**DocUC14/18**

**(Confirmed)**

**University Court**

**Minutes of the meeting of the University Court held on 25th September 2014**

**(Minutes 14.01 – 14.37)**

**Present:** Mr Antony Brian, Chair

Mrs Rhona Baillie, Mrs Hazel Brooke (Vice Chair), Dr Douglas Chalmers, Mr John Chapman, Professor Pamela Gillies, Ms Laura Gordon, Mr Ian Gracie, Mr Tom Halpin, Mr Gordon Jack, Mr Austin Lafferty, Dr James Miller (via video conference link), Mr Michael Stephenson, Mr Iain Stewart, Miss Davena Rankin, Mr Alistair Webster, Dr Bob Winter, Professor Stephanie Young

**Apologies:** Mr David Wallace

**In attendance:** Ms Jan Hulme, University Secretary & Vice-Principal Governance

Mrs Claire Hulsen, Director of Strategy and Planning

Mr Alex Killick, Director of People

Professor Mike Mannion, Vice-Principal & Pro Vice Chancellor Research

Mr Gerry Milne, Chief Financial Officer & Vice Principal Infrastructure

Professor Lesley Sawers, Vice-Principal and Pro Vice Chancellor Business Development,   
 Enterprise and Innovation

Professor Karen Stanton, Deputy Vice Chancellor

Professor Valerie Webster, Vice-Principal & Pro Vice-Chancellor Communications & External Relations

Professor John Wilson, Vice-Principal & Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Student Experience

Ms Janice Bruce, Secretary

**Chair’s Opening Remarks**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2014/15 academic session.
2. On behalf of Court, the Chair congratulated Professor Karen Stanton on her appointment to her new role as Deputy Vice Chancellor.
3. Claire Hulsen, Director of Strategy and Planning would be in attendance for items 11.1 and 11.2 SFC Outcome Agreement 2015-2016: Guidance and Approach and Outcome Agreement Self-Evaluation Report 2013-2014 and item 12, National Student Survey Summary of Outcomes.
4. The Chair advised that the following items would be starred:

* item 3, the matters arising briefing note
* item 14, the Bank of Scotland Mandate and Facility Letter

1. The Chair advised that item 8, the GCUNY Update, would be an oral report.

**Minutes of the meeting of the University Court held on 3rd July 2014**

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| 14.01 | Agreed |  | Document UC14/01, the unconfirmed draft minutes of the Court meeting held on 3rd July 2014 were an accurate record. |

**Matters Arising Briefing Note**

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| 14.02 | Considered |  | Document UC14/02, which provided an update on matters arising from the meeting of Court held on 3rd July 2014. |
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| 14.03 | Reported |  | The Chair of Court reminded members that following discussion of the annual Key Performance Indicator Report for 2013-14 at the Court meeting held on 3rd July 2014, it had been agreed that the 2015 KPI on Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) should be more stretching. It was proposed that Court amend the current 2015 KPI to: “Achieve 8 KTPs and exceed the sector average”. |
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| 14.04 | Agreed |  | The proposed revision to the 2014/2015 key performance indicator for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. |

