School in October/November 2016. Schools are well organised for REF submissions and are working in partnership with colleagues in Research & Innovation to develop a detailed submission strategy once the submission framework is announced by the funding councils.

6.3 Invitations to identify publications and outputs that, in the author’s view, meet the REF 2014 definition of at least 3* were issued in June this year. Some Schools elected to adopt a different approach, and supported the initial selection with internal (and, in the case of the School of Law, external) review. 1,873 outputs have been identified as possible outputs for submission, 511 have been reviewed internally (and, for Law outputs, also externally). Work on recording and assessing potential impact case studies is underway.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Not applicable.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The risks associated with research are described in STRA_2016-07 which was approved by Operating Board and Court in June 2016. The introduction of the Grants Academy is listed among the mitigating actions on that risk register. The review of the Research Governance Handbook, provision of online training and Schools ethics health checks contribute to high standards of research ethics and integrity.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Participation in the Grants Academy by gender will be monitored through the Research Policy Committee, along with application/awards and success rates by gender.
10 **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

10.1 Not applicable.

11 **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

11.1 Court is invited to note the information provided.

12 **FURTHER INFORMATION**

12.1 Further information is available from Marlis Barraclough (Senior Policy Advisor; Research & Innovation), Clerk to the University Research Policy Committee, tel: (01224) 273787 or email m.barraclough@abdn.ac.uk.

Marlis Barraclough  
Clerk to the University Research Policy Committee  
18 November 2016 (Open)

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
ROUTINE BUSINESS REPORT

SUMMARY

This report brings together items of business that are to be considered as routine business for approval or for information.

This report will be treated as routine business and is not proposed for discussion unless members request otherwise and notify the Clerk one clear day in advance of the meeting.

For Approval

The items which are for approval are:

14.1 Procurement Strategy
14.2 Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement
14.3 Senate Report

For Information

The items which are for information are:

14.4 SFC Outcome Agreement: Report on 2017 Process
14.5 Report from the Development Trust
14.6 Annual Report on Redundancy
14.7 Annual Statement on Research Governance and Integrity
14.8 Management Report  (To be circulated separately to members)

Further Information

Further information is available from Mr Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, Tel. 01224 273949 or b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 The purpose of the Procurement Strategy is to ensure procurement activity delivers value for money and contributes to the University’s broader aims and objectives over the next 5 years.

1.2 In April 2016, the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 (PR(S)A) and Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2016 came into effect. The Act requires that any Scottish public body that has significant procurement expenditure (i.e. where annual regulated procurement spend is above or equal to £5m) must prepare and publish a Procurement Strategy by 31 December 2016. It should be a clear, comprehensive and effective Procurement Strategy which underpins the University's Strategic Plan and provides focus for its procurement activities.

1.3 Procurement strategies must be published and must be made publically available online. On publishing the strategy, the University must then notify Scottish Ministers by email with the strategy either attached or with a link to where the strategy can be accessed from. Failure to do so will be deemed as non-compliance with the Act.

1.4 The Act requires that the Procurement Strategy sets the context in which the University will work to ensure that procurement delivers value for money and directly contributes to the achievement of its broader aims and objectives. The Procurement Strategy should also demonstrate how the University ensures it will consider the wider social, economic and environmental aim of procurement in a consistent manner in line with the Act.

1.5 The Strategy represents best practice and considers ways to drive efficiency and quality whilst assessing and managing risk to the University. The Strategy is available on the Court Intranet at [www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet).

1.6 Supporting the Strategy is a detailed Action Plan outlining actions to enable progression and ensure compliance with new legislation and regulations. This is available on the Court Intranet at [www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/court/intranet).

1.7 The current Procurement Strategy does not address the reforms and regulatory changes that will impact upon the practice of University procurement and is superseded by the new version which is submitted for consideration and approval by the University Court.

1.8 Further information regarding Procurement regulations is available at [http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/Procurement/policy/ProcurementReform](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/Procurement/policy/ProcurementReform).

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Procurement Strategy focuses on objectives that derive from, link and align to the University’s objectives. It details how procurement operations and outcomes from them will be assessed in terms of performance and effectiveness in securing improvement objectives, and how these will be usefully measured, valued, managed, reported and reviewed in the future.

2.2 As well as the requirement to ensure that our procurement work complies with procurement law and the University regulations, we also have a duty to develop the ways in which each buyer purchases goods and services to take account of those changes in legislation and how the processes may be used to support wider public policy, strategic aims and desired outcomes.

3. **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

3.1 The Procurement objectives support the University's strategic goals as detailed in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The content of the Strategy also takes account of the University's Financial Regulations and has been influenced by: The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.
(PR(S)A); the Scottish Government Procurement Journey; Sustainable Procurement Duty; the Living Wage and the Universities Scotland Efficiencies Taskforce.

4. **OTHER CONTEXT**

4.1 Not applicable

5. **DISCUSSION**

5.1 The objectives covered within this Strategy document are as follows:-

- Further develop partnerships within the sector to deliver value to users of procurement services;
- Work with internal budget holders, lead buyers and suppliers to deliver effective and coordinated purchasing effort;
- Promote value for money through good procurement practice;
- Positive communication links with partners and suppliers;
- Develop robust and useful procurement management information;
- Embed sound ethical, social, and environmental policies and professional development of procurement specialists and training for those who have devolved purchasing authority.

5.2 Procedural changes required to support the implementation of the Strategy will be detailed in an updated set of Procurement Policy and Guide to Procedures which are planned to be completed by March 2017.

6. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Although many staff are involved in purchasing work, the proposals are intended to improve processes, rather than introduce additional procedures. However, the new legislation does now cover additional thresholds of more than £50,000 for goods and services and for works worth more than £2 million so this will have an impact on those with devolved purchasing authority. Work to make the changes will be required, including setting up a lead buyer network, data gathering, and the provision of training and guidance.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 High value procurement is required to comply with EU regulations (i.e. goods and services more than £164,176 and works worth more than £4,104,394) and the recently implemented ‘lower value regulated procurements’ (i.e. goods and services worth more than £50,000 and works worth more than £2 million) is required to comply with Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

7.2 The risk is that non-compliant procedures are followed: this could result in legal challenges which will, as a minimum, lead to a delay in contract award, with the possibility of agreements being set aside and the requirement being retendered. An action could also be taken to the Court of Session or, in extreme cases, the European Court of Justice, resulting in a financial penalty and reputational damage.

7.3 The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires that public bodies must produce and publish a Procurement Strategy by 31 December 2016 and inform Scottish Ministers once this is done. Failure to do so would result in non-compliance with the Act.

8. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

8.1 Not applicable.

9. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

9.1 Measures to improve the University’s sustainability approach to procurement are detailed in the strategy and consideration of environmental, social and economic issues and how benefits can be delivered through the procurement will be made, where appropriate and on a contract-by-contract basis.
10. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

10.1 The University Court is invited to approve the Procurement Strategy. The Strategy will be updated every 5 years and any interim updates (e.g. for statutory compliance) will be made when required.

11. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

11.1 Further information is available from:
- Helane Gannicliffe, Head of Procurement, or David Beattie, Director of Finance
- h.gannicliffe@abdn.ac.uk or david.beattie@abdn.ac.uk
- Tel: 01224 274467 or Tel: 01224 272115

15 November 2016 (Open document)

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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

SLAVERY & HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATEMENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 applies to manufacturers, commercial organisations and retailers doing business in the UK, which supply goods and services and have an annual turnover exceeding £36M. Those who fall into this definition, must disclose information regarding their policies to prevent slavery and human trafficking within their organisation and from their supply chain.

1.2 The statement must be published on our web site by 31 January 2017.

1.3 The proposed statement is enclosed and must be reviewed and published on an annual basis.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 Court is requested to approve the Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement.

3. FURTHER INFORMATION

3.1 Further information is available from David Beattie, Director of Finance david.beattie@abdn.ac.uk or Helane Gannicliffe, Head of Procurement h.gannicliffe@abdn.ac.uk

[18 November 2016] [Open]
Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement

Introduction
This statement is made pursuant to Section 54 part 6 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

The University of Aberdeen is committed to acquiring goods and services without causing harm to others and is committed to doing what we can to combat slavery and human trafficking. This statement reflects our commitment to act ethically and with integrity in our business relationships, in line with the University's Sustainability and Social Responsibility Policy. We will also implement and enforce systems and controls that seek to ensure slavery and human trafficking does not take place within our supply chains.

The University of Aberdeen is a member of Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC), the procurement centre of expertise for Scotland's universities and colleges. The University benefits from its close links with APUC in a number of areas of sustainable procurement and is aligned to the APUC Code of Conduct ensuring consistency in approach to the Supply Chain. The University actively engages with APUC to support the inclusion of ethical sustainability, including addressing slavery and human trafficking, in their procurement programmes.

Purpose of the Statement
This statement is designed to demonstrate our commitment to the Modern Slavery Act 2015, (and specifically to section 54 (1)), and the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 by informing our students, staff, partners and the public about the University of Aberdeen and its policy with respect to modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour and labour rights violations in its supply chains.

