# UNIVERSITY COURT – AGENDA

Thursday 6 October 2016, 14:00-16:30, Lunch from 13.15
Executive Suite, Technology & Innovation Centre

***Declarations of interest:*** *None*

|  | **Introduction** | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | **Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2016** | **Paper A** |
| 2. | **Matters arising** | *5 mins* |
| 3. | **Principal's Report** | **Oral** <br> *20 mins* |
|  | **Substantive items** | |
| 4. | **Biomedical Engineering redevelopment proposal** <br> *Head of Department, Biomedical Engineering* | **Paper B** <br> *20 mins* |
| 5. | **Combined Heat and Power District Energy Project – tender return** <br> *Director of Estates Services* | **Paper C** <br> *15 mins* |
| 6. | **Student Recruitment Update** <br> *Director of Student Experience & Enhancement Services* | **Paper D** <br> *10 mins* |
| 7. | **National Student Survey 2016** <br> *Director of Student Experience & Enhancement Services* | **Paper E** <br> *20 mins* |
| 8. | **Outcome Agreement 2015/16 self-evaluation report & guidance** <br> *Acting Director of Strategy & Policy* | **Paper F** <br> *15 mins* |
| 9. | **EU Exit – update** <br> *Principal, Chief Operating Officer* | **Paper G** <br> *15 mins* |
| 10. | **Court Strategy Session, 24-25 November – initial planning** <br> *Principal* | **Paper H** <br> *15 mins* |
|  | **Items for formal approval** | *10 mins* |
| 11. | **Convener's Actions** | **Paper I** |
| 12. | **Corporate Risk Register** | **Paper J** |

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| 13. | **Treasury Management Policy** | **Paper K** |
| 14. | **Report for Scottish Funding Council: internal review of quality** | **Paper L** |

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| **Items for information** | |
| 15. | **Convener Recruitment - update** | **Paper M** |
| 16. | **Court Members' Annual Survey 2016** | **Paper N** |
| 17. | **Governance Act 2016 - update** | **Paper O** |
| 18. | **Complaints Handling Annual Report** | **Paper P** |

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| **Committee reports** | |
| 19. | **Senate** | **Paper Q** |
| 20. | **Executive Team** | **Paper R** |
| 21. | **Court Business Group** | **Paper S** |
| 22. | **Audit Committee** | **Paper T** |
| 23. | **Estates Committee** | **Paper U** |
| 24. | **Enterprise & Investment Committee** | **Paper V** |
| 25. | **Remuneration Committee** | **Paper W** |

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| **Closing remarks** | *5 mins* |
| 26. | **Any other business**<br>*Convener* | |
| | **Date of next meeting**<br>*Thursday 24 and Friday 25 November 2016, Ross Priory* | |

**Paper A**

## MINUTES OF UNIVERSITY COURT
### 22 June 2016

**Present:**  Richard Hunter (Convener), Ronnie Cleland, Dr Jane Morgan, Dr Jack Perry, Malcolm Roughead, Gillian Hastings, Dr Archie Bethel, Alison Culpan, Kerry Alexander, Susan Kelly, Marion Venman, Principal Professor Sir Jim McDonald, Vice-Principal Professor Scott MacGregor, Dr Veena O'Halloran, Dr Jonathan Delafield-Butt, Professor Erling Riis, Dr Dimitris Andriosopoulos, Louise McKean, Gary Paterson, Gerry McDonnell, Dr Alistair Goldsmith, Councillor Stephen Curran

**Attending:**  Hugh Hall, David Coyle, Professor David Littlejohn, Professor David Hillier, Professor Dimitris Drikakis, Rona Smith, Sandra Heidinger, Ray McHugh, Stella Matko, Darren Thompson, Raj Jeyaraj, Professor Andrew Goudie (for item 4), Rachel Doyle (for item 6), Iain McPhie (for item 7), Carina Scott (for item 7)

**Apologies:**  Dr Jeremy Beeton, Dr Andrew McLaren, Professor Douglas Brodie, Dr Stuart Brough

### Welcome and apologies

The Convener noted apologies and welcomed members of Court and attendees.

### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015 were approved with one minor correction to item 4 to clarify that staff surveys in relation to engagement with the University Values are conducted on a regular basis, but not necessarily annually.

### 2. Matters arising

University Chancellor – On 11 June 2016, Lord Smith of Kelvin, the University Chancellor, had been appointed a Member of the Order of the Companions of Honour in the Queen's Birthday honours list. The Convener noted this welcome recognition of the Chancellor's outstanding contribution to public life.

Revised Court webpage – Members noted that the University's Court webpage had been redesigned as part of the on-going Web Transformation Project.

Student members on Court – the Convener welcomed Mr Raj Jeyaraj who was in attendance as the incoming President of the University of Strathclyde Students' Association (USSA) for 2016/17. The current President confirmed that Mr Gerry McDonnell would continue on Court as the additional USSA member for 2016/17, following a decision by the members of the USSA Executive.

### 3. Principal's Report

The Principal informed members of other key activities and issues since the May meeting:

Scottish Government: Following recent changes to the Scottish Government Cabinet, the University would continue to work closely with Scottish Government Ministers and officials.

Executive Team composition: Following discussion at recent meetings of the Executive Team, proposals for an extended membership had been approved. These proposals were intended to create further capacity to address equality and diversity considerations in the Team and to support enhanced engagement with

senior leaders in key areas of strategic activity. Court noted and **approved** minor revisions to Ordinances and Regulations (highlighted in Paper J) to support these changes.

Digital Health & Care Institute:  Court noted that, from 1 July 2016, the University would host the Digital Health & Care Institute (DHI), part of the Scottish Funding Council's Innovation Centre Programme. This activity would complement the work of the University's existing innovation centres and enhance its already strong links with the NHS.

Scottish Government Manufacturing Strategy: the University had worked closely with the Scottish Government to advise and inform the development of a new Manufacturing Strategy. More details were expected to be published in the coming months.

Children's Research Centre: it was anticipated that the University would shortly launch a Children's Research Centre encompassing a range of relevant activity carried out through existing centres and initiatives.

International engagements: the Principal highlighted a range of international visits undertaken since May, including an opportunity to attend and speak at the Times Higher Education Asia Universities Summit in Hong Kong.

Staff engagement: the Principal had recently undertaken a number of successful engagement sessions, encompassing a significant proportion of the University's staff. These engagements had generated a range of relevant and insightful discussions. The results of a subsequent survey of all staff on the University's Values would be considered by the Executive Team in due course.

Investment activity: following recommendations by the Enterprise & Investment Committee (EIC) and approval by the Executive Team, the University would increase its equity stake in two companies: Synaptec Ltd and Mironid Ltd. Further details would be provided to Court via regular reports from EIC.

Innovation landscape: The Scottish Government had recently launched a review of Scotland's enterprise and skills agencies and a relevant web link would be circulated to Court to provide further information.

## 4.  Q3 Business Report and International Strategic Partnerships update

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Acting Director of Strategy & Policy introduced the Q3 Business Report 2015/16.

Members noted the following key points:

- Plans to introduce a 'stage-gating' process for 2016/17 to support enhanced Executive Team controls in key areas of non-salary in-year expenditure;
- A Q3 forecast operating surplus of £3.0M, in line with the position budgeted in June 2015;
- The anticipation of a higher than budgeted *overall* surplus for the year (£12.8M), largely due to exceptional items including increased gains on disposals (£0.5M) and the remaining Research and Development Expenditure Credit (RDEC) receipts (£1.5M);
- Significant continued growth in tuition fee income, albeit not to the level forecast;
- An increase in the University's projected year-end cash position, compared to budget, which was largely the result of lower than planned cumulative expenditure on fixed assets plus the beneficial cash impact of RDEC receipts; and
- A significant narrowing of the gap between the retention of SIMD40 students and the overall retention level

In discussion, Court recognised the criticality of international tuition fee income and discussed a shortfall against target in this area. Additional capacity had been introduced to help track the achievement of targets and support earlier forecasting of financial impacts. Significant supporting activity was also underway through increased international engagement efforts, utilisation of external partnerships, and greater internal sharing of best practice.

Court discussed the forecast figure for industry research income. Despite systemic issues across the UK, where business expenditure on research and development was comparatively low, this position was expected to improve due to the University's continued strategic focus on industry collaboration.

Court welcomed the Q3 Business Report as evidence that the University was clearly focused on achieving its strategic ambitions. **[Reserved section: Ref: section 30, FOI(S)A]**

Professor Goudie presented the first of an intended biannual update on International Strategic Partnerships activity (to accompany Q1 and Q3 Business Reports). He highlighted the significant progress made in developing strong collaborative relationships with key international partners as well as the key elements required to deliver these. Activity was evident across all four Faculties, with a focus on key areas of strength. Court welcomed the update and its high-level focus. The following points were raised in discussion:

- The need to ensure an appropriate balance in the number of key partnerships and avoid any over-dilution of the benefits;
- The importance of synergy between the University's strategic activity and that of potential partners;
- The benefits to the University from its membership of the Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research (CESAER)

## 5. 2016/17 Budget, Financial Forecast and Operating Plan

The CFO presented the 2016/17 draft Budget for academic year 2016/17 alongside the draft Financial Forecast for submission to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The CFO noted:

- A continued ambition to achieve a 4% operating surplus, albeit by a later target year (2019/20). This was in response to the impact of a reduction in SFC funding and significant, externally imposed, increases in staffing costs anticipated in 2016/17;
- Projected future growth in non-SFC income streams, with a particular focus on overseas fees and research income;
- Significant increases in recent years in the University's non-SFC income streams, relative to trends demonstrated by comparator institutions;
- The introduction of robust delivery and expenditure control strategies in the coming academic year, including the Executive Team's 'stage-gating' approach and enhanced scrutiny of financial plans by the Performance Development Group (PDG).