**Appointment of Chair of Court**

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| 14.05 | Considered |  | Document UC14/03, the recommendation regarding the appointment of the Chair of Court. |
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| 14.06 | Noted | i. | The Chair of the Court Appointing Panel reminded Court that the process for the appointment of a new Chair of Court, which Court had agreed at its meeting on 27th May 2014, had taken cognisance of the recommendations set out in the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. |
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|  |  | ii. | The Chair of Court Appointing Panel sought Court’s approval to appoint Mrs Hazel Brooke as Chair of Court from 6th February 2015 to replace Mr Tony Brian whose term of office and final term as a lay member of Court concluded on 5th February 2015. |
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|  |  | iii. | The Chair of Court Appointing Panel recommended that Court invoke its power to allow, exceptionally, a total period of lay membership (6 months) in excess of 9 years (with an absolute maximum of 12) to afford Mrs Brooke a full three year term of office. |
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|  |  | iv. | In response to a query about whether it would be possible, in future, to adopt a procedure whereby the Chair of Court commenced a new term of office upon being appointed, the University Secretary advised that the terms of the University’s Statutory Instrument did not envisage this and would not in any case allow the clock to be reset in such a way as to accommodate automatically an aggregate of Court membership of more than nine years or twelve in any circumstances. However, following the publication of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance which made this stipulation about new chairs of Court, the SI was being reviewed to identify a number of proposed changes for submission to the Privy Council. A paper would be submitted to Court for consideration at its meeting on 27th November 2014. |
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| 14.07 | Agreed | i. | To approve the appointment of Mrs Hazel Brooke as Chair of Court for a period of 3 years from 6th February 2015. Court offered its warmest congratulations to Mrs Brooke on her appointment. Mrs Brooke stated she was honoured to be appointed as Chair and thanked Court for its support. |
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|  |  | ii. | To invoke Court’s power to allow, exceptionally, a total period of lay membership (6 months) in excess of 9 years (with an absolute maximum of 12) to afford Mrs Brooke a full three year term of office. |

**Chair’s Report**

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| 14.08 | Noted | i. | Document UC14/04, a report from the Chair of Court on the activities he had undertaken and meetings he had attended on behalf of Court. The Chair drew Court’s attention to the dates of the visits to the Glasgow School *for* Business and Society on 23rd October 2014 and the School of Health and Life Sciences on 10th November 2014 and encouraged Court members to attend. |
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|  |  | ii. | The Chair informed Court that it had not been necessary for him to exercise the powers delegated to him over the summer recess. |

**Principal’s and Executive Board Report**

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| 14.09 | Noted |  | Document UC14/05, the Principal’s and Executive Board Report to Court. |
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| 14.10 | Reported |  | The Principal reported that, since writing her report, the University had achieved designation as a Changemaker Campus by Ashoka U in recognition of its global leadership role in promoting social innovation education. GCU would join the Changemaker Campus consortium, a dynamic, global network which contained many leading universities and colleges who shared inspiration, connections and support.  Professor John Wilson, Vice-Principal & PVC Learning and Student Experience and Professor Simon Teasdale, as Social Innovation Change Leaders at GCU, had presented GCU’s case in front of a panel of experts in the field as part of a rigorous process to decide whether the University qualified as a Changemaker Campus.  The endorsement by Ashoka U was further recognition of GCU’s commitment to embed social innovation as a core value in each academic school, department and research institute across the University’s campuses in Glasgow, London and New York.  Court offered its warmest congratulation to the University and to Professors Wilson and Teasdale on this achievement. |

**University Secretary’s Report**

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| 14.11 | Considered |  | Document UC14/06, the University Secretary’s Report. |
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| 14.12 | Noted |  | Court was required to reaffirm its Statement of Primary Responsibilities annually. |
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| 14.13 | Reported | i. | The University Secretary advised that, since her report had been written, the Scottish Funding Council had issued its final draft Financial Memorandum which the University had received that week. It was not expected that any further amendments would be made. The Financial Memorandum would be in force by early November 2014 and would be shared with Court at its meeting on 27th November 2014. |
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|  |  | ii. | The appraisal of the Chair of Court had been undertaken during the summer. A questionnaire was distributed to all Court members with an 84% return.  Following discussion of the anonymised findings and their satisfactory nature, which raised no issues of concern, the Vice-Chair provided feedback to the Chair using the summary findings and anonymised comments. |
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| 14.14 | Discussed | i. | Court’s programme of work for 2014/15, noting that this was likely to change throughout the year as issues emerged or were superseded or priorities changed. |
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|  |  | ii. | The calendar of Court and standing committee meetings for 2015/2016. It was recognised that, as the timetable was submitted to Court at the beginning of each academic year, it would inevitably be subject to some change throughout the year. |
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|  |  | iii. | The University’s response to the Committee of Scottish Chairs’ questionnaire on compliance with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. The University Secretary stated that there were some areas where the University’s governance arrangements were not yet wholly compliant due largely to constraints imposed by the terms of the Statutory Instrument. However, these issues would be captured as part of the changes which would be submitted to the Privy Council upon completion of the review of the University’s Statutory Instrument. |
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| 14.15 | Agreed | i. | To reaffirm the acceptance of the Statement of Court’s Primary Responsibilities as set out in appendix 1 to Document UC14/06. |
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|  |  | ii. | Court’s programme of work for 2014/2015 subject to two amendments:     1. The annual update on the People Strategy would be submitted to the Court meeting on 27th November 2014; 2. The Health and Safety Policy would be submitted to the Court meeting on 19th March 2015. |
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|  |  | iii. | To endorse the University’s response to the Committee of Scottish Chairs’ questionnaire on compliance with the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance. |