Key Categories
The following procurement categories have been identified as higher risk in terms of finding modern slavery and human trafficking occurrences in the supply chain:-

- Estates Goods, Services and Works
- ICT Equipment & Services
- Science, Technical, Engineering, Medical and Laboratory Goods and Services
- Residential Services
- Professional Services
When procuring goods, works and services in the higher risk categories the University ensures that suppliers are required to prove a high level of corporate social responsibility during the tendering and selection process.

**Future Plans**

As part of this reporting exercise in this and the coming years, the University expresses its commitment to better understand its supply chains and work towards greater transparency and responsibility towards people working within them.

The University will also continue to work with APUC on the use of sustainability tools for supplier assessment to ensure that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of its activities.

This statement will be updated on an annual basis.

Helane Gannicliffe

Head of Procurement

16 November 2016
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This paper provides details of the main items of business considered by the Senate at its meeting on 2 November 2016 of relevance to the University Court. The report focuses on (i) the remit and composition of joint committees of Senate and Court; (ii) changes to the composition of Senate; (iii) Delivery partners: principles and procedures; (iv) Partnership with the Interactive Design Institute; (v) Partnership with Transnational Education International; (vi) Increasing marking time in the first half-session; (vii) motion on University building proposals; (viii) a report on the Student Experience in 2016; (ix) update on the Collective Agreement; (x) the gender pay gap; (xi) proposals for the revised composition of University Court; (xii) validation agreement with Persona Training and Development Ltd; (xiii) appointment of Senate Assessor to the University Court; and (xiv) timing and frequency of meetings of the Senate.

1.2 This paper includes two items for routine approval and twelve items for information. The items for approval are:

   a) Remit and composition of Joint Committees of Senate and Court. Annex A refers.

   b) A draft Ordinance and Resolution on the composition of Senate and Election of Readers and Lecturers to Senate. The drafts of these proposals are set out with an explanatory paper at Annex B.

1.3 Further information may be obtained from Dr Gillian Mackintosh (g.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk or extension 2045).

2. **ITEM FOR ROUTINE APPROVAL**

   **REMIT & COMPOSITION OF JOINT SENATE AND COURT COMMITTEES**

2.1 In the light of recent changes to University structures, the Senate received revised remits and compositions of two joint Committees of Senate and Court, namely the University Committee on Teaching and Learning and the Student Experience Committee. The changes proposed largely reflect the replacement of previous College roles as *ex officio* members with the new Dean roles.

   The revised remits and compositions are appended in Annex A. The Senate, for its part, approved these changes. Court is invited to approve the revised remits and compositions at Annex A.

   **COMPOSITION OF SENATE**

2.2 The Senate considered and approved a number of changes to the composition of the Senate as detailed in the paper appended in Annex B. The University Court, for its part, is asked to approve the recommendations set out in this paper.

2.3 The University Court is further asked to approve, on the recommendation of the Senate the draft Ordinance, ‘Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus’ and the draft Resolution, ‘Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus’ which are required to effect these changes.

3. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

   The Court is invited to note the following items of information from the Senate:

   **DELIVERY PARTNERS: PRINCIPLES & PROCEDURES**

3.1 The Senate received a document setting out a policy framework for the way in which the University will work alongside third party delivery partners. This document sets out the principles and procedures which should be used for such initiatives and sets out the methods by which future delivery partners should be assessed, chosen, governed and quality assured. These procedures
have been informed by a review of best practice across the sector and cover work with both UK based and international delivery partners in which a partner organisation delivers the academic material leading to a University of Aberdeen award. The Delivery Partner, which may be any third party organisation without degree awarding powers, provides infrastructure and staff to a specification agreed by the University. Through the procedures, the University seeks to ensure that such programmes offer students comparable quality of learning opportunities and equivalent standards of awards to those received by students studying in Aberdeen. Following discussion, the Senate approved the policy framework document subject to a number of amendments to clarify that Senate would have the opportunity to consider all Delivery Partner proposals and any delivery locations with a partner, clarification in regard to termination of partnerships, and the need for independent due diligence on the student market.

**PARTNERSHIP WITH INTERACTIVE DESIGN INSTITUTE (IDI)**

3.2 The Senate received a report from a review undertaken by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) of the Interactive Design Institute (IDI). IDI is a private limited company founded in 2004 with the aim of creating opportunities for people to access accredited online learning courses. IDI has collaborated with the University of Hertfordshire for whom it delivers franchised provision of a number of undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes for the past eight years. IDI has undergone Review for Specific Course Designation by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education UK (QAA) and is registered on the UK Register of Learning Providers. IDI was approached by the University with a view to discussing the potential to develop online programmes as franchised provision, with this collaboration initially focusing on the establishment of an online MBA. A review was undertaken by QAC in July 2016 and the Panel was assured that the standards of provision for the courses delivered by IDI are at least equivalent to the standards at Aberdeen. The Senate approved the quality assurance aspects of the partnership on the basis of the report presented.

**PARTNERSHIP WITH TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (TNE)**

3.3 The Senate received a report from a review undertaken of the Lancaster University Ghana (LUG) campus in Accra which provides degrees awarded by Lancaster University delivered in partnership with Transnational Education International Ltd (TNE). The University is currently engaged in detailed discussion with TNE regarding the delivery of transnational education in Rwanda as a hub for the East African transnational market and, in association with the University of Lancaster, in Ghana. A review visit was conducted to LUG to provide an opportunity to assess how TNE works with a University to support and deliver its degree provision. The Senate, for its part, approved the quality assurance aspects of the partnership on the basis of the report presented. It further agreed that the detailed case for any specific programmes with TNE would be brought back to Senate for consideration. In particular, following discussion of the Rwandan proposal, it was agreed detailed proposals would be brought back to Senate for consideration.

**INCREASING MARKING TIME IN THE FIRST HALF-SESSION**

3.4 The Senate received a paper setting out proposals from the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) regarding an increase of one week to the marking time in the first half-session for courses at level three and above to the end of the first week of teaching in the second half-session (20 January 2017). For courses at levels one and two, the deadline would remain at the end of the first half-session (13 January 2017). Following discussion and a vote, the Senate approved the proposals set out in the paper subject to consideration being given to whether any further extension could be given to the marking deadline for PgT courses.

**MOTION ON UNIVERSITY BUILDING PROPOSALS**

3.5 The Senate received a motion setting out proposals regarding major capital projects. This recommended that all such projects should be brought to Senate for discussion and comment before they are taken forward by the University Court. Following discussion, the Senate approved the proposal.
3.6 The Senate received a paper reviewing data in regard to the student experience in 2015/16. This report covered areas including retention, degree outcome, use of the common grading scale, employability and the National Student Survey. The good work taking place across the campus to improve the student experience was noted however it was stressed that attention needs to be given to the area of assessment and feedback where the University falls well below benchmark. The importance of sharing of good practice was also stressed.

3.7 The Senate received an update on the Collective Agreement in regard to intellectual property and, in particular, the Intellectual Property and Confidentiality statements in the IP and Spin-out Policy. Some amendments to the wording of the Policy were proposed which it was agreed would be taken back to the Working Group for consideration.

3.8 In response to a query raised at the June meeting, the Senate received a paper providing an update on the Gender Pay Gap.

3.9 The Senate received proposals for a revised composition of the University Court. The Senate also received a motion proposing amendments to the proposals. Following discussion and a vote, the Senate gave its support to the proposals in the motion that the term Dean of Court should be adopted for the Senior Governor and that four of the twelve seats for independent Court members should be reserved for elected General Council Assessors. The Senate agreed to forward these to the University Court as representative of the Senate’s view. **Note:** The Senate’s view and a copy of the motion are included in a separate paper on today’s agenda regarding the composition of Court.

3.10 The Senate received a report from a validation review undertaken with Persona Training and Development Ltd (Persona). Persona provide professional training and development in the field of personal development and person-centred counselling. Following a request from the School of Education, the Quality Assurance Committee had considered a proposal to validate the ‘Psychological Wellbeing, Counselling and Psychotherapy’ programme leading to the award of a Postgraduate Diploma / Masters degree from the University. The Senate approved, on academic grounds, the recommendation from the University Committee on Teaching and Learning that this programme should be validated with immediate effect for a period of three years.

3.11 The Senate noted the appointment of Professor Delibegovic as a Senate Assessor for the College of Life Sciences & Medicine until 30 September 2020.

3.12 The Senate Effectiveness Review recommended that the Senate Business Committee review the schedule of Senate meetings with a view to these being more evenly spaced across the year and to ensure their schedule appropriately recognises the needs of Senators. In addition, it was noted that there would be value in increasing the number of meetings to avoid these becoming overly lengthy. It was further acknowledged that meetings should be scheduled in term-time to ensure that the student members are able to attend. Following discussion by the Senate Business Committee, the Senate approved proposals to increase the number of meetings from four to five and to adjust the timing so that all meetings of Senate fall within term-time. These changes would take effect from next academic year.

4 Resource Implications

4.1 There are no immediate resource implications arising from this paper.
5. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

5.1 Not applicable.

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 Not applicable.

7. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

7.1 Not applicable.

8. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

8.1 The Court is asked to approve:
   a) The revised remits and composition of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning and the Student Experience Committee. Annex A;
   b) The Ordinance ‘Amendment to the Compotion of the Senatus Academicus’ and the Resolution ‘Election of Readers and Lecturers to Senatus Academicus’. Annex B.

9. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

9.1 Further information is available from Dr Gillian Mackintosh (g.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk or extension 2045).

[15 November 2016 2016] [version 1] [Open]

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UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. **Committee Title**
   University Committee on Teaching and Learning

2. **Date of Establishment**
   TBC

3. **Convenor and Administrative Support Area**
   Convenor: Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching)
   Clerk: Academic Affairs (Registry)

4. **Purpose**
   A Strategy and Policy committee to support the University’s overall Learning and Teaching Objectives.

5. **Remit:** *(To be reviewed annually at first meeting of committee cycle)*
   To be responsible to the Senatus Academicus for the strategic oversight of teaching and learning matters and the wider academic student experience, both undergraduate and postgraduate and for the development of policies and practices 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 the quality assurance and quality enhancement of teaching and learning, and for the safeguarding of academic standards.

   The UCTL shall:
   
   - be responsible for the oversight, development and monitoring of the University’s strategic approach to learning and teaching, its associated Learning and Teaching Operational Plan and Risk Register and the alignment of these with College School and other Operational plans
   - be responsible for the development and implementation of policy relating to learning and teaching in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the University, and where this relates solely to either undergraduate or postgraduate provision may refer the matter to the relevant sub-committee for detailed consideration
   - be responsible for the ongoing enhancement of the quality of teaching and learning and for ensuring the effective dissemination of good practice
   - consider recommendations from the Quality Assurance Committee on mechanisms for the assurance of quality and standards and, as appropriate, make recommendations to the Senate
   - develop, review and promote professional staff development opportunities in regard to learning, teaching, assessment and feedback
   - develop and promote the work of the Centre for Academic Development
   - review and monitor the quality of provision of careers education, employability and the co-curriculum
   - be responsible for the oversight of teaching-related credit-bearing activity related to student mobility
   - be responsible for the oversight and quality assurance of online learning, transnational education (TNE) and collaborative agreements relating to teaching and learning.
   - consider and provide advice to the Student Experience Committee on aspects of the student experience which fall within both non-academic and academic areas
   - act on behalf of the Senate, after consultation with Heads of School to:
     - Approve Dates of Terms
     - Approve changes to the Regulations for Certificates and Diplomas, and to Regulations for Degrees in advance of their incorporation into a formal draft Resolution
     - Approve deadline for the refusal of class certificates
     - Approve deadlines for the return of examination results
     - Approve arrangements for Graduation Ceremonies
     - Approve changes to minimum entry requirements

6. **Composition and Quorum:**
   Convenor: Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching)
Membership: One representative nominated by the University Court
Student President of the Students’ Association (or nominee) and the SA President (Education & Employability Education Officer)
College Directors of Teaching and Learning
Heads of Graduate Schools
Conveners of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committees
Convenor of the Quality Assurance Committee
Deans for Undergraduate Studies
Deans for Postgraduate Studies
Dean for Quality Assurance & Enhancement
Dean of Graduate School
Conveners of UCTL Task Groups

In attendance: Director of Academic Affairs (or nominee)
Head of the Centre for Academic Development
Head of the Careers Service
Director of IT Services (or nominee)
Conveners of UCTL Task Groups

Quorum: 50%

ACCOUNT TO BE TAKEN OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP

7. MEMBERSHIP
Professor Peter McGeorge
Mr Colin Duncan
Mr Chubbe Anucha
Mr Liam Fuller
Professor Alison Jenkinson
Vacant - Dean for UG Teaching (Arts)
Dr Christopher Kee
Vacant - Dean for PG Teaching (Science)
Dr Judith Masthoff
Dr Kath Shennan
Dr Steve Tucker
Dr Tim Baker
Dr Bruce Scharlau
Dr Gillian Mackintosh
Ms Patricia Spence
Mr Peter Fantom
Mr Dean Phillips

Clerk: Dr R Bernard (Registry)

8. REPORTING LINE/PARENT COMMITTEE AND INTERFACE WITH OTHER COMMITTEES
Formal reporting line: Senate
Sub-committee: Undergraduate Committee, Postgraduate Committee, Quality Assurance Committee
Interface with other committees: Internationalisation Committee, Student Recruitment & Admissions Committee, Student Experience Committee

9. FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS
Three meetings per session (October, January, May).
Meetings between 10am – 4pm in accordance with University Policy.

10. PUBLICATION OF PAPERS
Cognisance will be taken of the University’s Publication Scheme and Agenda papers will be made available on web pages/StaffNet where possible.

11. DATE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVED/RECORDED BY UMG: tbc
1. **Committee Title**
   STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

2. **Date of Establishment**
   Established 30 June 2015, replacing Student Affairs Committee

3. **Convenor & Administrative Support Area**
   Convenor: Lay Court Member
   Clerk: Student Life

4. **Purpose**
   To focus on the achievement of the University’s overall strategic objectives relating to the non-academic co-curricular and other aspects of the student experience. The academic aspects being dealt with through the University Committee on Teaching & Learning.

5. **Remit: (To be reviewed annually at first meeting of committee cycle)**
   Responsible for:
   - To develop and approve policy and strategy regarding all areas relevant to any activities or facilities associated with the non-academic co-curricular aspects of the student experience (other than those under the specific remit of other University committees).
   - To consider and provide advice to UCTL on aspects of the student experience which fall within both non-academic and academic areas
   - To consider reports from the Students Association on its activities
   - To consider reports from the Sports Advisory Body
   - To consider reports relevant to the student experience from Academic Affairs, Student Life and any other bodies as appropriate.
   - To ensure compliance with the Code of Practice laid down by the University in accordance with the provisions of the 1994 Education Act
   - To advise the UCTL, Senate and Court on such matters as may be remitted to it by those bodies

6. **Composition and Quorum:**
   Convenor: Lay Member of Court
   Composition: Rector
   Rector’s Assessor
   Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching)
   University Secretary
   One academic member of staff with an interest in the Undergraduate Student Experience nominated from each College
   One academic member of staff with an interest in the Postgraduate Student Experience nominated from each College
   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
   Director of Student Life
   Equality and Diversity Adviser
   University Librarian (or nominee)
   Head of Student Support
   University Chaplain
   President of the Students’ Association and student sabbatical officers
   In attendance: Directorate of Student Life’s Heads of Section where required
   Directorate of Academic Affairs’ Heads of Section where required
7. **MEMBERSHIP**

Mrs J Shirreffs (Convener)
Ms M Chapman, Rector
Mr D Haywood, Rector’s Assessor
Professor Peter McGeorge, VP Learning & Teaching
Mrs C Inglis, University Secretary

Mr C Anuba, AUSA President
Mr L Macleod, Communities Officer
Mr L Fuller, Education and Employability Officer
Ms A McClellan, Sports Officer
Ms J Killin, Welfare Officer

*vacant*, Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business)
Prof Alison Jenkinson, Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Science, Engineering and Healthcare)
Prof Christopher Kee, Dean of Postgraduate Studies (Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business)
*vacant*, Dean of Postgraduate Studies (Science, Engineering and Healthcare)
Prof Judith Masthoff, Dean of the Graduate School

Mr L Forsyth, Director of Student Life
Dr G Mackintosh, Director of Academic Affairs
Ms A Shipley, Head of Student Support
Rev M Anderson/Rev D Hutchison, University Chaplains
Ms J Chalmers, Equality & Diversity Adviser
Ms D Bruxvoort, University Librarian

_In attendance:_ Mr A Wight, Deputy Director, Estates
Ms Margaret Paterson, Chief Executive Officer, AUSA
Ms K Allan, Alumni Relations Manager, Alumni Relations

_Clerk:_ Ms C Cameron, Project and Strategy Officer, Directorate of Student Life

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

Formal reporting line: Court, Senate
Interface with other committees: UCTL, UMG

9. **FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS**

3 meetings per session.
Meetings between 10-4 in accordance with University Policy.

10. **PUBLICATION OF PAPERS**

Cognisance will be taken of the University’s Publication Scheme and Agenda papers will be made available on web pages/StaffNet where possible.

11. **DATE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVED/RECORDED BY COURT:** 30 June 2015
ANNEX B
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
(6 December 2016)

COMPOSITION OF THE SENATE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper brings forward proposals arising from the Senate Effectiveness Review conducted in 2015 in regard to the composition of the Senate. These proposals have been discussed by the Senate Business Committee and approved by the Senate.

1.2 The University Court, for its part, is asked to approve the recommendations set out in section 9 regarding the composition of Senate.

