

**Report from the meeting of Senate held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

**1. Principal & Vice-Chancellor & Executive Board report to Senate**

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**External Environment**

**Research Funding**

GCU has received the indicative funding decisions for the Research Excellence Grant for AY 2015-16 to AY 2017-18. GCU's research funding will rise, in increments, to £2.738m in AY 2017-18 from £1.826m in AY 2014-15. The SFC funding model rewards only world-leading (4\*) and internationally excellent (3\*) work and the total amount of SFC research funding available has remained broadly unchanged (c£230m). The increase in GCU funding reflects significantly improved research performance in REF 2014 when 61% of the submission was rated 3\*/4\*.

**University Activities**

**RSE Fellow**

The Principal has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), joining 55 other leading citizens who span the arts, business, politics, science and technology who have been selected to join the RSE in its work to inspire knowledge and learning across Scotland. The list includes GCU Honorary Graduate Dr Mary Robinson, UN Special Envoy for Climate Change and former President of Ireland. GCU and the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice have worked together to establish a global research repository. Others leaders joining the RSE include Ian Rankin OBE, author; Sir George Reid, Former Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament; Baroness Ford of Cunninghame, Chairman of STV Group Plc, and eminent academics from universities across Scotland, including Professor Petra Wend, Principal and Vice Chancellor, Queen Margaret University.

**WE Day Celebration Dinner**

The Principal attended the Celebration Dinner for this year's WE Day, as the guest of GCU Honorary Graduate and Visiting Professor, Prof Eva Haller and GCU Honorary Graduate, Dr Yoel Haller. WE Day is an annual "youth empowerment" event, organised by the charity Free the Children, and the UK event is held at Wembley Arena. At the dinner, the Principal joined guests including Richard Branson and Martin Sheen. Chancellor Yunus later spoke at the WE Day event itself.

**SCQF Conference**

The Principal delivered a keynote presentation entitled 'Innovative RPL: Does it Exist?' at the 2015 SCQF Conference, on the invitation of its Chair, Sir Andrew Cubie. The presentation examined GCU's innovative approach to utilising Recognition of Prior Learning, and how this is practically supporting delivery, particularly in work based learning. Alasdair Allan MSP, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages also spoke at the event.

**Core Cities Devolution Summit**

The PVC Business, Innovation and Enterprise, participated in a panel session at the Core Cities UK National Devolution Summit, a day-long event, bringing together leading politicians, decision makers and academics to discuss how to devolve more powers to cities and their regions. Speakers included Danny Alexander MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury; Jim Murphy MP, leader of the Scottish Labour Party; Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities; Sir Richard Leese, Leader, Manchester City Council and Chair of Core Cities; and Cllr Gordon Matheson, Leader

of Glasgow City Council. Professor Sawers participated in a session called ‘What changes could devolution deliver?’ and highlighted the key role of universities in supporting economic development and community regeneration.

### **Caledonian Club**

The University has secured a donation of £60,000 from the Morgan Stanley International Foundation to deliver a new Caledonian Club project. Starting in July 2015, the Families Learning Together @ GCU project will bring together parents and children from five disadvantaged Glasgow communities for a unique summer school, designed to encourage positive family relationships and healthy life choices. Continuing the Caledonian Club’s innovative approach in engaging with parents, families will benefit from free educational activities such as cookery and nutrition, as well as social activities such as a family and child sports day.

### **Professor Ailsa McKay Commemorative Conference**

The late Professor Ailsa McKay has been celebrated by leading politicians, policy makers and academics at a conference in her honour, held at GCU. The conference highlighted Professor McKay’s interests in the economics of the welfare state, the reform of social security measures, women in work and the economics of gender inequality. The conference was organised by the Women in Scotland’s Economy (WiSE) Research Centre, which was established by Professor McKay. The Conference was addressed by the Deputy First Minister John Swinney MSP and the former First Minister the Rt Hon. Alex Salmond MSP, and the official welcome was delivered by the Principal.

## **International Activities**

### **Ashoka U**

The University has officially received its designation as a Changemaker Campus, in recognition of its global leadership role in promoting social innovation, at a ceremony held at the Ashoka U Exchange, the world’s largest gathering for social innovation education, bringing together 650 individuals representing over 120 institutions from more than 20 countries. The Principal joined global leaders from universities and colleges, social entrepreneurs and philanthropists to receive the award on behalf of the University. The Principal also took part in two panel discussions at the event, including a Senior Leadership Lunch, and a roundtable featuring Brent Carbajal, Provost, Western Washington University, Pat Reynolds, Dean of Faculty, Hamilton College, moderated by Kerry Healey, President Babson College. The Principal also attended the Presidents’ Track, a dedicated programme of networking events for leaders of Changemaker Campuses.

### **DVC – Trip to Australia**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor attended a Study Tour in Australia, visiting a series of institutions, including the University of Melbourne, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), Charles Sturt University, the University of South Australia, the University of Adelaide and Flinders University. The group met with senior ranking University leaders and discussed issues including policy issues in Australian HE, leadership and international collaboration. A follow up discussion on behalf of GCU is being progressed with RMIT, with a view to pursue an MOU in the area of Risk Management.

## **2. ELIR UPDATE**

Senate was provided with the early draft outcome report from the recent QAA Enhancement-led Institutional Review. The panel confirmed that the University has effective arrangements in place for securing academic standards and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience. This is the highest judgement that a panel can confer.