Court members discussed the draft Budget and offered particular scrutiny in the following key areas:

- The deferral of the operating surplus target. This was recognised as necessary due to the additional external costs anticipated in 2016/17;
- The level of ambition on income targets and deliverability. These were informed by a detailed analysis of current pipeline activity and anticipated growth. It was agreed that the impact of not meeting projected income targets should be appropriately reflected within the Corporate Risk Register;
- Cash and borrowings. Court noted the importance of maintaining current levels of cash generation in order to fund planned strategic investments.
- Embedding delivery strategies within Faculties. The Executive Team and PDG had enhanced the focus in this area as part of the annual planning round process.

Court **approved** the draft 2016/17 Budget and Four Year Financial Forecast.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) presented the University's 2016/17 Operating Plan, highlighting that some minor revisions may be required following the end of the current academic year.

Court **approved** the 2016/17 Operating Plan, subject to any minor amendments required.

## 6. Health & Safety Strategy and Annual Report

The Head of Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing introduced a draft Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2021 and noted:

- Strathclyde would be the first Scottish university to implement such a Strategy;

- It strongly emphasised the University's commitment to meeting its responsibilities for health and safety, whilst promoting the importance of wellbeing;
- Its alignment with the University's Strategic Plan 2015-2020, the People Strategy 2015-2020, the University's Values, and with sector-level guidance and industry best practice;
- Its role in supporting Court members in meeting their individual and collective statutory and legal responsibilities.

Court discussed the following points:

- The importance of benchmarking performance against other universities and organisations on key health and safety issues. This work was underway;
- The particular importance of a strong health and safety focus in light of ongoing and future estates development activity. The University was working closely with all contractors and required that they comply with the Considerate Constructors Scheme. Appropriate safety-related KPIs would be considered;
- Mental health training for staff and students was being developed and rolled-out across the University, as part of a new Mental Health Strategy;
- Actions to address mobility issues around the campus were being coordinated through the Estates Services Directorate, in consultation with local authorities.

Court **approved** the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy.

The COO presented the University Occupational Health and Safety Consultative Committee's (SACSOH) Annual Report to Court, for information. He noted the Executive Team's inclusion of a dedicated 'Safety Moment' at each meeting and the University's recent Healthy Working Lives Gold Award.

Court **noted** the SACSOH Annual Report.

## 7. Presentation: Global Alumni Engagement

Court received a presentation from the Alumni and Development Team on the results of a recent survey of global alumni and the follow-up activity resulting from this. Analysis of the survey results had indicated:

- A high response rate (double the average for similar surveys of this type);
- A strong affinity with the University amongst global alumni (9 out of 10 respondents felt proud to be an alumnus of the University);
- The University's high reputation amongst alumni (due to improved rankings performance, international recognition, and prominence in the media/communications);
- Opportunities to enhance digital communication strategies and content;
- Significant alignment amongst alumni with the University's entrepreneurial approach;
- Opportunities to establish a culture of legacy giving.

Court welcomed the presentation and noted:

- The significant proportion of survey respondents from outside the UK and the opportunities this presented;
- The opportunities for enhanced targeting of activity through further disaggregation of the survey data;
- On-going efforts to identify and encourage potential alumni donors through a clear demonstration of the impacts of philanthropic giving;
- The role of the Students' Association in alumni engagement activity.

## Items for formal approval

## 8. Convener's Action

Court **homologated** the Convener's Action taken to appoint Mr John Waddell as a co-opted member of the Enterprise & Investment Committee, for an initial term of three years.

**9. Implementation of FRS102 and revised SORP**

Court noted and **approved** the proposed changes to the preparation and presentation of the University's 2015/16 Financial Statements which were required as a result of a new UK Financial Reporting Standard (FRS102) and the revised Statement of Recommended practice (SORP).

**10. Sports, Health & Wellbeing Building – final approval**

The CFO briefly introduced the paper, which set out plans for a new Sports, Health and Wellbeing Building. Following a previous 'approval in principle' decision in October 2015, Court granted final **approval** for the project to proceed to tender.

**11. USSA Code of Practice**

Court **approved** a revised Code of Practice which detailed how the specific requirements of the Education Act 1994 are met.

**12. Court and Committee Membership 2016/17**

The COO introduced the Court Membership Group Report to Court, following its meeting on 13 June 2016, and highlighted a number of recommendations. Court **approved** the following reappointments to Court and its Committees for 2016/17:

Court Membership:

- reappointment of Marion Venman for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019
- reappointment of Jeremy Beeton for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019
- reappointment of Archie Bethel for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019
- reappointment of Jane Morgan for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019
- reappointment of Kerry Alexander for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019

Court Office-holders:

- reappointment of Ronnie Cleland as Vice-Convener of Court for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019
- reappointment of Marion Venman as Deputy Convener (Estates) for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019

Estates Committee Membership:

- reappointment of Virginia Becket as a co-opted member of the Estates Committee for a three year term, from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2019

Court noted that Mr Ian Dixon would stand down from the Audit Committee on 31 July 2016, following the end of his term of office. Court **approved** the use of future Convener's Action to appoint a new co-opted member to the Audit Committee, following further engagement between the Convener, the Vice-Convener and a potential candidate.

Court **noted** the progress update provided within the paper on the recruitment exercise to identify and appoint a successor for the current Convener of Court from 1 August 2017.

**13. Executive Team composition**

Court **approved** the proposed revisions to University Ordinances and Regulations required to enact changes to the composition of the Executive Team (see Item 3: Principal's Report, above).

**Items for information**

**14. Court Action Tracker 2015/16**

Court noted a paper highlighting progress on the completion of Court actions identified during 2015/16. It was agreed that the few outstanding items had been addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

## Committee Reports

The following committee reports were received and **noted** by Court:

**15. Senate**

Court **approved** Senate's recommendation that the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy with Integrated Study* be added to the list of permitted degrees and that Ordinance 3.1 be amended accordingly.

**16. Executive Team**
**17. Court Business Group**
**18. Audit Committee**
**19. Estates Committee**
**20. Staff Committee**
**21. Strategic Marketing Group**
**22. Equality & Diversity Strategy Committee**

**23. Any other business**

The Student President expressed his thanks to Court and the Executive Team for their support during his term of office. The Convener, in return, expressed thanks to the Student President, on behalf of Court, for his efforts in successfully leading the Students' Association through a significant period of change.

The Convener noted that this was the final Court meeting of the academic year. He thanked members for their collective effort and commitment throughout the year. He also welcomed the high level of constructive scrutiny and quality of debate that had been evident at meetings.

**Date of next meeting**

- 14.00-16.30, Thursday 6 October 2016

DT, July 2016

**Biomedical Engineering – Redevelopment Proposal**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

**Combined Heat and Power District Energy Project – tender return
[RESERVED ITEM]**

**Student Recruitment Update**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

## 2016 National Student Survey (NSS) Results and Analysis

**Introduction**

1.  The NSS has been conducted annually since 2005. The survey invites final year undergraduates to provide feedback on what it has been like to study on their course. The results are publically available to inform prospective students, their parents and teachers, and to allow comparisons between institutions. The NSS also provides Universities with valuable information on the student experience to support quality enhancement.

2.  This paper provides an overview to Court on the results of the NSS 2016, describes the in-depth analysis at subject level and the actions being taken to support sustained high performance when this exists and drive a step change in areas where targeted intervention is required.

3.  A detailed report on the NSS 2016 and the 2015 and 2016 performance heat-maps are available on the Court SharePoint site for reference.

**Summary**

4.  The University has received an overall satisfaction score of 87%, the same as in 2015. This is a disappointing outcome and not the outcome to which the University's aspires. Achieving an Overall Satisfaction score of 90% is a strategic KPI for the University.

5.  An overall satisfaction score of 87% is one point higher than the UK and Scottish averages and 3 points below the top quartile of institutions. On average, UK HEIs and the top quartile scores have remained static on the previous year while Strathclyde and the Scottish average has decreased.

6.  Post-results analysis by the Deputy Associate Principals for Learning & Teaching and the Professional Services team, demonstrates that whilst at institutional level the results are disappointing, at the individual subject level there has been considerable improvement in the 2016 results. 22 out of 38 subject areas achieved between 90% and 100% for overall satisfaction, either achieving or exceeding the strategic KPI.

7.  The analysis further demonstrates that while underperforming departments are in the minority, they are disproportionately represented by the higher student response rates achieved in the 2016 survey, which means that those courses with a large cohort of students have a higher level of influence on our overall institutional result. This impacted significantly upon the 2016 university level results.

8.  Through the analysis work, areas for targeted intervention have been identified. Action plan development activity is in place with implementation underway to enhance performance in the 2017 NSS.

**2016   High Level Results**

9.  The University achieved an overall satisfaction score of 87% - one point higher than the UK and Scottish averages and 3 points below the top quartile of institutions. On average, UK HEIs and the top quartile scores have remained static while the Scottish average has decreased.

10. Performance improved by three points for Assessment and Feedback (64%) and by one point for Personal Development (86%). Organisation and Management dropped by 3 to

75%, Learning Resources (90%) and the Students' Union (73%) both decreased by two. Teaching on my course (86%) and Academic Support (79%) decreased by one.

11. Table 1 shows the scores against the UK, top quartile and Scottish averages.

| NSS 2016 | Strathclyde | UK HEIs | Top Quartile | Scotland |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching on my course | 86 | 87 | 90 | 87 |
| Assessment & Feedback | 64 | 73 | 78 | 69 |
| Academic Support | 79 | 82 | 85 | 81 |
| Organisation & Management | 75 | 79 | 84 | 77 |
| Learning Resources | 90 | 87 | 88 | 88 |
| Personal Development | 86 | 83 | 83 | 83 |
| Overall Satisfaction | 87 | 86 | 90 | 86 |
| Students' Union | 73 | 69 | 70 | 64 |

12. Table 2 shows our performance against the UK, top quartile and Scottish averages.

| NSS 2016 | Strathclyde | UK HEIs | Top Quartile | Scotland |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching on my course | 86 | -1 | -4 | -1 |
| Assessment & Feedback | 64 | -9 | -14 | -5 |
| Academic Support | 79 | -3 | -6 | -2 |
| Organisation & Management | 75 | -4 | -9 | -2 |
| Learning Resources | 90 | +3 | +2 | +2 |
| Personal Development | 86 | +3 | +3 | +3 |
| Overall Satisfaction | 87 | +1 | -3 | +1 |
| Students' Union | 73 | +4 | +3 | +9 |

13. Compared with the sector, Strathclyde scores are above average for: Learning Resources; Personal Development; Overall Satisfaction; and Students' Union. Strathclyde scores are below average for: Teaching on my course; Assessment & Feedback; Academic Support; and Organisation and Management.