1.2 Further information is available from Professor Jeremy Kilburn, Senior Vice-Principal (j.kilburn@abdn.ac.uk) or from Dr Gillian Mackintosh (g.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk or extn 2045).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In line with the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, an Effectiveness Review of the Senate was conducted in 2015. A number of recommendations arose from the review which were approved by Senate in February 2016. Whilst many of these recommendations have already been implemented, some remain to be addressed. This paper brings forward proposals regarding changes to the composition of the Senate.

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 This paper relates to compliance with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance.

4. COMPOSITION OF SENATE

4.1 The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill initially set out proposals regarding the composition of Academic Boards (Senate) and in particular proposed that Senate should be no larger than 120 members, our Senate having a membership of approximately 140. However, having progressed through the Scottish Parliament, the final HE Governance Act does not prescribe a maximum size for Senate but does state the following: “The Act states that Senates should include certain categories of membership and that more than 50% of the Senate should be persons elected by the academic staff or persons elected by the students. The Act also requires that students elected to Senate should equate to at least 10% of the overall membership of Senate but not if this would mean there were more than 30 in number unless the HEI feels that would be appropriate.”

4.2 In regard to the requirements of the HE Governance Act, the current Senate composition aligns with these requirements as summarised below:

   (i) In terms of at least 50% of Senate membership being elected by academic staff or students, the Senate currently has a 2:1 staff membership of elected : ex officio members with currently 79 elected and 39 ex officio members.

   (ii) In terms of the student membership, there are currently 19 student members plus one in attendance. This equates to 14% of the Senate membership so meets the Acts requirement for at least 10% student membership and no more than 30 in number.

4.3 With recent changes to College structures, the ex officio membership of Senate requires to be revised to align with the new structures. The table below sets out the current ex officio members and proposed a revised ex officio membership to reflect the new ex officio roles.
4.4 The Senate, for its part, approved the proposed changes to the *ex officio* membership as outlined above and as detailed in the Ordinance ‘Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus’ appended in Appendix 1 to this paper. As the change will require Privy Council approval, the Senate further agreed that the revised *ex officio* composition should be implemented immediately pending internal approval of the Ordinance and its formal approval by the Privy Council.

4.5 In regard to student membership, as noted above, the Effectiveness Review proposed that “AUSA may wish to review representation arrangements for emerging student populations, such as taught postgraduate, research postgraduate and international students.” The current student membership of Senate together with a proposed revised membership to reflect changes to titles of AUSA positions is given below. This provides for 19 student members plus 1 in attendance.
4.6 The Senate, for its part, approved the revised student membership of Senate as outlined above and as detailed in the Ordinance ‘Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus’ appended in Appendix 1 to this paper. As the change will require Privy Council approval, the Senate is further agreed that the revised student membership should be implemented immediately pending internal approval of the Ordinance and its formal approval by the Privy Council.

4.7 In regard to the elected staff membership of Senate, the number of seats per School is currently determined on the basis of the staff numbers in each School. With the change to School compositions arising from the recent changes to structures, if this model is used the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition will have over one third of the elected staff seats. If only student load is used, there is quite a considerable change in the distribution of seats across the Schools. If both staff and student numbers per School are taken into account, a better spread of seats is achieved as detailed overleaf:

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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine, Medical Sciences &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural &amp; Computing Sciences</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8 The Senate approved the recommendation that the model used to determine the number of elected Senator seats per School be changed to be based on a combination of staff FTE and student load. The Senate, for its part, also approved the Resolution ‘Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus’ (appended in Appendix 2 to this paper) to effect this change and agreed to recommend its approval to the University Court.

4.9 The Senate Effectiveness Review recommended that Senate should have a gender balance of at least 40% of each gender. At the time of the Effectiveness Review, the gender balance of Senate taking account of both elected and ex officio membership (both staff and student) was 37% female. The Review in particular stated “a specific goal of achieving at least 40% of each gender by end of session 2017/18, by publishing its current composition against recognised indicators, by encouraging nominations from under-represented groups, by reviewing the extent to which Senate’s population reflects the population of the University and by reviewing eligibility criteria for membership.”

4.10 In regard to achieving gender balance as set out by the Effectiveness Review, this would require to be managed through the elected membership. The current gender balance of staff within Schools is as detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divinity, History &amp; Philosophy</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.11 Further to discussion at the last meeting, advice has been sought from the Gender Equality Steering Group on how gender balance might best be achieved within the elected members of Senate. Feedback will be reported at the next meeting of the Senate Business Committee following the Gender Equality Steering group’s discussions at their meeting in November. In the light of this feedback, the Senate Business Committee will consider the way in which the number of seats per School for elected Senators should be determined and will bring forward recommendations to Senate.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no resource implications associated with this paper.

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 Compliance with the Code of Good HE Governance is a condition of grant. The Senate is the University’s key academic body and as such it is critical that it works as effectively as possible.

7. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 No equality impact assessment is necessary at this stage.

8. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

8.1 Not applicable

9. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

9.1 The University Court, for its part, is asked to approve:

(i) the revised *ex officio* and student membership of Senate and the associated Ordinance ‘Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus’ (as detailed in Annex A)

(ii) the way in which seats for elected members of Senate should be distributed between Schools and the associated Resolution ‘Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus’ (as detailed in Annex B)

10. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

10.1 Further information is available from Professor Jeremy Kilburn, Senior Vice-Principal (j.kilburn@abdn.ac.uk) or from Dr Gillian Mackintosh (g.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk or extn 2045).

[17 October 2016] [Open]
Appendix 1 to Annex B

ORDINANCE of the UNIVERSITY COURT of the UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
No < > [AMENDMENT TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS]
at ABERDEEN the < > day of < > Two Thousand and Sixteen.

WHEREAS the University Court of the University of Aberdeen deems it expedient to amend the composition of the Senatus Academics of the University of Aberdeen designated in section 5 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 and Section 7 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 as amended by University Court Ordinance No. 138 (Amendment to the Composition for the Senatus Academicus) and University Court Ordinance No 140 (Amendment to the Student Membership of the Senatus Academicus):

THEREFORE the University Court of the University of Aberdeen in exercise of its powers under section 3, and paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 2 to, the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 and of all other powers enabling it in that behalf, hereby statutes and ordains:

1. Ordinance of the University Court of the University of Aberdeen No. 138 (Amendment to the Composition of the Senatus Academicus) and No 140 (Amendment to the Student Membership of the Senatus Academicus) are hereby revoked.

2. Notwithstanding the provision of section 5 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 and section 7 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, the membership of the Senatus Academicus of the University of Aberdeen shall comprise:
   (a) ex officio the Principal, all Vice-Principals and Heads of College, all Heads of School, all Deans, Representatives of the Quality Assurance Committee and the University Librarian;
   (b) an elected number of Professors, Readers and Lecturers and research staff of equivalent status not already ex officio members as specified in Section 2(a) of this Ordinance and equal to not less than twice the total number of these ex officio members; the elected members shall continue to be so elected in the manner set forth in University Ordinance No. 111 [Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus];
   (c) the Student President of Aberdeen University Students’ Association, Education Officer, the School Conveners of the said Association and three postgraduate representatives, provided (i) the said Student President, Education Officer and School Conveners have been elected by a poll of all students in the University or by a poll of all students at undergraduate level who have been assigned by the Senatus Academicus to the appropriate School, respectively, and (ii) the said postgraduate representatives have been elected by a poll of all postgraduate students registered on programmes taught in Arts, Humanities & Business, and Science, Engineering & Medicine and research students) and do not hold an appointment at or above the grade of Lecturer or equivalent in the University of Aberdeen; Declaring that the said student members may be excluded from meetings of the Senatus Academicus on occasions when this is deemed appropriate by a majority of the remaining members.”.

3. If, at the date on which a person’s membership of the Senatus would otherwise terminate he or she is acting as an Assessor from the Senatus on the University Court of the University of Aberdeen in terms of section 2 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, his or her membership of the Senatus shall be extended to cover the remainder of his or her current term of appointment as an Assessor on the said University Court.

4. The Ordinance shall not affect the rights of those persons presently members of the Senatus Academicus by virtue of section 7 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

5. This Ordinance shall come into force on the date on which it is approved by Her Majesty in Council.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF these presents are sealed with the Common Seal of the University Court of the University of Aberdeen and subscribed on behalf of the said Court in terms of the Requirements of Writing (Scotland) Act 1995.
RESOLUTION NO OF 2016

This Resolution shall come into force on with immediate effect after it is passed by the University Court.

