

SUMMARY REPORT OF COURT 20th SEPTEMBER 2019

The University Court met today, 20 September 2019 and welcomed to his first meeting David Halliday, the new governor elected by professional and support services staff in June. Court also extended a welcome to Lucy Strachan, our new Head of Governance. Yesterday evening the Court, together with students and members of staff, heard from Bernard Ponsonby, STV's Political Editor, who gave fascinating insights into Brexit as the journey continues and new aspects of the story unfold. Following today's Court meeting governors talked with students and staff before joining the audience for this session's first event in the Coffee, Cake and a Concert series the with a superb performance by the internationally recognised Professor Aaron Shorr, Head of Keyboard, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and Hyeon-Jeong Ro, flautist, also from the Conservatoire.

What follows is a high-level summary of the main issues addressed by Court today, which will also appear on the University website. Minutes of the meeting will be published on the University website in due course.

Rob Woodward
Chair of Court

1. Court Evaluation

The Chair provided a high level summary of the annual Court evaluation process which included his one to one meetings with all governors.

2. Principal & Vice Chancellor & Executive Board Report

The report provided a summary of items arising since the previous Court meeting. Among topics highlighted were the University's priorities for 2019/20 and its inclusion for the first time in the QS World University Rankings 2020, the launch of a sector guarantee to care-experienced applicants on campus, the University's nomination for a UK Social Mobility Award and its shortlisting for The Higher Education (THE) Awards. The report also drew attention to the tough funding environment, the Scottish Funding Council's priorities for 2019/20, the challenging efficiency savings which the University is set each year by Government and the welcome new scope for international recruitment resulting from the two-year post-study work visa being introduced for students starting courses from 2020. The Court also noted the imminent appearance of the Sunday Times League Table and the recent publication of Audit Scotland's report on Higher Education.

3. Student President's Report

The Student President, Eilidh Fulton, reported on the Students' Association's current issues and activities and presented the Students' Associations' performance against Key Performance Indicators. Court also reviewed the objectives for 2019/20.

4. Chief Operating Officer's Report

The Court noted the report which referred to topics relating to finance, staffing and the estate and drew attention to the development of a new online support resource as part of the mental health at work project.

5. University Secretary's Report

The Court noted the report and approved the Statement of the Court's Primary Responsibilities and the University's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for 2018/19 which will be published in the Annual Accounts. The Court noted that the University's first annual stakeholder meeting will be held on Thursday 21 November 2019.

6. Strategic Report 2018-19 – Review of progress against Strategy 2020 KPIs

The Court considered the report noting the University's strong performance against many of the KPIs in challenging circumstances and examining those areas where performance had been lower than expected.

7. Annual report on institutional-led review of quality and governing body statement of assurance for AY2018/19

Court endorsed the submission to the Scottish Funding Council of the Annual Statement on Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review and Quality Assurance Arrangements for the Academic Year 2018-19. This statement provides commentary on the University's quality assurance and enhancement processes and activities as part of the University's annual reporting to the SFC.

8. ELIR 4 Draft Reflective Analysis (RA)

The Court noted the report, the work underway and the valuable insight the document provided into the University's learning and teaching activity.

9. National Student Survey 2019

The Court noted the report from the DVC Academic on the University's performance in the 2019 NSS at institutional, School, programme and subject level. While many areas of the University had performed extremely well, further action was needed to enhance the University's performance in this key measure.

10. Longitudinal Education Outcomes 2019

Court discussed the report which was based on provider and subject level employment and earnings outcomes of UK domiciled first degree graduates one, three and five years after graduation.

11. Research Trimester C Report 2018-19

The Court noted the report including staff successes with the Economic and Social Research Council.

12. African Leadership College (ALC) Partnership: Report on Annual Academic and Contract Review

The Court noted the report which provided an update on the progress of the ALC partnership for 2018-19.

13. Chair of Court Appraisal

The Vice-Chair of Court led this discussion in accordance with the 2017 Code of Good HE Governance.

14. Date of next Court meeting

There will be a Court Strategy day on 17 October 2019.

The next meeting of Court will take place on Friday 22 November 2019.