

MINUTES OF UNIVERSITY COURT

25 January 2021

Meeting held by videoconference

Present: Dame Sue Bruce (Convener), Paula Galloway (Vice-Convener), Professor Sir Jim McDonald (Principal), Virginia Beckett, Dr Jeremy Beeton, Dr Archie Bethel, Linda Brownlow, Kayla-Megan Burns, Ronnie Cleland, Alison Culpan, Andrew Eccles, Gillian Hastings, Chelbi Hillan, Councillor Ruairi Kelly, Susan Kelly, Professor Scott MacGregor, William McLachlan, Malcolm Roughead, Marion Venman, Peter Young, Brenda Wyllie

Attending: Professor Tim Bedford, Professor Douglas Brodie, Adrian Gillespie, Professor David Hillier, Professor Atilla Incecik, Dr Veena O'Halloran, Professor Ian Rivers, Gordon Scott, Professor Eleanor Shaw, Rona Smith, Professor Iain Stewart, Steven Wallace, Dr Daniel Wedgwood, Kirsty MacLeod (items 1 & 2), Claire Carroll (item 3), Professor Stephen McArthur (item 3)

Apologies: Stephen Ingledew, Dr Barbara Keating, Dr Katherine Mitchell, Heather Stenhouse

Welcome and apologies

The Convener welcomed Court members and attendees to the meeting.

No interests were declared.

1. Going Concern assessment and EIB covenant amendment

[Reserved]

2. Financial Statements 2019/20

The CFO presented the Financial Statements, noting that Court had already considered a draft version at the November meeting of Court. The final version reflected additional work with ARC and the external auditor in relation to Going Concern (see previous item). Members' attention was drawn to the auditor's report; it was notable that no Emphasis of Matter paragraph had been included, despite the challenging external environment.

Court **approved** the Financial Statements, subject to conclusion of the final audit procedures on the Going Concern work and subject to the signing of the EIB amendment.

The Convener commended Finance and the wider University management for the quality of their work on the Financial Statements, despite the current challenging circumstances.

3. REF 2021: Submission Development

Professor Stephen McArthur (Deputy Associate Principal) and Claire Carroll (Research Policy Manager) gave an overview of preparations for the REF2021 submission, noting that this would be the final substantial update for Court before the submission was made. Final performance forecasts had been provided. It was noted that minor changes had been made at the national level to some aspects of the timing of the REF process, but none of these affected the University's submission deadline.

Final selection of outputs had been completed within the Units of Assessment (UoAs) and the selection of case studies was largely complete. A detailed internal review of Impact case studies had been conducted, with significant input from expert advisors. UoA-level Environment narratives had also been thoroughly reviewed, with further work required only in two very large UoAs. The University was also conducting system and administrative checks to ensure a smooth submission process.

Performance forecasting had been conducted on conservative assumptions, recognising that some aspects of the review process could not be replicated internally. Internal scoring used a more fine-grained scale than the official REF scores and all intermediate internal scores had been 'rounded down' to ensure a cautious forecast.

The Executive Deans provided summaries of REF preparations and predictions in their respective Faculties and confirmed that they had endorsed the processes and approaches taken to reach these.

Court **noted** the summary and forecasts.

Items for formal approval

4. Court dates 2021/22

Court **approved** the proposed meeting dates.

5. AOB

There was no other business.

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 2 March 2021