14. Compared with the top quartile, the University is above the average for: Learning Resources; Students Union; and Personal Development; and below the average for: Teaching; Assessment and Feedback; Academic Support; Organisation and Management; and Overall Satisfaction.

15. Compared with the Scottish averages, Strathclyde is higher for: Learning Resources; Personal Development; Overall Satisfaction and Students' Union; and below the Scottish average for Teaching; Assessment and Feedback; Academic Support; and Organisation and Management.

16. The results demonstrate that we continue to perform well in four of the eight survey areas, but remain behind the curve in the others, with fluctuating year-on-year subject level performances. Whilst the 2015 focus on Assessment and Feedback yielded improvement, the 2016 results pointed to the need for greater in-depth analysis at subject level to understand and address the factors impacting negatively upon the overall outcomes.

**Analysis and Interpretation**

17. A new coordinated approach to presenting distributed performance through "Heat Maps" was introduced in 2015/16. The "Heat Maps" present performance by subject level within each Faculty in quartiles, and rankings based on sector subject level performance.

18. The NSS 2016 Institutional Report and Heat Maps were distributed across the University in August and considered at the Executive Team on 5 September, at the Education Strategy Committee on 15 September and at the Senate on 28 September 2016. Individual Heat Maps for each subject were also sent to departments and schools for local in-depth analysis, reflection and to inform action plans.

19. Analysis of the institutional Heat Maps provided evidence of significant improvement in the overall quartile positions compared with 2015, with an increase of 120 in top quartile (dark green) attainment, taking the overall heat map to 354 top quartile areas.

20. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the percentage split over the quartiles for 2015 and 2016. This shows an increase from 53% to 59% in the total number of subject results now placed within the top 2 quartiles.

| Figure 2: 2015 Sector Quartiles | Figure 3: 2016 Sector Quartiles |
|---|---|
| 25% 26% 28% 21% | 37% 21% 20% 22% |
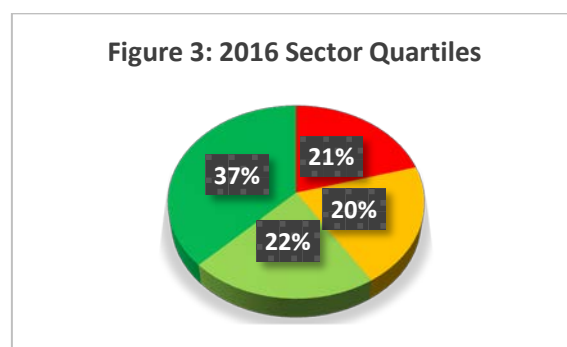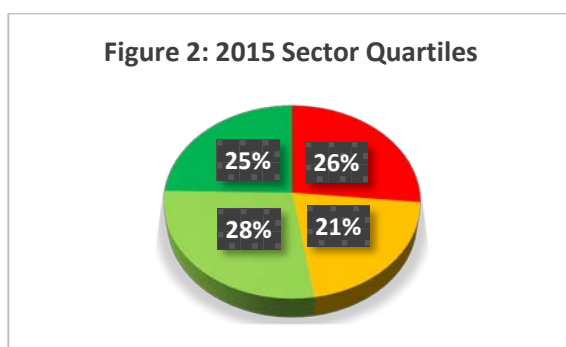
21. Analysis of subject satisfaction is equally informative. Using the year-on-year performance of each subject in the heat map, groupings based on overall level of performance can be created. Thus 22 of the 36 subjects show an overall improvement in their performance, with half of these achieving a significant improvement. 12 subject areas dropped in their performance, with 9 of these experiencing a significant fall. Furthermore, analysis of Overall Satisfaction alone showed that 26 (72%) increased their result and 9 (25%) decreased.

22. The analysis highlighted clearly that while underperforming departments/schools are in the minority, they are disproportionately represented in the areas with high student response rates. This means that those courses with large cohorts of students have a greater impact on our institutional results, regardless of high performance elsewhere. This impacted negatively upon the university level outcomes and is an area for additional targeted improvement for 16/17

**Achievement of the Strategic 90% Satisfaction KPI**

23. There are 22 subject areas that attained an overall satisfaction rating of 90% or higher, the target level of the University's KPI 3. This has risen significantly from the 11 subject areas last year. Table 3 highlights with those in yellow representing the subjects at 90% or higher, with the 3 in green indicating a decline from last year.

| KPI Overall Satisfaction attainment | 2016 | 2015 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accounting | 89 | 88 | +1 |
| Architecture | 74 | 78 | -4 |
| Biology | 100 | 42 | +58 |
| Business studies | 90 | 94 | -4 |
| Chemical, Process and Energy Engineering | 81 | 70 | +11 |
| Chemistry | 68 | 88 | -20 |
| Civil Engineering | 77 | 93 | -16 |
| Computer Science | 83 | 87 | -4 |
| Economics | 93 | 89 | +4 |
| Electronic and Electrical Engineering | 93 | 91 | +2 |
| English studies | 95 | 83 | +12 |
| Finance | 91 | 89 | +2 |
| French studies | 100 | 76 | +24 |
| History | 95 | 90 | +5 |
| Human Resource Management | 92 | 85 | +7 |
| Iberian studies | 90 | 84 | +6 |
| Initial Teacher Training | 83 | 89 | -6 |
| Italian studies | 92 | - | - |
| Journalism | 74 | - | - |
| Law | 96 | 88 | +8 |
| Management studies | 89 | 84 | +5 |
| Marketing | 93 | 89 | +4 |
| Mathematics and Statistics | 85 | 94 | -9 |
| Mechanical, Production and Manufacturing Engineering | 83 | 90 | -7 |
| Medical Technology | 96 | 65 | +31 |
| Microbiology | 89 | 86 | +3 |
| Molecular Biology, Biophysics and Biochemistry | 88 | 81 | +7 |
| Naval Architecture | 76 | 68 | +8 |
| Others in Biological Sciences | 82 | 79 | +3 |
| Others in Business and Administrative studies | 97 | 90 | +7 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Others in Education** | 98 | 89 | +9 |
| **Others in Subjects allied to Medicine** | 96 | 80 | +16 |
| **Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy** | 86 | 79 | +7 |
| **Physics and Astronomy** | 98 | 94 | +4 |
| **Politics** | 91 | 97 | -6 |
| **Psychology** | 96 | 95 | +1 |
| **Social Work** | 96 | 96 | 0 |
| **Tourism, Transport and Travel** | 92 | 87 | +5 |

**Action Plans**

24. The need to deliver continued change at pace is recognised, as is the focus on Department/School level engagement and improvement plans, along with targeted interventions to ensure sustained enhanced performance.

25. Meetings between the Deputy Associate Principals for Learning and Teaching and SEES with each Faculty Team are underway to co-ordinate and support focused activity. Department-led activity and the use of NSS improvement plans are key to achieving the desired outcomes.

26. This will be followed by the VP and Director of SEES meeting with the key Departments/Schools. The 6 departments that have the biggest impact on the results are receiving particular attention: Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy; Mechanical, Production and Manufacturing Engineering; Initial Teacher Training; Law; Maths and Stats; Electronic and Electrical Engineering

27. All departments/schools have been grouped into the following categories to support a targeted approach to implementing changes:

    A: Showing improvement and in a reasonable current position
    B: Very mixed performance with further improvement needed
    C: Large drop and significant action required

28. NSS Improvement Plan Templates (see appendix 1) have been sent to Heads of Department/School with different requirements to be addressed for each of the above categories. Improvement Plans are to be submitted to the Faculty Vice Dean (Academic) for approval prior to signed off versions being returned by 12 October.

29. The 6 departments that have the biggest impact on the results are also receiving particular attention: Pharmacology, Toxicology and Pharmacy; Mechanical, Production and Manufacturing Engineering; Initial Teacher Training; Law; Maths and Stats; Electronic and Electrical Engineering

30. Subject areas are establishing NSS Action teams to coordinate NSS engagement (e.g. course admin teams, support staff and individual lectures and tutors) and to provide regular updates to the Vice Dean (Academic) for the Faculty.

31. Engagement is also taking place with the USSA Executive towards working with Faculty and Class representatives to extend awareness of the importance of the survey through departmental Staff Student Liaison Committees. A key aim is to enhance student partnerships to maximise cohort activity.

32. NSS Forums focusing on themes and actions following NSS 2016 are taking place in Semester 1 and on preparation for NSS 2017 in Semester 2.

33. The Surveys and Metrics Working Group will ensure key stakeholders have a good understanding of the University's performance in all applicant/student-related surveys and metrics, in the context of comparator institutions and the sector overall, and will ensure the effective use of this data to inform and enhance practice.

34. NSS Action Plans are being monitored through the Quality Assurance Committee and reported to the Education Strategy Committee. Regular updates will be presented at meetings of the Senate throughout the session.

**Recommendation**

35. Court is invited to **note** the report and analysis and **comment** on the NSS Improvement Actions for 2017.

**Outcome Agreement 2015/16 self-evaluation report & guidance
[RESERVED ITEM]**

**EU Exit – update**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

## Court Strategy Session, 24-25 November – initial planning

**Introduction**

1.  Court is scheduled to hold its next annual residential Strategy Session at Ross Priory on 24-25 November. Recent discussions with the Convener have indicated that, while these sessions have worked very well in recent years, it is now appropriate to review their format. This paper provides an initial opportunity for Court to have a discussion on an appropriate way forward.

