

Military Education Committee
(7 March 2013)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN and THE ROBERT GORDON UNIVERSITY
MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on 3 December 2012

Present: Dr J Grieve (**Convener**, UoA), Professor I Broom (RGU), Ms C Buchanan (RGU), Col D Chapman (HRFCA), Mr M Coombe (UoA), Sgt P Corral (ESUAS), Mr P Fantom (UoA), Professor R Flin (UoA), Mr J Lemon (UoA), WO1 (RSM) W McLaren (AUOTC), Professor P Robertson (RGU), Mr J Wyllie (UoA) and Ms Y Gordon (Clerk).

Apologies: Lieutenant Colonel P Binnie (AUOTC), Professor I Diamond (UoA), Wing Commander BJO Kennedy, Professor S Klein (RGU), Squadron Leader J Lafferty (ESUAS), Lieutenant J Martin (AURNU), Colonel AK Miller CBE (HRFCA), Professor von Prondzynski (RGU), Dr P Ziegler (UoA).

Minutes

- 1.1 The Committee approved the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 June 2012.
(copy filed as MEC/031212/001)

Matters Arising

Future of the AURNU in Aberdeen (Minute 2 refers)

2.1 The Convener reported that the URNU in Aberdeen no longer existed. HMS Archer had moved to the Firth of Forth, and URNU would now only recruit from universities in the Edinburgh area;

2.2 The Convener had written to Commodore Williams to air the concerns of the MEC. However, he heard of the demise of the Aberdeen URNU through the on-line HMS Archer newsletter, and only heard back from the Commodore a few days after the publication of the newsletter. The Principal of the University of Aberdeen also wrote to the Commodore stating his disappointment at the decision to disband the Aberdeen URNU.

2.3 The AURNU paraded for the last time in Aberdeen on Remembrance Sunday.

Elphinstone Defence Lecture 2013 (minute 4.2 refers)

2.4 The Committee noted that Colonel Matt Glunz, Commander, Joint Intelligence Operations Centre Europe Analytic Centre, Molesworth, United Kingdom, had accepted the invitation to present the eighteenth Elphinstone Defence Lecture on Thursday 7 March 2013 at 7.30pm in the Regent Lecture Theatre. The title of his lecture would be available shortly.

[Note by Clerk: The title of the lecture will be '*Informing Military Decision making – The Role of Academia*'.]

Prizes (Minute 5.3 refers)

2.5 The Committee considered proposals, going forward, on how best to deal with prizes. At the last meeting the Committee agreed to bring back proposals and possible criteria to the next meeting. For example, there could be a military prize, or a sporting prize, to be presented at the next Defence Lecture.

2.6 It was *agreed* that there could be £50 per participating Aberdeen student for the ESUAS flight expedition, up to a maximum of £500. Units should submit suggestions for prizes, eg for the best student in X, and if approved (by the Committee via circulation) the prizes would be presented at the Defence Lecture in March 2013.

Action: Units

2.7 Now that the AURNU has been disbanded the Convener should write to the URNU to ask that they return the following, on moral grounds:

- The RGU prize which was originally gifted about 10 years ago and is for the student who shows the best aptitude in engineering on the ship. It is a plaque with the RGU crest on it.
- The 'Old Salts Trophy' which is a solid silver salt cellar in the shape of a ships capstan, it stands about 6" high and is about 2" across; given in the late 70's / possibly early 80's by Iain Cuthbertson when he was Rector. It is awarded to the student demonstrating the best navigational skills.

Action: Convener

2.8 That the Convener would meet the new CO of the AUOTC in the New Year and would discuss possible prizes with him.

Action: Convener

Unit Progress Reports

3.1 The Committee considered reports from the Service Units:

AURNU	<i>(copy filed as MEC/031212/002a)</i>
AUOTC (Report tabled)	<i>(copy filed as MEC/031212/002b)</i>
ESUAS (Oral report)	<i>(copy files as MEC/031212/002c)</i>

AURNU

3.2 It was noted that 28 students remained from the Aberdeen URNU, with no new recruits.

AUOTC

3.3 The following points were noted:

- Commanding Officer Binnie had newly been appointed on a two and a half year contract, therefore substantive changes to the UOTC were not anticipated in the near future;
- A total of 53 had been recruited with a further 25 still going through the medical procedure;
- One cadet from Aberdeen had successfully completed the TA Commissioning Course at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst;
- Generally speaking, regular UOTC Army staff had found the cadets to be extremely inspiring individuals, a sentiment echoed by ESUAS staff.

