

COURT BULLETIN: 23 NOVEMBER 2017

Dear Colleagues

This University Court Bulletin provides a high-level summary of the main issues discussed by Court and will be available on the University website after each meeting. The bulletins are not a formal record of the Court meeting. Minutes of the Court meetings are also published on the University website.

Appointment of Chancellor

The Principal advised Court that after five years in the role of Chancellor of GCU, Professor Muhammad Yunus was now stepping down from this position. In warm recognition of Professor Yunus' commitment to remaining a lifelong friend of the University, the Court took much pleasure in conferring the title of Emeritus Chancellor on him.

The Principal advised Court that Dr Annie Lennox OBE, Royal Academician, singer songwriter, highly-respected social activist and philanthropist, had agreed to be the new Chancellor of GCU. Court was delighted to receive this news and approved the appointment of Dr Lennox to this position.

The Principal noted that Dr Lennox's installation as Chancellor would take place at a ceremony at GCU on 2 July 2018.

Draft Annual Financial Statements for year ending 31st July 2017, Letters of Representation and Compliance with Financial Covenants

Court approved the Annual Financial Statements and External Audit Letter of Representation for the year ended 31st July 2017 and noted the University's compliance with the financial covenants.

Court noted that the annual financial statements for the University's subsidiary companies had been approved by the Board of directors of the respective companies.

2017-2018 Trimester A Student Recruitment

Court received an overview of student numbers for Trimester A of Academic Year 2017-18 based on registrations at GCU as at 13 November 2017. Court noted the main highlights which included:

- (a) The University was expected to be comfortably within the SFC student number limits for non-controlled subjects in academic year 2017-18.
- (b) For 2017-18, the position for new intake and continuing RUK undergraduate student numbers was at 93% of the Trimester A target.
- (c) The University had exceeded target for Trimester A new and continuing international students by 1% and was 12% above the final 2016-17 Trimester A position.
- (d) Due to strong recruitment from the UK/EU market, GCU London was at 133% of its student number target.

School for Work-Based Education Report

Court received an update on current and emerging projects being developed by the School for Work Based Education (SWBE) and projects led by SWBE in collaboration with other Schools. Court noted

the update and requested that routinely core information including the full pipeline of projects and the state of play with each as well as the expected value, cost and contribution of each and its RAG rating should be provided to a future meeting.

GCNYC

Court received an update on the overall position of GCNYC which included details of the inaugural meeting of the GCNYC Board of Trustees, the Middle States accreditation process (the recognition required to allow GCNYC to recruit internationally and to recruit students who required financial aid to pursue their studies), student recruitment and progression and of profile raising events for GCNYC.

Student Information Management System Project Report

Court received a progress update on the SIMS project. The revised timeframe for the project was 33 months, with full implementation planned for July 2020 and key functionality would be staged throughout the implementation.

SFC Outcome Agreement Guidance and Approach

Court received an overview of the Ministerial Letter of Guidance to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the guidance from the SFC in relation to the development of the University's institutional Outcome Agreement for 2018-19. Court was advised that the Scottish Government priorities were unchanged and that there remained a particular focus on widening access and the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for Widening Access.

GCU Corporate Risk Register

Court considered the GCU Corporate Risk Register which included details of significant changes that had been made to the Corporate Risk Register since last presented to Court in February 2017. The DVC Strategy advised Court that the University also maintained a Risk Event Log and that the process for determining what constituted a risk event would be reviewed further at the next meeting of the Risk Management Forum.

Senate Effectiveness Review

Court considered a summary of the Senate Effectiveness Review that had been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance and set out the recommendations made by the Senate Effectiveness Review Working Group. The Chair of the Senate Effectiveness Review Working Group advised Court that there was strong committed engagement by Senate in the review with a very positive outcome overall.

Annual Reports

- **Audit Committee Annual Report 2016/2017**

Court approved the Audit Committee Annual Report covering the work undertaken by the Committee in its fulfilment of terms of reference and compliance with Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requirements for the year to 31st July 2017 which would be submitted to the SFC.

- **Remuneration Committee Annual Report 2016/2017**

Court approved the Remuneration Committee Annual Report which incorporated details of the basis of all decisions about the salaries and terms and conditions of service for the Principal and other members of the Executive along with information concerning external comparators and other background information used by the Committee in making its decisions. Court approved the recommended remuneration of the Principal.

- **Senate Annual Report to 31 July 2017**

Court received an overview of the work undertaken by Senate during Session 2016/2017 to fulfil its terms of reference.

Court noted that the annual report from Senate was considered and approved by Senate at its meeting on 13th October 2017

Regular Updates

The following regular reports are submitted to each Court meeting.

- **Chair of Court's Report**

The report provided a summary of activities the Chair of Court had undertaken and meetings she had attended on behalf of Court. In particular the Chair noted that the Court Open event had taken place on 22nd November 2017. Approximately 25 members of staff attended the presentation and panel discussion, the latter moderated by a lay Court member.

- **Principal & Vice Chancellor & Executive Board Report**

The report provided a summary of substantive items considered by the Executive Board since the previous Court meeting in September 2017, issues arising in the external environment which impact on GCU and University activities.

- **University Secretary's Report**

The report provided a summary of work relating to areas of governance and legislative changes pertinent to the work of Court and the University. Main issues highlighted included:

Court considered the outcomes of the Court Effectiveness Review and the recommendations and proposed actions that had either been taken or were planned.

Court noted the initial work being undertaken in relation to the University's obligations under the Criminal Finances Act 2017.

- **Reports from Court Standing Committees**

Court noted reports from the Audit Committee, the Finance & General Purposes Committee, the Health and Safety Committee and the Staff Policy Committee on issues discussed since the last Court meeting.

Court approved changes to the Audit Committee Objectives and Terms of Reference following the appointment of the GCNYC Audit Committee at the meeting of the GCNYC Board of Trustees meeting on 26 October 2017.

Court approved the People Strategy Review 2016/17 and 2017/18 implementation.