**Proposal**

2.  The Executive Team met for an extended strategic discussion in late August. Participants included Executive Team members, Deputy Associate Principals, Professional Services Directors, and the Principal's Special Advisors.

3.  Emerging from this strategic discussion was a series of project streams which, collectively, are felt to represent and encompass the activities crucial to driving performance and supporting the delivery of the University's strategic priorities in the year ahead (and beyond). These project streams have been developed further at subsequent Executive Team meetings and will continue to be refined over the coming weeks.

4.  Following further discussion at Court Business Group on 22 September, it was recommended that these project streams be presented to Court as a potential basis for the format and structure of its Strategy Session in November. It is anticipated that, by this stage, the project proposals will be sufficiently refined (yet also at an early enough stage) for Court members to be able to make a significant contribution to their design and delivery.

5.  Court Business Group members felt that a detailed consideration of the proposed project areas would form the basis of a stimulating discussion at Court's residential session.

6.  The project streams being taken forward by Executive Team are detailed in the table at Annex A.

**Recommendation**

7.  Court is invited to **note** and **discuss**:

    - The recommendation from Court Business Group that the project activity emerging from recent Executive Team discussions be considered as the basis for Court's Strategic Session on 24-25 November; and

    - The project areas detailed at Annex A, which are subject to further refinement by the Executive Team and nominated Project Leads.

**Annex A: Executive Team Projects 2016/17 (subject to further refinement)**

| | Project title/Area | High Level Objectives | Project Lead(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Refreshing our vision of a 'Leading International Technological University' | ▪ LITU vision refreshed and reinforced in light of experience<br>▪ Benefits from academic strategic partnerships maximised<br>▪ External partners' and potential partners' experiences consistently calibrated through the lens of 'LITU' | Deputy Associate Principal, R&KE (Professor Tim Bedford) |
| **2** | Leadership Review and Development | ▪ Enhanced leadership capacity and quality at sub-ET level and within Faculties/ Departments/ Directorates<br>▪ Leadership succession planning established within all Faculties/ Departments/ Directorates<br>▪ Appropriate Professional Services capability available to support academic leadership and business excellence within Faculties/ Departments<br>▪ Maximising benefits from enhanced external and internal networking | Deputy Associate Principal, L&T (Professor Sara Carter) |
| **3** | Size and structures to enhance growth and sustainability | ▪ Understanding of optimal Academic and PS structures required to support:<br>  ○ Agility<br>  ○ Growth potential<br>  ○ Opportunity realisation<br>▪ Established view on priority activities (key areas for investment/growth) and potential areas of de-prioritisation or disinvestment. | Associate Principal & Executive Dean, Faculty of Engineering (Professor Dimitris Drikakis) |
| **4** | What works? Identifying and implementing best practice business processes and approaches | ▪ Identify and focus on key business processes which have demonstrably driven growth and support strategic delivery<br>▪ Ensure optimal calibration between central and distributed control of business processes and systems<br>▪ Increased understanding amongst Faculties/Directorates and Departments/ Schools in how to achieve best practice<br>▪ Consistency and compliance in practice and approach across all areas to support delivery of growth and Strategic Plan KPIs | Associate Principal & Executive Dean, Strathclyde Business School (Professor David Hillier) |
| **5** | Reviewing and enhancing internal communications | ▪ Internal communication processes and approaches optimised to support delivery of strategic priorities<br>▪ Key messages clearly and consistently cascaded from Executive Team, through established leadership structures, to relevant areas<br>▪ Enhance awareness and comprehension amongst all staff of strategic imperatives (e.g. investing institution, need to generate surpluses, reduce costs, adapt to changing external environment, etc.) and how to contribute to their delivery | Associate Principal & Executive Dean, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences (Professor Douglas Brodie) |
| **6** | Reviewing and realigning financial planning and budgetary processes | ▪ Budgeting and planning processes transparent, aligned to strategic delivery and flexible to changing external circumstances and internal performance mid-year<br>▪ Budgeting process supports pursuit of efficiencies, cost reductions and prioritisation of expenditure | Chief Financial Officer (David Coyle) |

**Convener's Actions**

**Appointment of co-opted member to the Audit Committee**

1.  Following a recommendation from Court Membership Group, Court agreed on 22 June to approve the use of future Convener's Action to appoint a new co-opted member to the Audit Committee, subject to further engagement between the Convener, Vice-Convener and a potential candidate.

2.  The Convener and Vice-Convener met with the candidate, Dame Susan Bruce DBE DL, over the course of the summer and agreed that she would make an excellent addition to the membership of the Audit Committee. The Convener exercised the authority delegated by Court and Dame Susan was appointed for an initial term of one year from 1 August 2016. The appointment is renewable for a further period of three years.

**Approval of minor changes to the USSA Memorandum and Articles of Association**

3.  At its meeting on 5 May 2016, Court approved a new Memorandum and Articles of Association for the University of Strathclyde Students' Association (USSA). Following this approval and subsequent advice received by USSA from its solicitors, some non-material amendments were required to these documents. These minor revisions were considered and approved by the USSA Board of Trustees.

4.  Convener's Action was sought and received on 5 August 2016 in order to ratify these changes and an annotated version of the Memorandum and Articles of Association is available as background information on SharePoint.

**Recommendation**

5.  Court is invited to **homologate** the Convener's Actions taken to:

    *   Appoint Dame Susan Bruce as a co-opted member of the University's Audit Committee until 31 July 2017: and
    *   Approve non-material amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the University of Strathclyde Students' Association.

**Corporate Risk Register**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

## Treasury Management Policy – Proposed Revision

**Introduction**

1. Prior to February 2012, the University invested all surplus cash balances directly with approved Banks and Building Societies in accordance with approved counterparty limits.  In February 2012, the University's Treasury Management Policy was reviewed and revised in light of the then problems in the Eurozone.  Deposit limits and approved counterparty limits were revised at that time, and, in addition, the University employed the services of a cash manager, Royal London Asset Management (RLAM) as a resource additional to the University's internal treasury function to invest surplus cash on our behalf, principally to support greater diversification to mitigate the risk of failure of counterparties.  RLAM are permitted to invest in deposits and certificates of deposit with Banks and Building Societies on the University's approved Credit List.

2. Approved counterparties and limits have been kept under review since 2012, but there has been no requirement for any substantive change to the Treasury Management Policy.  Over the recent period, however, there have been a number of changes in the external environment, which are explained below.  In light of these changes it is now considered appropriate to revise the Treasury Management Policy.  The suggested revisions also incorporate updates to reflect sector best practice guidance.

**Changes in the external environment**

3. In common with many other charities and public sector organisations, the University's Treasury Management Policy specified a minimum acceptable rating for approved counterparties to ensure that our cash deposits would be invested with high quality banks and financial institutions.

4. The limit approved in the most recent revision to the University's Treasury Management Policy in 2012 was a minimum acceptable long term rating of A+ (as rated by Standard and Poors).  However, since then, the financial landscape has changed.

5. Our Cash Managers, Royal London Asset Management (RLAM) previously invested funds in call accounts, Certificates of Deposit and Treasury Bills.  However:

- A number of institutions that meet our ratings criteria have either closed call accounts (e.g. HSBC) or have notified RLAM of significant reductions in the level of call funds that they will accept, because they do not consider the returns on such accounts sufficient to offset the cost of the bank levy (which is based on banks' total liabilities).

- When investing funds in Certificates of Deposit, because a number of banks have been downgraded such that AA- is now the highest rating, the market is now very concentrated in a small number of banks.  RLAM guidance is also to further limit our use of counterparties to those that operate in stronger regulatory regimes, such as Canada, Australia and Scandinavia.  Fewer than ten banks therefore now meet our ratings criteria and only 3 or 4 are active in the market at any one time.  When accepting deposits, they are looking for funds to be deposited for longer periods.

6. As a result of these changes, in addition to yields being pushed down to very low levels for those clients who have sought to maintain their rating criteria, the concentration of client funds with any one institution has increased.  RLAM previously aimed for no more than 20% of client money to

be with any one institution.  However, due to the market restrictions, this has now typically increased to around 35%.

7.  The risks associated with this concentration of client funds have increased as a result of new UK and EU 'bail-in' powers, introduced following the banking failures of the financial crisis.  These powers are intended to ensure that shareholders and creditors of a failed financial institution, rather than the taxpayer, meet the costs of any future failures.  The new provisions give authorities the power to cancel or reduce shareholdings, bondholdings and cash deposits in order to stabilise an institution.  Whilst the bail in procedures would not necessarily result in a depositor losing their funds, they could mean that they would not be able to access those funds during a recovery period.  Certain assets are, however, excluded from any bail-in: these assets include secured liabilities i.e. those that are backed by some form of collateral.

8.  Another key change in the regulatory environment affecting how our deposits are managed are the new Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) rules.  Previously, where RLAM had one client seeking to deposit funds and one seeking to realise funds, RLAM was permitted to 'match' these deals, avoiding transaction costs.  The new FCA rules require each individual deal to be concluded by way of a trade through an independent market broker.  This is resulting in reduced flexibility and increased deal costs, ultimately leading to lower returns.

**Proposed revised approach to investment of cash**

9.  In response to these changes in the market environment and regulatory changes, RLAM is making changes to the cash management services it provides.  Currently RLAM provides a pooled segregated cash service where all client funds are held by HSBC as custodian.  Each client has its own bespoke rules for selecting counterparties, credit limits and length of deposits.

10. Whilst RLAM will continue to provide a segregated cash service this will require clients to invest more than £20 million and to have their own individual custodian and settlement account.  Continued use of a segregated cash service is not considered attractive to the University for the following reasons:

   - Market factors resulting in a reduced ability to diversify cash investments because of weaker liquidity across bond and cash markets, low deposit rates, and the new bail in rules (giving authorities the ability to disrupt the rights of creditors and shareholders).

   - Additional management requirements adding cost and management overhead.

11. As an alternative to a segregated cash service, RLAM offer 'pooled fund solutions'.  These provide a blended approach: by segmenting cash into risk tranches, greater diversification can be achieved, increasing yield and reducing risk for a given level of return.  Cash is placed with RLAM by buying units, and the capital and returns realised by selling those units at a later date at a higher price.  The low price volatility gives a high degree of certainty of achieving a given yield for a given level of risk.

