

Glasgow Caledonian University Court

Minutes of the meeting of the University Court held on 2 May 2019 at 9am in the Lantern

Present: Rob Woodward (Chair)
Dr Douglas Chalmers, Dr Morag Ferguson, Campbell Fitch, Sylvie Freund-Pickavance, Daniel Gallacher, Professor Pamela Gillies, Laura Gordon, Dr Bill Gunnyeon, Asif Haseeb, Gordon Jack, Ian Kerr, Sharon Lowrie (by phone), Meg Lustman, Neena Mahal, Dr Davena Rankin, Rachel Simpson, Lesley Thomson, Alistair Webster, Professor Stephanie Young (Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Professor James Miller, Professor Ann Priest, Paul Reynolds,

In attendance: Professor Cam Donaldson, Pro Vice Chancellor Research
Eilidh Fulton, Student President Designate
Jan Hulme, University Secretary & Vice Principal Governance
Claire Hulsen, Director of Strategy & Planning
Seonag MacKinnon, Director of Communications & Public Affairs
Adrian Lui, Equality & Diversity Advisor (from item 12 onwards)
Susan Mitchell, Chief Operating Officer
Yetunde Ogedengbe, Vice-President (SHLS), GCU Students' Association
Paul Queen, Director of Finance
Professor Valerie Webster, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Deborah Donnet, Assistant Head of Governance (Secretary)

By Invitation Ms Jacqueline Merchant

Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair extended a welcome to a new lay governor, Campbell Fitch, who was attending his first meeting of the Court; to Eilidh Fulton, Student President Designate, who would take up her role as a Court governor from 3 June when her term of office as President commences; and to Jacqueline Merchant who was shadowing the Principal for the day as a participant in this year's Jo Cox Women in Leadership programme. Mr Fitch, a GCU alumnus, outlined his international career and current role which now allowed him to contribute to the work of the Court.

Student governor, Rachel Simpson, student observer, Yetunde Ogedengbe, and lay governor, Laura Gordon were all attending their last meeting of Court. The Chair warmly commended Ms Simpson and Ms Ogedengbe on the outstanding student ambassadorial role they had played, their skill in creating a platform to project the student voice and their consummate professionalism in their roles. Turning to Ms Gordon the Chair paid tribute to the unstinting service she had given to Court over the past nine years and the superb role model she offered as a lay governor whose commitment, candour, passion and ambassadorial zeal were exemplary. The Principal offered her personal thanks to Ms Gordon for her energy, her straightforward approach which combined constructive challenge with supportiveness, and her profound recognition of the realities of leadership. On behalf of the Court the Chair thanked all three for their excellent contributions and approach.

The Chair expressed the Court's appreciation for the thought-provoking talk given to Court by Professor Mike Mannion, Assistant Vice-Principal (Academic) & Professor of Computing, on the preceding evening and the stimulating discussion it had prompted on the benefits and risks of the use of technology to deliver personalised student services.

The Court meeting would be followed by a short visit to the Students' Association for presentations and discussion with the student officers and the Association's CEO.

The Chair noted that Item 13 should be starred for approval.

1. Minutes of the meeting of the University Court held on 14 March 2019

The minutes of the previous Court meeting were approved by circulation prior to the Court meeting.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 It was noted that the outstanding matters arising relating to Graduate Apprenticeships had now been addressed with information circulated to Court members. Further briefing would be supplied if opportunities emerged for formal introductions.

2.2 Court noted the Register of Interests of members and those in attendance and members were reminded of their responsibility to advise the Court secretariat of any changes as they arose. No changes or additional interests were notified.

3. Items Brought by the Chair of Court

3.1 The Chair would consider the Link scheme in light of feedback to date and the appointment of new lay governors. Feedback was very positive for the most part and any issues, such as the number of link responsibilities held by some governors, would be resolved. The matter would be discussed further with governors over the summer.

3.2 It was agreed that the now annual risk workshop with Court members would be held **at 4.30 pm on Wednesday 19 June.**

3.3 This was the first meeting where governors had not been issued with any hard copy papers to supplement the electronic versions. The transition appeared to have gone smoothly and governors were thanked for their readiness to embrace the change which was intended to deliver greater convenience combined with significant resource efficiency. The intention was to develop the Library function of Convene to allow members easy access to key documents such as the Risk Register.

3.4 The Vice-Chair had attended the Meeting of the Chairs of Scottish Courts on the Chair's behalf and reported highlights including discussion with the Minister where the value the government placed on higher education was emphasised as were the government's funding constraints. The Minister had acknowledged the importance of supporting a diverse sector and promoting the Scottish HE brand internationally.

4. Principal's and Executive Board Report

4.1 The Principal presented her report drawing particular attention to the SFC strategic dialogue visit which had taken place recently and where a positive engagement with the SFC team had culminated in their observation that the University should be bolder in communicating the extent and richness of its excellence and achievement. It was proposed by a governor that, although there were opportunities for staff to meet with the SFC team including the staff governors, a staff governor should be involved more extensively in future. The briefing documents for the visit were commended and it was agreed that these should be placed in the Court's electronic Convene library.