ESUAS

3.4 The following points were noted:

- A total of 11 students had been recruited from Aberdeen (10 UoA and 1 RGU) with 19 total at present;
- If Leuchars was to close it was rumoured that the Unit would move to Perth. For Aberdeen students it would be no different time-wise than currently having to travel to Leuchars.

COMEC

4.1 Mr Lemon reported on the recent Council of the Military Education Committees (COMEC) meeting. The following points were noted:

- The changed format of meetings was welcomed by delegates, in that student cadets now give presentations to the COMEC;
- The new chair of COMEC is a former training officer;
- The highest ranking personnel from the RN present at the conference was a Chief Petty Officer.

4.2 The Committee hoped that going forward the COMEC would be robust.

Date of Next Meeting

5.1 The Committee agreed that the next meeting of the Committee should be on **Thursday 7 March 2013 at 4.30pm**, in advance of dinner for the EDL. The meeting and dinner will be hosted by the University of Aberdeen in the Linklater Rooms.

Committee Remit

6.1 The following remit was noted. It was approved in 1993 by the Court and Senate of the University of Aberdeen and by the Academic Council and the Board of Governors of the Robert Gordon University:

- (a) To direct the policy of the Officer Training Corps, the Air Squadron and Royal Naval Unit (the three Service Units) within the University of Aberdeen and the Robert Gordon University (the Aberdeen Universities).
- (b) To co-operate and liaise with the Ministry of Defence in all service matters affecting the Universities.
- (c) To encourage the study of National Defence within the Universities and to secure Military Science its due place in University studies.
- (d) To ensure that the time spent by students with the Service Units is not to the detriment of their academic studies.
- (e) To promote instruction and training for candidates for commissions in the Armed Services.
- (f) To foster an interest in, and an understanding of, the Armed Services and to provide leadership training in a military environment.

- (g) To approve recommendations for the posts of Commanding Officers of the three Service Units.

Membership

- 7.1 The relevant bodies of the Universities also agreed on the following composition (current members indicated):

The University of Aberdeen

Senate	Principal and 7 nominees: (Mr Combe, Mr Fantom, Professor Flin, Dr Grieve (Convener), Mr Lemon, Mr Wylie, Dr Ziegler)
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The Robert Gordon University

Board of Governors	Principal and 1 nominee (Professor Klein)
Academic Council	3 nominees (Professor Broom, Mrs Buchanan, Professor Robertson)

Ex Officiis

Post

Current individuals

CO AUOTC	Lieutenant Colonel P Binnie
Oi/c AURNU	Lieutenant J Martin RN
OC ESUAS	Squadron Leader J Lafferty RAF
Commander, 51 Bde	Brigadier P Harkness
CE, Highland RFCA	Colonel AKM Miller, CBE
FOSNENI Staff Officer	Lieutenant Commander G Atkinson RN
University Liaison Officer, Army	Lieutenant Colonel (ret'd) NS Southward
University Liaison Officer, RN	Lieutenant Commander S Lister RN
University Liaison Officer, RAF	Wing Commander BJO Kennedy *

ESUAS Flight Expedition

- 8.1 It was *noted* that a donation of £200 was made towards the ESUAS expedition. MEC members had agreed to donate £50 per participating Aberdeen student, up to a maximum of £500, however, no Aberdeen students were involved. MEC therefore made the donation as a one off gesture of goodwill and support. It was hoped that ESUAS would encourage Aberdeen students to participate in the future, remembering this gesture, and that the other Universities which were represented in ESUAS will recognise their responsibilities now and in the future.

Queens' Challenge Cup

- 9.1 It was noted that if any member of the MEC wished to attend this event they should inform Lt Col Young (so he could make appropriate arrangements). The event was an important date in the diaries of the UOTCs and provided an opportunity for MEC members to witness the sporting side of the OTC.

(copy filed as MEC/031212/004)

Action: Members