12. Under a pooled fund approach, cash would be allocated to one of three tranches based on the time horizon within which the University forecasts requiring use of that cash:

| Time horizon | Features of fund appropriate for investment of cash |
|---|---|
| Core and operational cash | – Bespoke treasury management and/or money market funds with a |

| Time horizon | Features of fund appropriate for investment of cash |
|---|---|
| that needs to be immediately accessible | variable net asset value but very low volatility.<br>– Very short duration assets (maximum 60 days) from high quality institutions (giving a recent return of typically approx. 0.4%).<br>– Typically a AAA rated fund. |
| Cash to be invested for 6 months or longer | – A fund invested in assets with 3-9 month duration, primarily money market instruments with a high level of liquidity but very low volatility, giving a return higher than a pure liquidity fund (recently typically approx. 1.0%).<br>– Typically a AAA rated fund. |
| Cash to be invested for 12 months | – Fund required to be low risk, but to deliver a higher level of return (historically typically approx. 1.25%). Generally invested in assets with >6 month duration, of low volatility.<br>– Fund includes cash, short-dated credit, gilts and floating rate notes.<br>– Typically a AA rated fund. |

13. The advantage of the second and third tranches is that they broaden the range of available investment assets, increasing diversification and mitigating default risk. In particular, RLAM highlight the use of covered bonds. These assets are debt securities backed by cash flows from mortgages or public sector loans. As such, they are excluded from any 'bail-in' provisions, and are more attractive in relation to the risk of failure of a financial institution compared to direct cash deposits. Investors have dual recourse to both the issuing bank and the underlying assets in the event of a default, making them a relatively secure option. Covered bonds also tend to pay a higher yield than certificates of deposit issued by the same entity.

14. RLAM have three funds aligned to each of the three tranches outlined above:

- Short-term Money Market fund – a liquid and diversified fund, rated AAA by Fitch, volatility V1.

- Cash Plus fund – a liquid and diversified fund providing higher yields than the Short Term Money Market fund; a broader investment base and longer fund duration, rated Fitch AAA/V1.

- Enhanced Cash Plus fund -– a liquid and diversified fund providing higher yields than the Money Market and Cash Plus funds through a broader investment base (including more Fixed Rate Notes) and longer fund duration, rated Fitch AA/V2.

15. All units in these funds can be realised at two days' notice notwithstanding the longer investment horizons of Cash Plus and Enhanced Cash Plus. If a significant value is realised earlier than the investment horizon of a fund this may attract direct transaction costs, which would result in a lower return over the investment period.

16. Having reviewed the asset allocation within each of the funds (see Appendix 1), we believe that investing in a mix of some or all of these funds will build a portfolio that is, in aggregate, more liquid, and has greater diversification and higher yields than we can achieve by continuing to invest solely in Money Market instruments (cash deposits, certificates of deposit and treasury bills). This strategy would therefore align more strongly with our primary Treasury Management objectives of preserving capital and ensuring liquidity, while secondarily supporting the highest return.

17. In addition to proposing that we include an appropriate value and mix of money market funds within our cash investment strategy, changes are also proposed in relation to the acceptable long term credit ratings for approved counterparties and counterparty limits. The current policy sets a minimum acceptable long term rating for approved counterparties as Standard & Poors A+. Lloyds and Royal Bank of Scotland were also specifically named as counterparties due to the significant UK government shareholding at the time.

18. The following key points are proposed in relation to our cash investment and management within the revised Policy:

- *In line with best practice set out in the Code, our minimum acceptable long term counterparty ratings will be specified in terms of an equivalent rating across all three credit rating agencies – Moody's, S&P and Fitch.* Appendix 2 sets out comparative ratings. Where counterparties have ratings from multiple agencies, they should normally meet all agencies' ratings.

- *Our current minimum acceptable long term rating should be reduced from S&P A+ to S&P A- (Moody's A3, Fitch A-), which is regarded as the lowest level at which counterparties are regarded as 'upper medium grade' for investment (see Appendix 2).* This proposal reflects the market-wide reduction in counterparty ratings, and is necessary to ensure we are able to access a sufficiently diversified pool of banks for direct cash placement if required. This change would potentially double the pool of banks available to us for direct cash placement, but nonetheless remain a relatively limited pool of active counterparties at any given time – typically fewer than ten. The proposed use of RLAM money market funds would reduce our need to place cash directly with counterparties, and allow us to access Fitch AAA or AA rated funds. Our use of RLAM funds would also be subject to a minimum acceptable long term rating of upper medium grade.

- *It is proposed that the Royal Bank of Scotland will continue to be included as a specific named counterparty.* The current RBS rating is S&P BBB+ (Moody's Baa1, Fitch BBB+), which is the top level of counterparty regarded as 'lower medium grade' for investment.

- *It is proposed to reduce the limit for UK Clearing Banks from £20 million to £10 million to bring it in line with non-UK counterparties.* This proposal reflects the view from ratings agencies that UK Clearing Banks offer no greater security from the risk of default than non-UK Banks.

- *In order to ensure clarity around day to day operational banking limits, the counterparty limit with the University's Bankers, Lloyds / Bank of Scotland, will be amended from the current definition of 'a maximum nominal limit for term deposits of £20 million' to 'will not ordinarily exceed £30 million'. Within this proposed £30 million limit, no more than £20 million will be held on deposit in accounts to which there is not instant access.*

- *It is proposed that the University be permitted to invest in RLAM's Short Term Money Market, Cash Plus and Enhanced Cash Plus funds.* Use of these funds will be limited to 75% of total cash and deposits. Cash will be placed in these funds to align with a profile of maturities that reflects the University's cash flow forecast, assessed between cash required within 1-2 months, cash required within 3-9 months and cash not required for 9 months or more. (Notwithstanding the intended maturity profile, funds will nonetheless be accessible within 2 days, giving significant flexibility in the event that unforeseen circumstances arise.)

- *The policy continues to require that sums cannot be invested for a period of greater than six months without prior agreement of the Treasurer.*

**Proposed revisions to Treasury Management Policy to reflect best practice**

19. In addition to the proposed changes to our cash investment approach, the proposed revised Treasury Management Policy reflects the latest guidance on Treasury Management in the Public Services (including organisations which are materially reliant on government funding) issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) in its Treasury Management Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes ('the Code').

20. The following sections of our revised Treasury Management Policy have been updated to reflect recommended practice set out in the Code. These are changes to the format of the Policy, and do not reflect changes to our substantive treasury management objectives, policies and procedures:

- Risk management
- Performance measurement
- Decision making and analysis
- Approved instruments, methods and techniques
- Organisation and segregation of responsibilities
- Reporting requirements and management information
- Accounting and auditing arrangements
- Cash and cash flow management
- Money laundering
- Staff training and qualifications
- Use of external service providers
- Banking arrangements

**Recommendation**

21. Court is invited to **approve** the proposed revisions to Treasury Management Policy and practice set out in the attached document and Annex, following endorsement by Court Business Group (22 September) and scrutiny by the Audit Committee (8 September).

## Appendix 1 – Fund Asset Allocations

### Short-term Money Market Fund

| Asset allocation | Min | Max | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Money Market Instruments** | 25% | 100% | Includes certificates of deposit, time deposits and treasury bills (< 397 days) |
| **Covered Bonds** *Floating Rate Notes* *Fixed Rate notes* | 0% | 30% | Covered bonds issued by banks and building societies (< 397 days) |
| **Corporate Bonds** *Floating Rate Notes* *Fixed Rate notes* | 0% | 20% | Bonds issued by financial and non-financial corporates with a minimum credit rating of AA- (< 397 days) |
| **Gilts / Supranational** | 0% | 75% | UK government and supranational issuers with a minimum credit rating of AA (< 397 days) |

### Cash Plus Fund

| Asset allocation | Min | Max | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cash Instruments | 50% | 100% | Certificates of deposit, time deposits, floating rate notes (FRNs) |
| Covered Bonds | 0% | 30% | Covered bonds issued by banks and building societies |
| Corporate, Sovereigns and Supranational Bonds | 0% | 20% | FRNs and short dated bonds with a minimum credit rating of AA- |
| Gilts/Supranational | 0% | 20% | UK government securities and treasury bills |

**Enhanced Cash Plus Fund**

| Asset allocation | Min | Max | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Money Market Instruments** | 25% | 100% | CDs, time deposits, and Treasury bills |
| **Covered Bonds**<br>*Floating Rate Notes (FRN)*<br>*Fixed Rate notes* | 0%<br>0% | 30%<br>20% | Issued by banks and building societies |
| **Corporate Bonds**<br>*Floating Rate Notes (FRN)*<br>*Fixed Rate notes* | 0%<br>0% | 30%<br>20% | All bonds will be investment grade only |
| **Asset Backed Securities (ABS) & Mortgage Backed Securities (MBS)** | 0% | 20% | Issued by financial and non-financial corporates with a minimum rating of AA- |
| **Gilts / Supranational** | 0% | 20% | UK government and supranational issuers |

## Appendix 2 – Comparative Credit Rating agency scores

The table below summarises comparative Credit Rating Agency scores.