[Tenth Amendment to Schedule A to University Court Ordinance No. 111
(Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus)]

After consultation with the Senatus Academicus, the University Court of the University of Aberdeen at its meeting on <> passed the following Resolution:

1. In terms of Section 1(b)(i) and (ii) of University Court Ordinance No. 111 (Election of Readers and Lecturers to the Senatus Academicus), paragraph 1 of Schedule A (Regulations for the Conduct of Elections) to the said Ordinance, as amended by University Court Resolutions Nos. 27 of 1970, 44 of 1972, 64 of 1973, 139 of 1990, 196 of 1996, 223 of 2000, 245 of 2006, 252 of 2007 and 260 of 2008, is hereby further amended as follows:

(i) Voting shall take place in the following constituencies, which shall comprise the Professors, Readers and Lecturers, including Clinical staff and the holders of research and academic-related posts of equivalent status, who at the time of election are not members of the Senatus Academicus ex officio, in those Schools and academic Units assigned to the various Colleges by the University Court on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus in terms of Resolution No. 213 of 2003, together with any other Professor, Reader, Lecturer or holder of a research or academic-related post of equivalent status not otherwise included in a constituency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Constituency</th>
<th>Number of Seats allotted to Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) University of Aberdeen Business School</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) School of Divinity, History and Philosophy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) School of Education</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) School of Language, Literature, Visual Culture &amp; Music</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) School of Law</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) School of Social Science</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) School of Biological Sciences</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) School of Medicine, Medical Sciences &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) School of Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j) School of Engineering</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k) School of Geosciences</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l) School of Natural &amp; Computing Sciences</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) The number of seats allotted to individual constituencies (a) to (l) above may be varied by the University Court on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus.

2. Notwithstanding Sections 5 and 6 of Schedule A to the above Ordinance, the system of voting to be followed within each constituency shall be the Single Transferable Vote, as specified by the current rules of the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

3. Noting in this Resolution shall affect the continued membership of the Senatus Academicus for the remainder of their term of office of any person who, at the date when this Resolution comes into force, is already a member of the Senatus Academicus in terms of University Court Ordinance No. 111.

4. This Resolution shall come into force from and after the date on which it is passed by the University Court.
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This paper is to update University Court on progress towards negotiation of the University’s 2017/2018 Outcome Agreement with the SFC.

1.2 The University is required to develop an Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council for the next three years (2017/18-2019/20) and to submit a draft version of Agreement to the Council for their review by 16 December 2016. Formal submission, following feedback from SFC, is due on 31 March 2017.

1.3 Court is invited to note the framework for the Outcome Agreement process and the proposed development timetable.

1.4 Further information is available from Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk, ext. 3792).

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 Outcome Agreements between universities and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) were introduced in 2012-13 as part of the Scottish Government’s Spending Review. They set out what an institution plans to deliver in return for their funding from SFC and are developed through a dialogue with our allocated SFC Outcome Agreement Management Team and form part of the conditions of SFC funding.

2.2 The University has submitted annual reports in the past but is moving to a three-year Outcome Agreement cycle as preferred by the SFC this year, covering the period 2017/18-2019/20.

2.3 The SFC expects institutions to deliver on the outcomes set out in the Agreements and, when considering progress, will establish evidence of under-delivery from a combination of the statistical data available, from the progress reported by institutions and by the information available from the outcome manager and key stakeholders. If statistical evidence suggests under-delivery, the SFC may take action to establish an improvement plan, reduce or recover funding, or apply a penalty.

3. **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

3.1 The Outcome Agreement forms part of the conditions of the University’s SFC grant funding and as such, has clear strategic importance to the University.

4. **DISCUSSION**

4.1 The University is now moving to a three-year Outcome Agreement cycle for the first time. Following the publication of guidance for the development of the Outcome Agreement on 5 October, the University has started development of the document.

4.2 The Outcome Agreement process continues to emphasise the following key areas:

- Support to students with protected characteristics (including deprivation, gender, age, ethnicity, disability and care leavers)
- High quality learning and teaching
- World-leading research
- Innovation in the economy, and
- Sustainability.

However, this year’s guidance also notes an increased emphasis on the following cross-cutting themes and priorities:
• Partnership working and collaboration
• Equality and diversity, including the new requirement for equality impact assessments to be carried out on Outcome Agreements
• The development of a process for identifying and supporting students with care experience
• Gender, including the development of action plans to tackle gender imbalances at institutional, subject and board levels
• Development of an institutional British Sign Language Plan
• Increased reflection on aspirations around social and cultural impact
• Responding to skills needs
• Gaelic
• Employer engagement with the curriculum
• Monitoring of positive destinations for graduates and entry into professional occupations
• New national aspirations for widening access, with raised targets
• Incorporation of the University Innovation Fund Scheme

4.3 A number of new measures of progress have been introduced in this cycle:

• In addition to monitoring of 20-40% most deprived backgrounds, aspirations for recruitment of Scotland-domiciled UG entrants from the 20% most deprived backgrounds will also be measured
• In addition to Scotland-domiciled graduates entering positive destinations, the SFC will now monitor the number of Scotland-domiciled graduates entering professional occupations.
• Measures on charity and European Commission income have been dropped and instead universities are asked to set out aspirations to grow their total research income from all sources.
• Measure of annual capital and maintenance spend on estates and buildings as proportion of value of the estate has been dropped. Instead, institutions should reflect on how they ensure an effective and sustainable estate in their commentary on wider sustainability and the learning and research environment.

4.4 Meetings are currently being held with internal stakeholders to develop the narrative for the report and to identify targets for the next three years. Planning staff met with the SFC Outcome Agreement Team on 31 October to discuss the agreement in detail, in particular key changes and additions. The Council have noted that as well as setting targets and identifying key activities in priority areas, providing examples of best practice and showcasing our successes in the Funding Council’s priority areas would be very much welcomed.

4.5 A consultation process will be carried out within the University as part of the development process, as all universities are required to carry out a consultation with staff, staff unions, and the Students’ Association. The aim is for the consultation process to start in the end of November and to be completed by January 2017.

4.6 The proposed timeline for the Outcome Agreement can be seen in table 1. The University will submit a well-developed first draft on 16 December after consideration by the Senior Management Team (SMT). The SFC will review and comment on the University’s draft Agreement after our submission on 16 December and the agreement will thereafter be finalised. A final version of the document will be submitted to University Court in March 2017 for approval.

4.7 The proposed timeline for the development of the Outcome Agreement is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Outcome Agreement 2017-2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>05/10/2016</td>
<td>Guidance published by SFC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/10/2016</td>
<td>Meeting with SFC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/11/2016</td>
<td>Consultation with key stakeholders starts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/12/2016</td>
<td>Report to Court on the Outcome Agreement process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/12/2016</td>
<td>First draft of the Outcome Agreement submitted to SMT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The University receives around 35% of its core funding from the SFC. Under-delivery against key targets in our Outcome Agreements may have an impact on our funding from SFC, in terms of penalties being applied, and impact on future funding.

6. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 Under-delivery against key priorities within the framework for Outcome Agreements may lead to financial sanctions being imposed by the Scottish Funding Council and may impact on future funding, and its response to requests for an appropriate share of additional funded places or strategic funding. The recommendations contained in this paper attempt to mitigate this risk.

7. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Full achievement of Outcome Agreement targets against national measures around widening access, admissions processes, gender balance and support of students with protected characteristics will enhance the equality and diversity of the University community.

8. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

8.1 Full achievement of Outcome Agreement targets against national measures around carbon footprint reduction, widening access, support of students with protected characteristics and engagement with business and industry will help improve the sustainability and social responsibility of the University.

9. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

9.1 Court is invited to note the framework for the Outcome Agreement process and the proposed development timetable.

10. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

10.1 Further information is available from Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (email hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk, ext.3792).

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**Board/Committee** | **Date**
---|---
Previously considered by | UMG | 31 October 2016
Further approval required | n/a |
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

ANNUAL REPORT ON REDUNDANCY ACTIVITIES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This paper provides an overview and update of the management of redundancy activities undertaken by Human Resources for the period 1 December 2015 to 30 November 2016.

1.2 The key outcomes of these activities are:

- 337 individuals placed at risk of redundancy for this period: 125 avoided redundancy by receiving a continuation of their current project/role; 79 were redeployed into a new role or project; 101 individuals were made redundant. The remaining 32 staff resigning from the University

- The costs incurred in dismissing individuals on the grounds of redundancy were £156,069.69 in respect of statutory redundancy payments made, and £43,452.49 for payment in lieu of notice incurred.

The success factors to highlight from this period are detailed as follows:

- The number of staff receiving Pay In Lieu of Notice (PILON) has halved compared to 2014/2015 with only 9 staff receiving PILON.

- Analysis of Outcomes by Gender has revealed that the success of the redundancy avoidance process has remained comparable for male and female employees.

- With an inherent risk in undertaking individual consultation and dismissal on the grounds of redundancy there has been one appeal against the dismissals issued in the last year, and no litigation undertaken by any of those individuals who have been dismissed.

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

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 These activities have been enabled by positive working partnerships with line managers and Campus Trade Unions with the joint aim of managing the avoidance of staff redundancies wherever possible. This paper will also report on the work of the committees (Redundancy Dismissal Panel and the Joint Consultative Committee on Redundancy Avoidance), which support the process of redundancy avoidance.

3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 It is the University's intention to provide a stable working environment and security of employment for all staff wherever practicable. The diverse nature of the roles and activities undertaken by our staff is underpinned by an equally diverse range of funding streams. Circumstances arise on a regular basis in which funding streams, particularly funding underpinning research activities, conclude, or are only available for a limited period. In such circumstances individual members of staff or groups of staff, may be placed at risk of redundancy and, as such, become subject to the terms of the University's Redundancy Policy and Procedure.
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES & NUTRITION – RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE

4.1 The School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition (SMMSN) has been asked to address a budget deficit of £4.024m and, through a restructuring of the School activities, savings of up to £1.5 million within the current year have been identified. In order to deliver this, the School considered all areas of activity within the School and presented a proposal for restructuring.