4.2 There was an update on progress being made in GCNYC including the University's accelerated journey towards full Middle States accreditation, the process for acquiring Title IV status and the

work in hand to recruit internationally in light of the acquisition of the SEVP permissions. The Principal briefed Court on an issue that had arisen and had been appropriately resolved.

- 4.3 Graduation fees continued to be a contested issue in higher education and the Principal confirmed that the University, which had already introduced change in consultation with the Students Association for the current year, would continue to work with the Association on details with a view to further changes for the following year.
- 4.4 Discussions with the Students' Association would proceed so that the Association could move to well adapted and attractive new premises in two phases.
- 4.5 A meeting was sought with the CEO of Glasgow City Council to discuss the potential impact on the University of the successful equal pay claim against the City Council brought by Council/ALEO staff.
- 4.6 The University's outstanding success in appearing in the global top 50 universities in the THE Social Impact league table was warmly commended by Court. There would be a fuller briefing and analysis at a later meeting which would address the University's performance in all the league tables.

ACTION: A Staff Governor to be involved more extensively in future Strategic Dialogue meetings (Principal). Strategic Dialogue briefing documentation to be placed in Convene library (Acting Head of Governance).

5. Student President's Report

- 5.1 The President highlighted the constructive talks about the move of the Students Association and the successful launch of the Mental Health agreement between the University and the Association.
- 5.2 The Chair commended the President and her team on their role in securing good student engagement with the development of the University's 2030 strategy.
- 5.3 The Chair encouraged lay governors to join him at the regular informal meetings he, the Vice-Chair, University Secretary and Mr Gallacher (the link governor for the Association) held with the student officers. Mr Gallacher endorsed this and suggested governors should attend the Association's teaching awards ceremony on 16 May 2019.

6. Chief Operating Officer Report

The Chief Operating Officer presented her report which was a platform for any key issues relating to students, people, finance or IT to be brought to Court's attention. Topics included work underway to understand the University's staff cost profile and the move of the Students' Association and its interface with the expected siting of the new TIC (The Imaging Centre) in the ground floor of the existing building in the autumn. Following discussion, the Court noted the report and it was agreed to circulate further information, including images of the TIC.

ACTION: Images of the TIC to be circulated (Acting Head of Governance)

7. University Secretary's Report

- 7.1 The Court noted the report.
- 7.2 The revised draft of the proposed Election Rules was approved following further discussion and reaffirmation of the Court's decision to move from FPTP to AV voting. The Court noted the Professional and Support Staff Governor's concern about the introduction of AV for the

forthcoming staff governor elections. Reassurances were given that staff would be provided with clear guidance regarding voting procedure.

- 7.3 The Court noted the Calendar of Court Meetings. It was agreed to review the dates of the December meetings of the People Committee in 2020 and 2021.

ACTION: December 2020 and 2021 People Committee dates to be reviewed (Acting Head of Governance)

8. Student Recruitment and Admissions

The report provided an early view of 2019/20 Tri A Student Recruitment. The Court noted the report.

9. International Student Barometer 2018/19 results

The Court was pleased to note the generally excellent results which were important for marketing purposes but did not feed through into league tables.

10. Development of Strategy 2030

The Director of Strategy and Planning presented the report, pointing out that the consultation had been well supported and positive. Analysis was underway and the Court would receive a further report in June.

11. Draft GCU Risk Management Policy

11.1 Court praised the document and noted that at the SFC Strategic Dialogue meeting, reference had been made to the University's leading position in this field, and the internal auditors too had been very complimentary.

11.2 To complement the occasions when the Court would address risk and the register fully, risk would be a standing item in the Principal's future reports with a flag showing whether the register had undergone any changes since the last meeting of Court.

11.3 Court **approved** the revised Risk Management Policy.

ACTION: Director of Finance to implement changes to the Risk Management Policy.

12. Public Sector Equality Duty Report

12.1 The Court welcomed the Equality and Diversity Advisor, Adrian Lui and commended the report. Discussion covered the use of data; the role of the People Committee; the good working relationship on this agenda between the University and the unions; areas that would be the focus for development with particular references to ethnicity where it was suggested that there should be a further breakdown of the data to show ethnicity by domicile; and the importance of a strong, compelling narrative about the University. Noting the University's many strengths revealed in the report's content, Court agreed that it should hear more at a future Court meeting about the University's approach to Communications and Public Relations.

12.2 The Court **approved** the Report without amendment for publication.

13. Standing Committee Business

13.1 The Court **noted** a report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee which updated the Court on the issues discussed and decisions made by the Committee at its meeting on 8th April

2019. It was highlighted that the Draft Budget 2019/2020 would be presented to the next Court meeting for approval.

13.2 Court **noted** a report from the People Committee which updated the Court on the issues discussed and decisions made by the Committee at its meeting on 20th March 2019. Court welcomed the success of the new format of the Committee's meetings which included a deep dive into a key topic, race equality having been the theme at the March meeting.

13.3 The Court noted the report from the Audit Committee of 15th April 2019. The Court **approved** the amended Terms of Reference to include reference to Information Governance. It was further noted that the Audit Committee Chair had requested that other Committee Chairs review the Risk Register to identify risks on it that were appropriately monitored by their Committee.

The meeting concluded with a statement by Laura Gordon who paid eloquent tribute to the University, its impact on her and the vision of its leadership.