The ratings highlighted in yellow represent prime, high grade and upper medium grade investment quality counterparties, which it is proposed be the University's minimum permitted long term counterparty approval rating.

| Moody's | | S&P | | Fitch | | Rating description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Long-term | Short-term | Long-term | Short-term | Long-term | Short-term | |
| Aaa | | AAA | | AAA | | Prime |
| Aa1 | | AA+ | A-1+ | AA+ | F1+ | High grade |
| Aa2 | P-1 | AA | | AA | | |
| Aa3 | | AA− | | AA− | | |
| A1 | | A+ | A-1 | A+ | F1 | Upper medium grade |
| A2 | | A | | A | | |
| A3 | P-2 | A− | A-2 | A− | F2 | |
| Baa1 | | BBB+ | | BBB+ | | Lower medium grade |
| Baa2 | P-3 | BBB | | BBB | F3 | |
| Baa3 | | BBB− | A-3 | BBB− | | |
| Ba1 | Not Prime | BB+ | B | BB+ | B | Non-investment grade speculative |
| Ba2 | | BB | | BB | | |
| Ba3 | | BB− | | BB− | | |
| B1 | | B+ | | B+ | | Highly speculative |
| B2 | | B | | B | | |
| B3 | | B− | | B− | | |
| Caa1 | | CCC+ | C | CCC+ | C | Substantial risks |
| Caa2 | | CCC | | CCC | | |
| Caa3 | | CCC− | | CCC− | | |
| Ca | | CC | | CC | | Extremely speculative |
| | | C | | C | | Default imminent |
| C | | RD | D | DDD | D | In default |
| / | | SD | | DD | | |
| / | | D | | D | | |

**Appendix 3 – Latest Weekly Cash Report**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

**Annex A – Draft Treasury Management Policy**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

**Annual Statement on Institution-led Review of Quality**
**Academic Year 2015-16 for the Scottish Funding Council**

**Introduction**

1.      This report provides the University of Strathclyde's annual statement on institution-led review of quality assurance and enhancement activity for the academic year 2015-16.

2.      As an institution we are committed to taking a modern outlook to generate new ideas, create opportunities and engage in effective partnerships across our Education provision, and Research and Knowledge Exchange activities. Taking a pro-active, reflective and self-evaluative approach is therefore critical to our success; both in terms of defining our strategic goals and creating effective measures which demonstrate our underpinning effectiveness and progress towards overall enhancement of the student experience.

3.      As the academic governing body of the University, Senate plays a pivotal role in leading cross-institution evaluation and monitoring of academic matters, including academic standards and quality. All Education committees report to Senate, which considers all matters relating to the strategic direction of our Education provision. The University's committee structure oversees all Education strategy, provision, monitoring and enhancement and continues to operate effectively. The Education Strategy Committee (ESC), convened by the Vice Principal, provides strategic direction with the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) overseeing our institutional quality framework and the Learning Enhancement Committee (LEC) focusing upon enhancement of learning and teaching. The Deputy Associate Principals hold convenorship of LEC and QAC. Each education committee produces an annual reflective report which draws together achievements for the year and proposes priority areas for the year ahead. These summary reports, produced in collaboration with committee members, form part of the formal reporting on education strategy and quality to Senate and onward to University Court (to complement our Annual Statement on Institution-Led Review of Quality), and are appended to this document (Annex 1).

4.      The Educational ethos and approach at Strathclyde is one of continual innovation to provide an intellectually stimulating environment and compliment and build on our strengths in research and knowledge exchange. Our strategic aim is to develop students who are engaged, enterprising, enquiring, and ethically, globally and culturally aware. Our strategic aims for Education are led by our Education Strategy Committee who set priorities on an annual basis as agreed with members of this committee and those of Learning Enhancement Committee and Quality Assurance Committee. Priorities for 2015-16 incorporated the following: the development of performance indicators for education, including internationalisation and external engagement; strategic developments to enhance curriculum and learning flexibility and the learning environment; adoption of a reflective and stratified approach to enhancing the quality of the student experience including a unified approach to the NSS; continued progression of actions following recommendations from ELIR 2014; and the development of a unified and strengthened partnership approach to collaborative provision.

5.  The University of Strathclyde continues to engage with the Quality Assurance Agency and engaged in a constructive annual discussion with the new QAA Director in November 2015. Discussions mainly focused on the ELIR Follow-up Report (formally published in July 2015) and on the University's developments around the Internal Review process, policy and procedures. Representatives from the University also attended an ELIR 3 Follow-Up event with Dundee and Glasgow universities. The purpose of this meeting was to provide the opportunity to engage in active discussion with colleagues from other institutions. This was considered a very positive meeting that provided a forum for sharing information across the sector.

## Institution-Led (Internal) Review Activity

### *Overview*

6.  The Quality Assurance Committee of the University's Senate has overall responsibility for the quality assurance of the University's academic provision and of the academic standards of its awards through its oversight of annual and cyclical quality assurance processes. It considers the outcomes of subject reviews from a holistic perspective and identifies issues that have relevance and impact across the institution. Faculties must conform to current Procedures and Guidelines for internal review set by the University in line with its statutory responsibilities; oversight for the delivery of reviews is undertaken by Quality Assurance Committee on behalf of Senate.

7.  The University has revised its [Internal Review: Policy, Procedure and Guidelines](#) including a suite of supporting guidance documentation, this was approved by Senate in September 2015 for implementation in 2015-16. An evaluation of the revised approach will be undertaken during 2016-17 through QAC. Any evaluation will be in line with internal and external drivers including current and any revised ELIR expectations, review the Quality enhancement Framework (QEF) and the implications arising from the emerging Teaching Excellence Framework. The structure of the Business School's Faculty-based review process was reviewed following agreement after ELIR 2 (2010) that the School would undertake a Faculty-based review due to the structure of its degree programme and the ongoing in-depth strategic Excellence Review that was underway during that period. However, as of 2016-17, the Business School's review process will be undertaken on a departmental (subject-area) review schedule in alignment with the rest of the University.

8.  Responsibility for annual course and class monitoring and review lies at Faculty and Department / School level. Additionally, Faculty Annual Reports are considered jointly by the Quality Assurance and Learning Enhancement Committees of Senate. These reports provide updates on enhancement activities and confirmation that appropriate quality assurance is in place in each of the four Faculties. This integrated approach also facilitates sharing of good practice and learning enhancements across the University. As well as a reflective analysis of AY 2015-16, there continues to be a strengthened focus on how each Faculty's enhancement activities contribute to the delivery of overall strategic priorities and the annual report template aligns with the ELIR methodology. These reports are peer-reviewed and provide a valuable source of

examples of good practice for wider dissemination across all Faculties and professional services. Increasingly, with the establishment of the Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Programme (STEP), outcomes from these reports and the peer review process impact directly on the STEP staff development offering. The reports are also used to inform institutional strategic developments (for example, teaching and learning infrastructure developments and institutional responses to external consultations).

9. Student representation is integral to our internal review processes with a student representative forming an essential part of the review panel membership. Meetings are also held with representative groups of students to inform the deliberations of review panels. Students are engaged and involved in academic quality in many ways; through class representation, participation in Student-Staff Liaison Committees, University-wide focus groups, and membership of Faculty Academic Committees. Members of the University of Strathclyde Students' Association (USSA) Executive are members of Senate and Court and the key University Committees including the Learning Enhancement Committee, Quality Assurance Committee, Education Strategy Committee.

10. Strathclyde will continue to work with the Scottish HE sector to revise and update the overall Quality Enhancement Framework to produce a compelling Scottish equivalent to TEF. We recently responded to a Business, Innovation and Skills technical consultation which provided us with an opportunity to input into the development of the TEF in Scotland. Engagement with the TEF and Universities Scotland in taking forward a Scottish equivalent will be a continued priority for the coming year.

***Institution-Led (Internal) Review Schedule 2015-16***

11. Institution-Led (Internal) Quinquennial Reviews took place as outlined in the table below. The full reports of the reviews of Physics and Civil and Environmental Engineering were considered at QAC at its meeting on 6th May. Headline messages were also received at this meeting for the remaining reviews. Full reports will be considered by QAC at its meeting on 21st September 2016. As the Strathclyde Business School had previously undergone a Faculty-wide Review in 2011-12, four reviews were conducted in semester 2 2015-16 in other Faculties.

| Faculty | Department / School |
|---|---|
| Engineering | Civil and Environmental Engineering; Architecture* |
| Science | Physics; Department of Computer and Information Sciences* |
| Humanities & Social Sciences | School of Social Work and Social Policy*; School of Law* |

*Headline messages received by QAC in 2015-16, full reports will be submitted to the Committee in 2016-17.

**External Review**

12.    The University of Strathclyde partners with Study Group UK (Bellerbys Education Services Ltd) to host the International Study Centre (ISC). In November 2014 the QAA undertook an Embedded College Review for Education Oversight (ECREO) of the ISC in relation to the delivery of its Foundation Programmes. The University was pleased to note the QAA's confidence (i) that academic standards were managed appropriately and (ii) that the quality of learning opportunities at the embedded college was assured and enhanced appropriately and in accordance with the policies and procedures of Study Group (and of the University where appropriate). A follow up monitoring visit took place in January 2016. The review identified areas of good practice and made recommendations around further enhancing the Centre's academic standards. In addition the Quality Assurance Committee noted the work that has been done over the past year to embed the relationship between the Study Centre and the faculties, Student Experience and Enhancement Services and the University's external examining process.

**External Accreditation**

13.    Accreditation and re-accreditation visits by various Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies took place as outlined in the table below. Unless otherwise stated, all visits led to the envisioned validation / accreditation / re-accreditation being awarded.

| Faculty | Department / School / Course | Reviewing body | Date of Visit |
|---|---|---|---|
| Science | Department of Computer and Information Sciences - MSc Information Management with Industrial Placement | Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals | 4 May 2016 [1] |
| Engineering | Department of Architecture - BSc Architectural Studies; MArch; PG courses | RIBA (validation), ARB (prescription) (Part 1 and Part 2) | 5-6 November 2016 |
| Engineering | Department of Architecture - MSc Urban Design | RTPI (Royal Town Planning Institute | 10 February 2016 |
| Engineering | Department of Architecture - MSc Architectural Design for the Conservation of Build Heritage | Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) | 1 August 2014 |
| Engineering | Department of Biomedical Engineering - MSc Biomedical Engineering | Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM) | 24 September 2015 [2] |
| HaSS | School of Education - BA (Hons) Childhood Practice | Scottish Social Services Council | February 2016 |

| | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| HaSS | Law School - LLB (Hons) Clinical Scots and English Law | Law Society of Scotland | December 2015 |
| | | Law Society of England and Wales | February 2016 |
| | | Council of Legal Education (NI) | June 2016 |
| HaSS | Law School - LLB (Hons) English Law | Law Society of Scotland | December 2015 |
| | | Law Society of England and Wales | February 2016 |
| | | Council of Legal Education (NI) | July 2016 |

**Notes:**

**1** *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals agreeing to include the new MSc Information Management with Industrial Placement in the accredited courses list along with the original MSc Information Management course.*

**2** *Annual accreditation. No Visit required for July 2016, the Department were asked to submit evidence of changes further to the previous visit. The BME department is currently awaiting confirmation of accreditation based on this submission.*

**Review Outcomes**

14.     Senate has oversight of all internal review outcomes through the Senate Business Committee, which receives Quinquennial Review reports submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee. These are provided in Faculty reports to Senate and Senate also receives minutes of Quality Assurance Committee meetings at which the Review reports are considered, highlighting any commendations and recommendations.