4.2 The School took forward, a Voluntary Severance and Early Retirement Scheme in an attempt to address the savings through voluntary means in the first instance. The Scheme was launched on 18 July 2016 and ended on 30 September 2016.

4.3 The Restructuring Committee accepted eight applications for voluntary severance which delivered ongoing savings of £538,000.

4.4 Following confirmation of the savings achieved, it was determined that for further savings to be realised, compulsory redundancies would be required. Consultation with the Campus Trades Unions has been ongoing for the duration of the voluntary exercise and both the trades unions and staff in the affected areas were aware that, should savings not be achieved through voluntary measures, a collective consultation process as per the terms of the Consultation on Avoidance of Redundancy Policy will commence. This step was in line with the agreement reached with University College Union (UCU) following discussion between the University and UCU facilitated by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in January 2016.

4.5 Early consultation with the Campus Trades Unions included discussion about the selection criteria to be used in the event of a compulsory redundancy exercise. Whilst the trades unions as a matter of principle will not agree selection criteria, discussion regarding this has been constructive.

4.6 At the JCCRA meeting on Wednesday, 12 October 2016 the campus trade unions were notified that a total of 23 staff would be placed at risk of redundancy. It was also noted that within this, the School had 11 opportunities for staff to be redeployed/assimilated to. This would mean that, at most, 12 staff would face redundancy.

4.7 Those staff involved were notified of the situation and all staff have attended their first consultation meeting with further meetings scheduled.

4.8 All staff have been offered additional support and an Outplacement Adviser who has been on campus providing one to one support for them.

4.9 To date, eight staff have accepted assimilation into a new role. Additional opportunities have been identified for all other effected staff which they are currently considering and we are hopeful to mitigate the redundancy for all staff who have been identified at risk of redundancy as a consequence of the restructuring exercise.

4.10 UCU have confirmed that they are still in dispute and, as a result of placing staff at risk of compulsory redundancy, they are balloting their members for strike action and action short of strike. The ballot closes on 21 November 2016.

5 KEY ACTIVITIES

5.1 Notification to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills

5.1.1 There is a statutory requirement to notify the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) on a quarterly basis of any intention to dismiss 20 or more employees as redundant at one establishment within a period of 90 days or less. The University operated three separate establishments – Foresterhill, Old Aberdeen and the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health (RINH) until 1 April 2016. Only two of these establishments have reported potential redundancies to BIS since RINH has never had more than 20 employees at risk of redundancy in any 90 day period. From 1 December 2015 the University has notified BIS of 134 potential redundancies at the Foresterhill site and 179 potential redundancies at Old Aberdeen. From 2nd April 2016 all RINH staff were located on the Foresterhill site and any potential redundancies were reported with the Foresterhill site. The number of reported potential redundancies has fallen slightly in comparison to last year.
5.2 Collective Consultation

5.2.1 As described in previous years, collective consultation has been ongoing with our recognised Trade Unions – UNISON, Unite the UNION, UCU and Prospect - on ways of avoiding dismissals due to redundancy, reducing the numbers of staff at risk of redundancy and mitigating the consequences for staff at risk of redundancy. The University fulfils its collective consultation responsibilities through the Joint Consultative Committee on Redundancy Avoidance (JCCRA) the remit of which is provided at Appendix A.

5.2.2 Consultation at the University is still carried out according to the Consultation on the Avoidance of Redundancy Policy.

5.2.3 A full JCCRA is still held quarterly and operational meetings are held in the other 2 months of each quarter. The operational meetings are attended by representatives of our recognised Trade Unions and representatives from Human Resources. Experience has shown that these have not been required to be held by the Trade Unions this year although this is appraised on a month to month basis. Any queries identified by the Trade Unions are usually resolved informally directly with Human Resources.

5.2.4 With the launch of the focused Voluntary Severance scheme in School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition in July 2016, additional JCCRA meetings were convened to facilitate more regular discussions about options for redundancy avoidance. They also provided a mechanism to give regular updates on the Voluntary Severance scheme to our recognised Trade Unions and allow consultation on how the compulsory redundancy scheme within the School would be taken forward. Seven Additional JCCRA meetings have been held in total from 10 August 2016 to date.

5.3 Outcomes of Consultation

5.3.1 At each quarterly Redundancy Dismissal Panel and JCCRA meeting, a summary of the outcomes of the consultation process are presented and discussed. These are detailed below.

5.3.2 A breakdown of the outcomes of the cases presented to the JCCRA is available in Appendix B and a graphical representation of the outcomes of all cases is shown below. The graph from the previous year is also shown for comparison purposes. These figures relate to staff with projected end dates up to 30 November 2016.

5.3.3 These illustrate that the proportion of staff being made redundant unfortunately did rise during some months of last year, in particular between the months of December 2015 and July 2016. This rise appears to be linked to the decrease in the proportion of staff receiving a continuation of their current project/role. This may be reflective of the increasingly competitive nature of external funding environment. In addition a number of large grants/programmes concluded in 2016, including ‘Green Concrete’ and projects linked to the RESAS programme and as such staff working on this were unable to continue in their current role. The outcomes for October and November 2016 have seen a decrease in the proportion of staff being made redundant and a return to the same levels as last year. The number of staff being redeployed into a new/project role has remained relatively stable.

5.3.4 Overall, the last year has seen a small decrease in the proportion of staff being made redundant with 30% staff being confirmed redundant in 2015/2016 compared to 31% 2014/2015.

5.3.5 The tables beneath each graph show the number of individuals for the respective rolling year which each month represents the end of. This shows that the number of individuals entering the process has decreased.
The figures below show the number of individuals who were at risk of redundancy during the period 1 December 2014 to 30 November 2015 and are a numeric illustration of the percentages shown above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dec 14</th>
<th>Jan 15</th>
<th>Feb 15</th>
<th>Mar 15</th>
<th>April 15</th>
<th>May 15</th>
<th>June 15</th>
<th>July 15</th>
<th>Aug 15</th>
<th>Sep 15</th>
<th>Oct 15</th>
<th>Nov 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>334</td>
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<td>366</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures below show the number of individuals who were at risk of redundancy during the period 1 December 2015 to 30 November 2016 and are a numeric illustration of the percentages shown above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dec 15</th>
<th>Jan 16</th>
<th>Feb 16</th>
<th>Mar 16</th>
<th>April 16</th>
<th>May 16</th>
<th>June 16</th>
<th>July 16</th>
<th>Aug 16</th>
<th>Sep 16</th>
<th>Oct 16</th>
<th>Nov 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>342</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 A breakdown of the numbers of staff over the last year declared at risk of redundancy by staff category is provided in the table below. As in previous years the majority of ‘at risk’ staff are Researchers. This is due to the nature and funding of the project work on which they are engaged.

5.5 The next largest category is Academic Related there was no large group placed at risk. The majority of individuals within this number were supported by external funding, with others providing maternity or secondment cover. Some individuals engaged on teaching only contracts can also be placed at risk of redundancy. This is due to a number of factors such as providing cover for academic colleagues on secondment, maternity or research leave.

5.6 The number of support staff placed at risk of redundancy has increased 12 to 26 this year. This increase is connected in part to the Secondment of substantive staff to the Onesource project and the engagement of additional staff to cover their period of absence. However, it should be noted despite this increase, the number of support staff confirmed as redundant has remained low, with only 1 support member of staff being confirmed as redundant this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Category</th>
<th>Number of Individuals placed “At Risk” with a projected end date between 1 Dec 2015-30 Nov 2016</th>
<th>Number of Individuals placed “At Risk” with a projected end date between 1 Dec 2016-30 Nov 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Related</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.7 Outcomes of Consultation by Gender

5.7.1 An analysis of the Outcomes of Redundancy Consultation process by Gender can be seen below. Of the 337 staff that entered the consultation process 200 were female and 137 were male. The pie-charts below show that as with last year the outcomes for men and women at University are comparable, with 29% of male and 30% of female employees who enter the ‘at risk’ process being confirmed as redundant.
Outcome of Redundancy Consultation Process for Males
1 Dec 2015 to 30 Nov 2016

- New Project/Role: 36%
- Continuation of Project/Role: 29%
- Redundant: 22%
- Resigned/TUPE: 13%

Outcome of Redundancy Consultation Process for Males
1 Dec 2014 to 30 Nov 2015

- New Project/Role: 35%
- Continuation of Project/Role: 31%
- Redundant: 22%
- Resigned/TUPE: 12%
5.8 Individual Consultation

5.8.1 As highlighted in the 2015 report throughout the period of collective consultation we also have a statutory obligation to undertake consultation with individual members of staff at risk of redundancy. The individual consultation meetings are undertaken by the individual’s Head of School or Section or their nominated deputy. Individuals are entitled to be accompanied at these meetings by a person of their own choosing. In most cases those who choose to be accompanied are supported by an accredited Trade Union official although many individuals attend unaccompanied. The purpose of the individual consultation is to ensure individuals are clear of the reason why they are at risk of redundancy and to provide support and review options
for mitigating the risk of redundancy. A Redeployment Adviser provides support at these consultation meetings and will work with individual, if they wish, to help identify suitable alternative employment for them. In some circumstances individuals opt not to engage with the redeployment process, the most common reason for this is that the individual has previously been at risk of redundancy and feels familiar with the process. In these cases the Redeployment Adviser still continues to support individuals informally as required.