The panel identified five positive areas of practice relating to the student experience including students as partners; student support; internationalisation of the student experience; focus on employability and graduate attributes and supporting widening participation and transition. Areas for development were also identified and these included the research student experience; capturing the “off campus” student voice and feedback on assessment. The University will consider these matters in due course. The University will receive full Outcome Report and Technical Report on 12<sup>th</sup> June and it will be published on the QAA website at that time. The Principal thanked all staff and student participants for their engagement in the review process.

### **3. PEOPLE STRATEGY 2020**

As part of the consultation process Senate was invited to consider a paper outlining the draft People Strategy 2020. The People Strategy will support the delivery of the core 2020 Strategy including Strategy for Learning; Research and Internationalisation. Two key themes have emerged relating to the academic activities of the University; “Enhancing Capability” and “Working Well”. Senate noted the direction of travel on the development of the People Strategy. Consultation with other stakeholder groups will continue over the coming weeks.

### **4. MODULE EVALUATION FEEDBACK**

Senate was provided with an update report on the recent EvaSys module evaluation pilot. Module Evaluation Questionnaires are used to ascertain student satisfaction with their learning and teaching experience. Overall, the pilot was very well received by staff and a student response rate of 43.63% was recorded. Currently the University utilises a variety of methods to gather feedback in the academic schools. The aim is to adopt a consistent and strategic approach to gathering module feedback across the University and to ensure institutional oversight. Senate agreed that a business case outlining the resource implications be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

### **5. QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

Senate considered and approved changes to the Qualifications Framework. The Framework document has been updated to take into account a number of regulatory changes for example, the revised Assessment Regulations. Structural changes were also made to the document to make it more user friendly and updated terminology in line with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. The revised Qualifications Framework (version 6) can be accessed at <http://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/regulationsandpolicies/>

### **6. SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL (SFC) - OUTCOME AGREEMENT**

Senate noted the final Outcome Agreement for 2015-16 and 2017-18 following its submission to the SFC in February 2015. The Outcome Agreement is a negotiation between the University and the SFC in relation to the outcomes expected from GCU in return for public funding received. The University’s agreement is driven by our own strategic objectives whilst addressing Scottish Government and SFC priorities. The 3 year agreement is the product of consultation with staff and input from the Students’ Association. The University is performing well in terms of government and SFC priorities in areas such as

sustainability and adopting the living wage. Our HESA indicators have also shown much improvement. A summary document is available on the Strategy and Planning portal. The SFC will publish all Outcome Agreements for the sector alongside the final grant allocation in April 2015.

## **7. CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Code of Student Conduct was formally approved by Senate at its December 2014 meeting. Minor amendments have been made to the Code in light of feedback received such as the inclusion of process flow diagrams for ease of use. The revised code will be implemented from September 2015 and will be available on the Department of Governance and Quality Enhancement webpages and portal in due course.

## **8. SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL – REVIEW OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT FRAMEWORK**

Senate noted the University's response to the SFC's sector wide consultation on the Quality Enhancement Framework. This review will inform the strategic approach taken by the Higher Education sector in Scotland in relation to managing the quality of the student learning experience and providing public confidence in the quality and standards of higher education. Overall the University values the current collaborative partnership approach; the focus on enhancement; the engagement of students in quality management process and students as partners.

## **9. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT REVIEW – CALEDONIAN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING OMAN (CCEO)**

Senate received a report confirming the continued academic health of the collaborative partnership with CCEO. As part of the University's normal quality assurance and enhancement activities a 5 year review of the student learning experience was conducted by a panel of both internal and external peers. The review panel noted that students were particularly engaging, articulate and enthusiastic about their overall experience, the College in general and their programme so study. A number of areas of positive practice were identified including staff induction and peer support; the "open door" policy for students was deemed to be highly effective in encouraging student engagement and the panel commended the approach taken to the selection and approval of final year projects and opportunities for publications arising out of projects. A number of areas for enhancement were also identified including refreshing induction activities; expanding the use of the VLE and improvements to academic advising. Overall, Senate was assured of the continued effectiveness of the collaboration and student experience.

## **10. RESEARCH INSTITUTES AS VIRTUAL ENTITIES**

Senate members discussed the notion of Research Institutes as virtual entities following a Chair's Report to the Research Committee. It was explained that in implementing the Research Strategy 2020 and realising its ambitions, that the strategic approach to managing our research capability required a stronger central research infrastructure. The aim is to bring the research community together building on what we have achieved and providing

greater clarity on how we use research funding. Senate will consider a further paper on implementing the Research Strategy in due course.

#### 11. OTHER MATTERS APPROVED

- The undernoted honorary and visiting appointments

	<b>Post</b>	<b>Field of Expertise</b>
Prof Anthony Morgan	Visiting Professor in SHLS	Public Health Education and Research
Mr John McKay	Honorary Professor in Broadcast Journalism	Journalism

- Following recommendations from the higher Degrees Committee, Senate confirmed the award of 14 PhDs; 1 ProfD and 1 MPhil.
- Memorandum of Agreement for
  - Accreditation of BSc Oral Health Sciences (School for Dental Care professions at Glasgow Dental Hospital)
  - Joint delivery of award of PgC in Mental Health Social Work

#### 12. OTHER MATTERS NOTED

- The Senate and Senate Standing Committee Calendar of Meeting for session 2015-16
- The confirmed minutes of the Academic Policy Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014
- The confirmed minutes of the Research Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> November September 2014
- The confirmed minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014
- The confirmed minutes of the undernoted School Boards
  - SHLS – held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014
  - GSBS – held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2014
  - SEBE – held on 28<sup>th</sup> October and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014
- The highlights of the meeting of University Court held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015
- The updated Senate membership for Session 2014-15
- The date of the next meeting of Senate will be Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015