15.     Some key outcomes from the internal reviews presented to QAC in 2015-16 have been: a general engagement with the Widening Access agenda particularly through the Student Transitions Enhancement Theme; in Physics, the introduction from 2014-15 of a more rigorous system for supporting and reviewing research grant applications; following on from its Athena SWAN Silver Award the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering is now applying for a Gold Award; in general the reviews highlighted the diverse ways in which departments/ Schools are aiming to attract international students, for example the Law School has introduced two new courses, namely Finance and Law and International Management and Law.

16.     The Quality Assurance Committee is the institution's representative body of expertise for all matters pertaining to the quality assurance of our education provision; reporting to Senate after each meeting. The Quality Assurance Committee plays a key role in driving forward the University's academic quality framework, including monitoring of all internal reviews and implementation of and reflection upon the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. All our academic policies and guidelines also reflect the UK Quality Code.

17.     Outcomes from Internal Quinquennial Reviews are reported to the Quality Assurance Committee, with Vice Deans Academic taking responsibility for and leading on forward actions. Responses are monitored at Faculty Academic Committee and Board of Study and institutional level through the Quality Assurance Committee and enhancements are progressed through the Learning Enhancement Committee.

18.     The outcomes of external accreditation visits are considered at Faculty Academic Committees and also reported to the Quality Assurance Committee on an annual basis; these will be considered at its first meeting of the session on 21 September 2016.


*Areas of Positive Practice*

19.     A number of examples of positive practice have been identified, through both internal and external review, as well as being surfaced through education committees. As highlighted above, good practice is shared widely across the University to ensure the continued enhancement of our learning and teaching. Examples of positive practice are listed below:

   a. In 2015-16 the University implemented an NSS Improvement Framework to further strengthen engagement with staff and students to the National Students Survey. The Framework incorporates a detailed annual action plan which is implemented under the oversight of the Education Strategy Committee. Throughout 2015-16, a series of workshops and discussions took place in advance of the NSS 2016 providing the opportunity for staff to share good practice across the University. Faculties were also asked to produce NSS Improvement Plans which were reviewed by Education Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee, again with the purpose of sharing good practice and also to highlight any areas of concern. These were widely shared across the institution.

   b. Following on from the success of last year's Learning and Teaching Day, the University hosted another similar event in June 2016 that focused on learning and teaching in an international technological university. Presentations included work on Learning Analytics, the Strathclyde Mobile App, "Digital Disruption" and TESTA (Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment).

   c. The University has partnered with FutureLearn to launch five quality Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in the areas of Forensic Science, Journalism, Business, Caring for Vulnerable Children and Genealogy which have seen a combined total of 198,000 enrolments as of September 2016. These courses are designed to fit around the lives of learners, emphasising learning as a social activity, with knowledge shared and developed between participants.

   d. The Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Programme (STEP) was launched in 2015-16. The programme is designed to directly support and align with the strategic ambitions of the University by promoting and encouraging innovation and excellence in teaching. The range of activities available in the programme has been informed by and designed to respond to the feedback provided by staff as a result of an extensive consultation with teaching staff across the University. As a result, the programme is flexible and uses a blend of different opportunities with a focus on practical application. In this first year of operation the programme has hosted 55 events, with 778 attendances and has attracted positive feedback.

e. The Internal Review Checklist that is now embedded in the [Internal Review: Policy, Procedure and Guidelines](#) has been welcomed across the faculties. Within the review of Civil and Environmental Engineering, the benefit of completing this matrix in advance of the meetings enabled more targeted discussions on areas that required further attention.

f. A review of the structure of the University's academic year took place in 2015-16, with the overarching objectives of enhancing the student experience, responding to student's feedback on the academic year, facilitating consistency and alignment with other HEI's and responding to feedback connected with assessment and feedback. This work was taken forward in partnership with students, academics and professional services communities. Some of the key outcomes of this review have been the delivery of exams before Christmas resulting in an earlier start date to teaching in semester 1, the creation of two development weeks (1 per semester) to provide opportunities for orientation and enhancement activities for all years of study and teaching blocks which provide greater alignment with external key dates to enable more flexible travel/ student exchange arrangements for the wider study body.

g. A Collaborative Provision Agreement Sub-Group has been set up to support Senate and the Senate Business Committee in the review and assessment of new collaborative agreements leading to an award or joint award of the University. This sub-group is chaired by the Vice Principal and oversees that due diligence of draft agreements has been undertaken by the faculties. Each of the faculties is represented on the group together with a representative from Research and Knowledge Exchange Services and Recruitment and International Office.

h. In July 2016 the first meeting of the Surveys and Metrics Working Group took place. The purpose of this group is to ensure the University has a good understanding of its performance in applicant/ student-related surveys and metrics. This will ensure the effective use of this data to inform and enhance practice across the institution. This Working Group reports into Education Strategy Committee.

i. Education Strategy Committee has a continued focus on widening access and participation: reviewing the effectiveness of our widening access/schools outreach provision underpinned
by a mapping of activities across the institution and within Faculties. Furthermore, the University is working with the Colleges to develop a STEM Hub for Glasgow, to comprise a virtual presence through a bespoke website and a physical presence in the new City of Glasgow College Cathedral Street building. This is intended to increase awareness of STEM amongst school pupils in Glasgow and encourage them to consider careers in STEM areas.

j. The University has recently completed a project to augment the institution's Mobile App. The aim of this project was to provide a high quality comprehensive, accessible app essential to ensure students and visitors are able to make the most of their time at Strathclyde. The app will enable improved data gathering to further improve all University services, e.g. capture of data regarding types of devices being used, student movement across campus, and potential feedback about individual services. A cross-institutional approach has been taken to develop the app which has allowed students from Computer and Information Sciences and Entrepreneurial students from the Business School to work with Professional Services on its design.

k. The Learning Enhancement Committee is overseeing a strategic pilot of the TESTA

(Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment) methodology; the Law School and the Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences are the first areas reviewing their assessment methods using this process. The TESTA methodology has been presented at Senate and at the University's Learning and Teaching Day.

l.  A Steering Group oversees the Student Transitions Enhancement Theme at Strathclyde University. The Steering Group consists of two Deputy Associate Principals (Learning and Teaching), the Academic Enhancement Theme Lead, the Vice President for Education from the Students' Association, the Deputy Director (Education Enhancement), Student Experience & Enhancement Services Directorate and a Learning Enhancement Adviser. The Vice President for Education from USSA is also a member of the QAA's sector-wide Student Network.

m.  An event to disseminate the findings of five Student Transitions projects was held in February 2016. For four of the five projects reported, the findings were presented by student interns who undertook the work.

n.  Early in the plan, it was decided that the QAA institutional funds for Student Transitions would be used to facilitate cross-institution engagement with the theme, through small scale projects. In 2015-16, the second year of the theme, we selected six transitions projects to be supported by the funds provided by the QAA. Each project is employing student interns to assist with the work, and some have been provided with modest additional resource by the Department or Faculty concerned. The projects aim to support staff in addressing challenges involved in transitions through key stages in study, particularly placements and other external engagement opportunities. These projects are currently underway and their findings will be reported and shared internally and externally over the coming months. Students working as interns is a model that is widely used across the University and works well for both staff and students. For example the University has offered the Research Interns@Strathclyde programme for a number of years to offer third year undergraduate and fourth year Integrated Masters students direct experience in the research environment for those who are looking to a career in academia. There are places for up to 20 students who receive a stipend for a 6-8 week summer placement within the University.

20.  Our undergraduate and postgraduate course provision benefits from a high level of external recognition of quality through both Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation and the positive reports from External Examiners, for example:

- All external accreditations/ re-accreditations were achieved with a range of positive commendations and with no significant issues.

- The University attaches high importance to External Examiners' reports and the on-line reporting mechanism gathers quantitative data as well as free text comments respecting the overall quality of the degree programmes(s). Key headline messages underline that External Examiners are taking their responsibilities seriously and providing full and constructive feedback on strengths/weaknesses and recommendations for enhancement and that the standards of teaching, learning and assessment at Strathclyde are high. This is reflected in the achievements of our students which are comparable with those in other UK HEIs in which the External Examiners have experience.

***Areas for Development***

21. Alongside retaining focus on existing strategic priorities, some new areas for development have emerged, which are being addressed by the relevant Department/School and Faculty, as well as considered at University level. Examples are listed below:

   a. The University will continue to engage with the Student Information and Management Systems (SIMS) project on the management of curriculum data across the whole student life cycle and this will be a continued priority for the year ahead across the institution.

   b. In line with our formal ELIR outcomes, the University is addressing the recommendation to promote the equivalence of the postgraduate student experience across the institution by developing an approach to staff workload planning that recognises all aspects of learning and teaching, including research student supervision.

   c. The Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Study was recently approved at Senate. The updates and inclusions in the revised version incorporate the new University policy on Intellectual Property and PGRs, and offer an efficient and consistent University approach to PGR studentship management and administration through the inclusion of clearly defined expectations of study hours, working hours, holiday entitlement and absence. The University has also developed a PG Cert in Researcher Professional Development, the quality assurance for which is embedded in the HaSS quality processes to ensure alignment with cross-institutional accredited development.

   d. The acquisition of feedback from postgraduate taught students on their learning experience remains an on-going challenge as responses to the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) are limited; the Surveys and Metrics Working Group, will provide greater opportunity for maximizing our engagement with this survey in the context of our wider student surveys.

   e. The University is taking an holistic approach to reviewing PGT provision, reflecting upon this in the context of mainstreaming internationalisation and a focus on the postgraduate student experience will continue to be explored through the Quality Assurance Committee. This is further supported by the work of the University International Recruitment Committee which brings together international recruitment activities that exist across the Faculties and Professional Services areas to coordinate the opportunity for collaboration and market development in both new and existing international markets.

   f. A strategy for the use of learning analytics to support the learner journey is being developed which will be informed by five internal pilot projects that explore the potential costs and benefits of the use of learning analytics and helping to refine institutional strategy, provision and support.