5.9 Outcomes of Individual Consultation

5.9.1 Generic training in the form of self-marketing workshops delivered by an outplacement company, CSP Scotland, are offered to all individuals at risk of redundancy.

5.9.2 As outlined previously these workshops provide help to staff with putting together CVs, interview skills and advice on marketing themselves and their skills in today’s competitive jobs market. The feedback received from the individuals who have attended these sessions continues to be very positive. The Redeployment team have continued to work to raise the profile of this course to those at risk of redundancy and this has had a positive effect with the number of individuals attending increasing again in 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of CSP Workshop</th>
<th>Number of Individuals Attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total 2014</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 2015</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 2016</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.9.3 In addition to the self-marketing workshops, individual sessions with CSP Scotland have been offered to staff a risk of redundancy.

5.10 Redeployment

5.10.1 Information on accessing redeployment vacancies is communicated to individuals at risk of redundancy prior to the individual’s 1st consultation meeting, The Redeployment Advisers provide detailed advice and guidance to individuals at the consultation meetings and as required on an informal basis.

6 OUTCOMES OF REDEPLOYMENT

6.1 Over the course of the last year a total of 149 posts have so far been advertised on the redeployment vacancies webpage, which is a decrease on the number of posts advertised last year. 51 applications were received from 34 different applicants.

6.2 Out of the 51 applications received, 39 were shortlisted for interview and 23 were subsequently appointed.

6.3 The relatively small numbers of applications is an ongoing trend from previous years. It is reflective of the often specialised nature of posts advertised within the University. Although, this year has seen a rise in the number of applications received and the number of staff appointed to a redeployment role. In 2014/2015 only 37 applications were received from a larger pool of applicants of which only 18 were subsequently appointed.

6.4 As indicated last year, not all vacancies are subject to being advertised at the redeployment stage. Agreement was reached at JCCRA to not normally advertise vacancies at Grade 1 or 2 levels at the redeployment stage. In addition, the decision taken by the Restructuring Committee in May 2015 that posts should be advertised internally to all staff and not just those at risk or redundancy in order to avoid increased staff costs while filling vacancies remains in place.

6.5 The Redeployment stage has also proved beneficial since its inception in supporting the Sickness and Attendance Management Procedure along with the Capability Procedure, both of which may recommend that an individual seeks redeployment into an alternative role.

6.6 Project SEARCH interns are also permitted to benefit from the redeployment stage as they are able to apply for vacancies at the University prior to external advertisement. This seeks to allow the University to further support interns in finding longer term employment opportunities
REDUNDANCY DISMISSAL PANEL

7.1 The Redundancy Dismissal Panel meets on a monthly basis to consider recommendations for dismissal in respect of individuals who still remain at risk of redundancy upon the conclusion of the collective and individual consultation processes. The table in Appendix C shows a breakdown of the number of cases considered by the Redundancy Dismissal Panel.

7.2 If, despite best efforts, a redundancy situation cannot be avoided, members of staff who have accrued two years continuous service at the date of their dismissal on the grounds of redundancy receive a statutory redundancy payment. During the 2015/16 financial year 67 individuals received redundancy payments totalling £156,069.69. This is an increase on 2014/2015 financial year when only 58 individuals received a £98,084.80 during this period.

7.3 Payment in lieu of notice (PILON) is paid when an individual’s full notice period is not met at the time of dismissal being confirmed. During the period 2014/2015 18 individuals received a payment in lieu of notice totalling £60,304.16. In the period 2015/2016 there has been a decrease in number of staff receiving PILON with only 9 individuals received a payment in lieu of notice totalling £43,452.49.

7.4 This decrease has resulted the review of processes by Human Resources following last year’s report which identified areas of improvement that would reduce the instances in which PILON is paid. Of the 9 individuals that received PILON, 4 experienced a period of long term sickness during the consultation process which delayed meaningful discussions about redundancy mitigation. In addition, it should be noted that almost half of the total PILON figure was paid to one individual with an unusually high salary (clinical consultant) as such it is anticipated that PILON can be lowered further next year.

7.5 A full breakdown of payments is available in Appendix E.

8 ONESOURCE

8.1 Redeployment and redundancy processes will be incorporated into OneSource to streamline the administrative tasks associated with the process, including automated triggers for generation of correspondence.

9 APPEALS

9.1 Members of staff are entitled to appeal against a decision which is taken to dismiss them on the grounds of redundancy. 176 notices of dismissal on the grounds of redundancy were issued during the period 1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016. Only 1 appeal was been received in connection with these.

10 OTHER CONTEXT

10.1 The report and the information contained within it should be taken in the context of the overall funding situation affecting the University, and the statutory framework within which it must operate.

11 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are financial implications in making statutory redundancy payments and payment in lieu of notice incurred. Resource is required in the form of staff members to carry out the process and the implementation of new IT systems involved.

12 RISK MANAGEMENT

12.1 There are risks involved with collective consultation in respect of adherence to statutory minimum requirements which if not met can result in a financial penalty. Risks from individual consultation are from the additional costs incurred with payment in lieu of notice, and also from possible litigation undertaken by individuals if standard procedure is not followed.
13 **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

13.1 The Avoidance of Redundancy Procedure has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment process and no additional issues with equality relevance have been identified within this paper. In addition an Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in connection with the Reshaping of the College of Life Sciences and Medicine.

14 **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

14.1 No areas of environmental, social or ethical impact have been identified.

15 **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

15.1 The University Court is invited:

i. To acknowledge the continued partnership working that has led to the ongoing success in the practical application of our collective and individual consultation procedures; and

ii. To note that we remain committed to enhancing the support provided to staff at risk of redundancy with the view to reducing the numbers of redundancies wherever possible.

16 **FURTHER INFORMATION**

16.1 Further information is available from Fiona MacAskill (ext 7077, email f.macaskill@abdn.ac.uk), Mrs Debbie Dyker, Director of Human Resources (ext 3732, email d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk).

Mrs Debbie Dyker
Director of Human Resources
December 2015 (Open)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board/Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previously considered by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Management Group</td>
<td>21/11/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further approval required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


JCCRA REMIT

The JCCRA’s remit is to:

- Provide a forum for consultation on matters relating to all proposed staff redundancies. Work with the HR Section to develop and review policies and provisions with a view to avoiding or reducing redundancies within the University and, where redundancies cannot be avoided, to mitigate the consequences of redundancies e.g. redeployment, retraining, careers advice and counselling, talent pool management, methodology for maximising job security in the context of diverse sources of funding, arrangements for voluntary severance and early retirement in the context of the avoidance of redundancies;

- Review and discuss overview information on potential redundancies in the period ahead: comprising the reasons for potential redundancies, numbers and descriptions of employees affected, total number of employees in each category and any University proposals for handling the potential redundancies including selection and compensation arrangements;

- Identify any areas of concern and advise on necessary action;

- Work with Redeployment Advisers to ensure that policies and provisions for the avoidance of redundancies are communicated appropriately to managers and staff.
# OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of JCCRA</th>
<th>Total New Cases Referred</th>
<th>Still at Risk</th>
<th>Continuation of Project/Role</th>
<th>New Role</th>
<th>Redundancy with Extension to Notice Period</th>
<th>Redundancy with Notice</th>
<th>Redundancy with PILON</th>
<th>Resignation</th>
<th>TUPE Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 December 2015</td>
<td>23 (21)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>6 (7)</td>
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<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 January 2016</td>
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<td>0 (1)</td>
<td>13 (6)</td>
<td>3 (5)</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>4 (7)</td>
<td>0 (3)</td>
<td>2 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9 (9)</td>
<td>8 (3)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>9 (6)</td>
<td>1 (0)</td>
<td>0 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1 (0)</td>
<td>16 (9)</td>
<td>6 (15)</td>
<td>2 (3)</td>
<td>8 (14)</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>1 (8)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>24 (28)</td>
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<td>5 (7)</td>
<td>8 (9)</td>
<td>0 (4)</td>
<td>7 (6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>4 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>4 (6)</td>
<td>0 (3)</td>
<td>0 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 May 2016 (June)</td>
<td>61* (30)</td>
<td>0 (1)</td>
<td>40* (14)</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
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<td>3 (2)</td>
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<td>21 (30)</td>
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<td>2 (14)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
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<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>4 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 September 2016</td>
<td>35 (69**)</td>
<td>25 (61)</td>
<td>5 (4)</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (0)</td>
<td>2 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 October 2016</td>
<td>17 (32)</td>
<td>17 (32)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
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<td>0 (0)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>312 (364)</strong></td>
<td><strong>72 (127)</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 (81)</strong></td>
<td><strong>42 (48)</strong></td>
<td><strong>11 (16)</strong></td>
<td><strong>61 (56)</strong></td>
<td><strong>7 (10)</strong></td>
<td><strong>18 (26)</strong></td>
<td><strong>0 (0)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures shown in red are the numbers of cases referred and the outcomes in the 2014/2015 period at the time of the 2015 Annual Report for comparison purposes.