SFC Outcome Agreement 2015-2016: Guidance and Approach

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| 14.16 | Noted |  | Document UC14/11, an overview of the SFC guidance and the University’s proposed approach for the development of the Outcome Agreement 2015-2016. |

**Outcome Agreement 2013-2014: Self-Evaluation Report**

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| 14.17 | Considered |  | Document UC14/12, an initial draft of the self-evaluation report required by the Scottish Funding Council as a progress update on targets and activities agreed for the 2013/14 Outcome Agreement. |
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| 14.18 | Reported |  | By the Director of Strategy and Planning that overall, there was good progress in a number of areas, especially in relation to articulation. |
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| 14.19 | Discussed |  | Court commended the paper with one governor suggesting that it could be a useful addition to the governor induction material. |
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| 14.20 | Agreed |  | To endorse the Outcome Agreement 2013/2014 self-evaluation report for submission to the SFC by 31st October 2014. |

**GCU New York Update**

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| 14.21 | Received |  | An oral update from the PVC Research & Academic Provost GCUNY on the development of GCU New York. Main points highlighted included: |
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|  |  | i. | GCUNY’s legal counsel had been in contact with the State Education Department (SED) about the progress of the application for the educational licence and would keep this under review. |
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|  |  | ii. | GCUNY Inc. had now received charitable status (501c3) which would enable it to approach potential donors. |
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|  |  | iii. | The GCUNY Vice President was continuing to raise the University’s profile and esteem through initiatives such as the series of Town Hall Lectures which were attracting high profile organisations who wished to speak at GCUNY and the Fair Fashions Convention. |
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|  |  | iv. | Some Executive Education classes had been confirmed and a number of opportunities were being explored. |
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| 14.22 | Discussed | i. | In response to a query about sharing the minutes of the GCU NY Board meeting, Court was advised that these would be submitted to the next Board meeting on 27th November for approval following which the approved minutes would be circulated to Court. |
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|  |  | ii. | Responding to a query about cost implications of the length of time involved in gaining the educational licence, the Principal stated that it had been known from the outset that this would take eighteen to twenty-four months to be concluded. In the interim a significant amount of work was being carried out successfully to build GCUNY’s esteem and to gain recognition for its entrepreneurial spirit. |
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|  |  | iii. | It was agreed that it would be helpful for Court members if progress could be reported against the original business plan as well as the current budget. |
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|  |  | iii. | In response to a request, the Vice-Principal & Pro Vice Chancellor Research stated that he would arrange photographs of the internal fit-out at GCUNY for Court’s information. |

*[Secretary’s note: Photographs were made available at the Court Away Day on 7th and 8th October 2014.]*