*Includes individuals working on the TAURx project.
** Includes RESAS funded projects at the Rowett and HSRU projects.
## REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total Cases</th>
<th>Approved</th>
<th>Deferred</th>
<th>Out of Process*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 November 2015</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 December 2015</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 January 2016</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 February 2016</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 March 2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 April 2016</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May 2016</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 June 2016</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 July 2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 August 2016</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September 2016</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 October 2016</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*out of process* refers to those cases that were submitted to the Committee but were no longer at risk of redundancy on the date of the meeting. For example those that had received further funding.
## REDUNDANCY PAYMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CASS</td>
<td>£7,218</td>
<td>£16,274.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Divinity, History and Philosophy</td>
<td>£6,286</td>
<td>£7,192.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Education</td>
<td>£662</td>
<td>£958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Language, Literature,</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
<td>£1,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music and Visual Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Social Science</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
<td>£6,686.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Business</td>
<td>£270</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLSM</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Biological Sciences</td>
<td>£6,054</td>
<td>£16,649.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and</td>
<td>£44,911.34</td>
<td>£89,423.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Psychology</td>
<td>£2,523.28</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPS</td>
<td>£29,233.32</td>
<td>£32,875.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Engineering</td>
<td>£8,896.32</td>
<td>£5,666.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Geosciences</td>
<td>£12,992</td>
<td>£3,816</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Natural and Computing Sciences</td>
<td>£7,345</td>
<td>£23,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UO</td>
<td>£3,144.86</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£93,084.80</strong></td>
<td><strong>£156,069.69</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the 2015/16 financial year, 67 individuals received redundancy payments totalling £156,069.69

This table shows the amounts paid broken down by College and School. Due to the extent and nature of the research activities that are conducted within CLSM more staff enter the Avoidance of Redundancy Process in this College than any other. As such the largest proportion of payments has been made to individuals employed within this area.
## PAYMENT IN LIEU OF NOTICE

### Payment in Lieu of Notice Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of Divinity, History and Philosophy</th>
<th>£1,070.05</th>
<th>£6,312.51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Education</td>
<td>£908.68</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Language, Literature and Visual Culture</td>
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<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Social Science</td>
<td>£161.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Business</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration for CLSM</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Biological Sciences</td>
<td>£8,310.51</td>
<td>£3,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Psychology</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition</td>
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<td>£30,472.39</td>
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<td>£2,770.17</td>
<td>£0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Geosciences</td>
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<td>£2,967.42</td>
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<td>UO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£60,304.16</strong></td>
<td><strong>£43,452.49</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In 2014/2015 The School of Medicine & Dentistry, The School of Medical Sciences and the Rowett Institute of Nutrition & Health were reported separately, however they have been combined in the one School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition to reflect the current structure of the College.

Payment in lieu of notice is paid when an individual’s full notice period is not met at the time of their dismissal letter being issued. It should be noted that these figures account for cases where this included, for example, only a single day and in very few cases has a full notice period been paid in lieu.
1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 The University is required to comply with the standards and expectations outlined for research ethics and governance in the Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which was published in July 2012. As part of its obligations, the University is expected to provide a short annual statement to its governing body outlining various research governance related measures it has taken to ensure compliance with the Concordat throughout the previous year.

1.2 This paper provides Court with the annual statement (enclosed). The statement has previously been considered and approved, and by the University Management Group (UMG) at its meeting on 21 November 2016. The statement will also be made publically available via the University webpages.

1.3 This paper should be noted for information.

1.4 Further information may be obtained from Professor Bryan MacGregor (Vice Principal for Research) on (01224) 273 831 or b.d.macgregor@abdn.ac.uk, or Marlis Barraclough, Senior Policy Advisor, Research & Innovation, (01224) 273 787 or m.barraclough@abdn.ac.uk

2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 In July 2012, Universities UK (UUK) published the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The Concordat was developed in collaboration with a number of different bodies, including the funding and research councils, and the Wellcome Trust.

2.2 The Concordat is designed to provide assurances that the UK research community continues to apply its research the highest standards of rigour and integrity. It makes a clear statement that research integrity is a primary concern of all those involved with research.

2.3 In July 2013, the national funding bodies (HEFCE, SFC etc.) wrote to all institutions to outline requirements for compliance with the Concordat. It was noted that compliance was now effectively a condition of funding. Compliance at Aberdeen is monitored and managed through the Research Policy Committee.

2.4 The Concordat outlines five key commitments which Universities must adhere to in order to meet expectations and ensure compliance. Under Commitment 5, the University is required to present a short annual statement to its governing body (the University Court) which does the following:

- Provides a summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues (for example, postgraduate and researcher training, or process reviews);

- Provides assurances that the processes in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation;

- Provides a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken.

2.5 The statement prepared by the University is attached. This will also be made public via the institutional research governance webpages.
3. **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

3.1 This relates to and supports the strategic objective to maintain the highest standards of research ethics and governance.

4. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 N/A.

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

5.1 Failure to maintain high standards of research governance and failure to comply with the Concordat form part of the risk assessment for research (Strategic Risk STRA_2016-07). Enforcing compliance with the Concordat through our committee structure and staff development and training activities mitigates this particular risk aspect.

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 N/A.

7. **SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

7.1 N/A.

8. **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

8.1 Court is invited to note the attached statement, which will also be published on the University website.

9. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

9.1 Further information may be obtained from Professor Bryan MacGregor (Vice Principal for Research) on (01224) 273 831 or b.d.macgregor@abdn.ac.uk, or Marlis Barraclough, Senior Policy Advisor, Research & Innovation, (01224) 273 787 or m.barraclough@abdn.ac.uk

[16 November 2016] [1] [Open]
The University of Aberdeen seeks to achieve the highest standards in its research governance arrangements, recognising both the importance and centrality of rigour and integrity to high quality research performance. The University recognises that research integrity is a primary concern of all those involved with research, and that it is vital to have in place robust and effective processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct.

The University is committed to full compliance with all areas of the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which was first published in July 2012. It is an expectation of the SFC, RCUK and the Wellcome Trust, and therefore a requirement of funding, that all Universities comply with the guidance and commitments outlined in the Concordat. The University is required, under Commitment 5 of the Concordat, to submit an annual statement to its governing body (University Court) which summarises the actions and activities undertaken by the University to support and strengthen its research governance arrangements. The statement should also provide high level comment on any formal research misconduct investigations which may have been undertaken over the course of the previous year.

Statement of Compliance

This statement outlines steps the University has taken, and measures it has put in place, for compliance with the UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, as outlined in the Concordat under Commitment 5:

- Supporting and Strengthening Research Integrity: the University has taken a number of steps this year to strengthen its research governance arrangements.

  The University has launched an on-line training module on research ethics and governance which is available for self-directed study and assessment by staff of all disciplines. All staff are strongly encouraged to complete the training module. A similar module has been developed and launched specifically for Postgraduate Research Students. Completion of the training module will be monitored by the Research Policy Committee and through the Graduate School for Postgraduate Research Students.

  The University has also agreed to continue to undertake light touch governance and ethics ‘health checks’ of schools. These will ensure compliance with the Concordat at School level and identify weaknesses that need to be addressed and good practice that can be shared across the institution. The health checks will be carried out on a rolling basis.

  The Research Governance Handbook, which details policy and processes relating to research conduct across the University is currently under review, following significant organisational change and in the light of additional regulatory and statutory requirements. It was last reviewed and benchmarked against the Concordat using the UKRIO Self-Assessment Toolkit in 2015, and the current review will consider whether the University continues to comply. It is expected that the review will be completed by March 2017.

  The University has put in place a range of measures to enhance its health and safety arrangements, thereby supporting the delivery of high quality research whilst ensuring the optimal safety of research participants and staff.

- Research Misconduct – Systems and Incidents: the University has in place a robust system for dealing with allegations or incidents of research misconduct. These are outlined in detail in Section 4 of the University Research Governance Handbook. The University is satisfied that the systems in place provide comprehensive mechanisms for dealing with research misconduct, and that staff are provided with an appropriate range of options for reporting allegations of research misconduct. There are a number of different parties to whom an allegation can be reported, and in each case, the allegation will be taken in complete confidence.

  The University did not undertake any formal research misconduct investigations or consider any case over academic year 2015/16; no formal complaints were made. There have been several cases of minor infringements or potential near misses of governance arrangements. After investigation these have not warranted proceeding to formal disciplinary procedures. We remain alert to infringements and near misses so that we can engender a culture of learning and continuous improvement.