**Research Strategy**

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| 14.23 | Considered |  | Document UC14/08, the Research Strategy which set out the University’s strategic objectives for research until 2020. |
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| 14.24 | Reported | i. | The PVC Research stated that the Research Strategy encompassed the University’s mission whilst focusing on areas of strength. Senate had approved the strategy at its meeting on 13th June 2014 following an extensive and robust discussion. The Strategy provided a solid foundation from which to develop processes and plans to deliver the strategic objectives for research until 2020. |
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|  |  | ii. | The key performance indicators would be revisited once the University had received the results of the REF on 18th December 2014 and adjustments made to the details of some of the operational plans if necessary. |
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| 14.25 | Discussed | i. | Court commended the comprehensive nature of the strategy. |
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|  |  | ii. | The academic staff governor suggested that, in addition to the research undertaken for the REF, it might be useful if Court had a broad awareness of areas of research being developed by early researchers. The University Secretary stated that Caledonian Connected was a useful source of information for governors. |
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|  |  | iii. | There was some discussion about the requirement which the four UK higher education funding bodies were introducing that outputs submitted to the post-2014 REF be made available in an open-access form policy. The PVC Research stated that the University was committed to publishing the outcomes of publicly funded research as soon as possible. One member suggested that this commitment might be made more explicit in the Research Strategy. |
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| 14.26 | Agreed |  | To endorse the Research Strategy. |

**Staff Policy Committee Report: 10th September 2014**

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| 14.27 | Noted | i. | Document UC14/09, a report on the substantive issues of business discussed at the Staff Policy Committee meeting on 10th September 2014. |
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|  |  | ii. | The full annual report on the People Strategy would be submitted to the Court meeting on 27th November 2014. |

**Staff Survey 2014**

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| 14.28 | Noted | i. | Document UC14/10, a high level summary of the results of the 2014 Staff Survey and planned next steps. |
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|  |  | i. | By the Director of People stated that, overall, the results showed continued improvement in most areas. However, there were areas where increased effort would be required over the next eighteen months to achieve the challenging targets which had been set. |
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|  |  | ii. | Further analysis was being undertaken on the breakdown of responses to understand what lay below the figures. |
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|  |  | iii. | Court commended the progress made to date but acknowledged that the University still wished to improve in a number of areas. |

**National Student Survey 2014**

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| 14.29 | Noted | i. | Document UC14/13, an overview of the results of the National Student Survey 2014. |
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|  |  | ii. | Court welcomed the improved results with regard to the Students’ Association which was testament to the significant amount of work which had been undertaken in this area during 2013/2014 in particular. |
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|  |  | iii. | Work was still required to improve results in some areas, for example assessment and feedback. The University would continue to engage with the student population to find ways of improving satisfaction in these areas. |

**Annual Institutional Statement to the Scottish Funding Council of Internal Review Activity**

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| 14.30 | Considered |  | Document UC14/14, the Annual Statement to the SFC on Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review and Quality Assurance Arrangements for the academic session 2013/2014 and document UC14/15, the Annual Statement of Assurance for the Scottish Funding Council. |
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| 14.31 | Discussed |  | The Principal referred to the thematic reviews which the Quality Assurance Agency had undertaken in those universities which had a sub-campus in London. The QAA had commented positively on the way in which GCU applied its quality assurance arrangements. The Chair of Court commended all those involved in achieving such a successful outcome. |
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| 14.32 | Agreed |  | To approve the annual statement to SFC on internal review activity for 2013-2014 as presented in document UC14/14. |

**Annual Renewal of Facility Letter and Resolution with Bank of Scotland plc**

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| 14.33 | Considered |  | Document UC14/09, requesting the approval of   1. the Facility Letter which is joint between the University and GCUC Ltd and GCU Academy Ltd, replacing the Letter approved by Court in September 2013; and 2. a Resolution to reapprove the Facility with Bank of Scotland plc replacing the Resolution approved by Court in September 2013. |
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| 14.34 | Reported |  | By the Chief Financial Officer & Vice Principal Infrastructure that the Facility Letter had previously been reviewed in full by the University’s lawyers and that it and the Resolution remained unchanged from those approved in September 2013. |
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| 14.35 | Agreed |  | To approve the renewal of the Facility Letter and Resolution. |

**Principal’s Objectives 2014/15**

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| 14.36 | Noted |  | Document UC14/17 which outlined the Principal’s overarching objectives for 2014/15. |

**Date of next meeting**

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| 14.37 | Noted |  | The next meeting of Court would be held on Thursday 27th November 2014 at 4.30pm. |