*Student Engagement*

22.    The University continues to enjoy a highly productive relationship with the Strathclyde Students' Association. Sabbatical officers participate in all senior University committees and the USSA President has worked in collaboration with the institution's Executive leads to represent the students' voice in the context of our Outcome Agreement by helping to set our institutional targets in the area of Widening Access which are each considered at QAC.

23.    Monitoring the student experience is effected through a range of mechanisms, through institutional level meetings between key Professional Services, USSA Student Executive and Academic Leads, alongside Student-Staff Liaison Committees, class evaluation and informal feedback.

24.    The Student Executive collectively participates in all self-evaluation activities led through our University committees. All senior committees of Senate, along with all sub-committees, working groups and special task groups have student representation from the appropriate Student Executive members. This ensures that the student voice is at the heart of our evaluative processes and is able to influence the output and implementations of key strategic activities across the institution. Commonly, the Student Executive will reach out to the wider student body through surveys and social media to capture a cross-section of views. Similar processes are used by student representatives on Student-Staff Liaison Committees (class reps), and the students who serve on Faculty committees.

25.    The Principal holds monthly meetings with the President of the Students' Association, and meets other sabbatical officer holders on a regular basis. Through these meetings the Principal is informed directly on matters of interest to the student body and the relevant sabbatical officers are informed about key University developments. These meetings can also provoke further reflective discussion within the formal committee environment.

26.    Staff and students across the University have engaged well with the Student Transitions enhancement theme. The theme has allowed the University to focus on and tap into an area of ongoing work that is being carried out by a strong network of colleagues across the institution. A clear benefit of this theme has been to compare ideas and activities with those of other institutions and to contribute to a greater awareness of the barriers to effective transitions across the sector.

27.    In Semester 2 of 2015-16 the University piloted the use of "Transforming the Experience of Student Through Assessment" (TESTA) to further explore and understand the University's NSS scores. This involved in-depth work with two programmes – the LLB Honours programme in the Law School and the MPharm in the Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences in order to understand students' experiences of assessment and feedback. Students' feedback was collected through both questionnaires and focus groups, and formed a basis for reflection and discussion by the programme teaching team. Wider adoption of the TESTA framework will be taken forward in 2016-17.

**Annual Monitoring Processes**

28.     An overview of annual quality monitoring processes conducted under the auspices of the Quality Assurance Committee is captured in Annex 2.

**Public Information about Quality**

29.     The Strategy and Policy Directorate is the key contact point for public information on our strategic targets and wider institutional facts and figures including the verification and provision of data used by league table compilers, and for internal queries relating to analysis of league table position.

30.     Through the Strathclyde University Business Intelligence Reports and Dashboard (SUnBIRD) System, we are continuously working to meet internal information needs for readily-accessible drill-down data from corporate data systems. This corporate management information system is using data warehouse and data visualisation software to present data in the form of dashboards with accompanying reports, offering users additional information and enhanced functionality using multiple internal and external sources in the corporate data warehouse. It includes many data items and indicators such as UCAS tariff points, retention rates, undergraduate and postgraduate student population including data on progression and degree outcomes. There is the potential to link this process to our emerging activity in Learning Analytics.

31.     A range of performance measures and related data are collected, presented and analysed across the University on both a routine and ad hoc basis. Refreshed annually using internal and external data, the University's Management Information Profiles (MIPs) present 3-year time series figures for data items and indicators not yet included in SUnBIRD, such as student satisfaction, destinations of leavers, and space occupied. The MIPs are published internally on SharePoint at University-level and by Faculty/Department. This data informs the analysis within the Faculty annual reporting process.

32.     The Student Surveys Team within the Student Experience and Enhancement Services Directorate prepares analyses of a wide range of student survey data incorporating the NSS, PTES, PRES, DHLE, International Student Barometer and UK Engagement Survey along with an internal Strathclyde Undergraduate Student Survey and an induction survey on the experience of first year undergraduate students. The Student Surveys Team works closely with the Faculties to manage and promote engagement with external survey submissions. Summary outcomes from these surveys are disseminated externally and internally via the Student Surveys webpage.

33.     The University's presentation of public information regarding all of its undergraduate courses is consistent and accessible on the Unistats webpages through its participation in KIS. A formal internal sign off process is in place to manage the quality of the data. The return has generated a welcome consistency in the presentation and collation of information, with a new undergraduate course web site now published online. Course prospectuses are published after consultation between the University's Marketing and Development Services Directorate and academic Departments and Schools. All

publications are signed off by a key contact nominated by the Head of Department.

34.     The University continues to recognise the importance of the internet in managing relations with the wider public, from prospective students to employers, government agencies and funding bodies. The University continues to work in accordance with the Competition and Market Authority guidelines and updated student fees are now available on the University web pages together with a list of associated fees relating to a course such as the cost of equipment and materials required.

35.     All information relating to the institutional management of quality has been consolidated and is available in the public domain. This includes a revised approach to the presentation of policy to the student community through student friendly policy web-pages to contextualised institutional academic policy in a more accessible tone for the student community. Our course regulations are published externally. We are currently looking at a more streamlined approach to the regulations including working with the Faculties to enhance the data being entered into the class catalogue. This will have the further benefit of strengthening compliance with the terms of the Erasmus Plus Charter.

## Institutional Reporting on Quality

36.     While the University Senate confers delegated responsibilities for detailed scrutiny of quality assurance matters to the Quality Assurance Committee, significant matters of note are referred to Senate for consideration and approval. The University Court also has oversight of institutional quality reporting via quarterly Court Business Reports. Quality assurance matters are incorporated within reports on our Education provision.

37.     Institutional reports on quality also incorporate external measures of quality. The results of the NSS are an important source of data in the University's quality assurance and enhancement processes. At an institutional level, Senate reviews the high level results of the NSS and participates in discussion on resulting institutional actions. The Quality Assurance Committee considers an institutional analysis of student feedback which incorporates the outcomes of the wider suite of internal and external student surveys and other internal feedback mechanisms through which the views of students are gathered, reviews NSS results and monitors actions at a Faculty level. Pursuing curriculum enhancement activities informed by feedback within the NSS is overseen by the Learning Enhancement Committee.

## Forward plan of Internal Reviews

38.     A summary of the forward plan of internal reviews is attached as Annex 3.

## Annual Statement of Assurance

39.     In line with SFC guidance, an annual statement of assurance confirming that this report has been endorsed by Court (the University's governing body) will be signed by the Convener of Court and returned under separate cover.

## Further information

40.     For further information, contact Ms Sarah Currie, Education Quality and Policy Officer, sarah.currie@strath.ac.uk 0141 548 4602.

<div align="right">13 September 2016</div>

**Annex 1**

**Annual Committee Report 2015-16: Education Strategy Committee**

*1.  Committee Overview*

The Education Strategy Committee (ESC) is a high-level strategic Committee of Senate, which reports and provides advice to the Executive Team and University Court.  ESC meetings take place four times per academic year to discuss, agree and progress institutional strategic priorities for Education.  A dedicated ESC-sub group meeting is also held at the end of the session to provide an opportunity for collective review and reflection across all three Education Committees, namely the Education Strategy Committee, the Learning Enhancement Committee (LEC) and the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

ESC's primary responsibilities include review and updates to Education Strategy, priority setting for deliverables each session, reviewing and responding to external initiatives and developments, directing and overseeing learning and teaching enhancement activities, developing new policies and assessing implications and overseeing the delivery of the Education strategy through other Committees and groups such as LEC and QAC.

*2.  Progress and Achievements*

a) ESC had oversight for monitoring ongoing planning, implementation and operational management of activities required to support the **reshape of the academic year for 2016/17,** following approval by Senate. The **partnership working** of Faculties and Professional Services was acknowledged, recognising the efforts undertaken to realise the **benefits for an enhanced student experience**, opportunities for curriculum flexibility and **new opportunities for extra-curricular activity** during the development weeks. The parallel **strategic project to enhance the integrated timetabling processes** is recognised as an important enabler for realising further curriculum flexibility and an enhanced experience for students and staff.

b) Priorities for the Education portfolio for 2015-16 focused on a number of strategic projects and were grouped into the **eight high-level areas of priority**: 1) outstanding/ongoing ELIR 2014 follow-up actions; 2) the development of Education Performance Indicators (EPIs); 3) a reflective and stratified approach to enhancing the quality of the student experience; 4) a unified and stratified approach to the National Student Survey (NSS); 5) the use of technologies to support the learner journey; 6) enhance internationalisation of the student experience; 7) enhance curriculum and learning flexibility and the learning environment, and 8)develop a unified and strengthened partnership approach to collaborative provision.

c) The Education Project Implementation Framework was introduced to enable implementation and monitoring of our Education projects, to demonstrate sustainable impact with respect to our strategic objectives and vision for Education in 2015-16.

d) An **Education Performance Metrics working group was established** in October 2015 and a draft framework for Education Performance Indicators (EPIs) has been developed and focuses on three areas of priority which are aligned to the our strategic priorities for Education: the 3i's (international, internships and industry); curriculum and learning flexibility informed by the use of technologies and student progression and retention.  The proposed direction for each EPI has also been identified, together with potential data sources and a series of recommendations to further progress this work to inform the next steps, likely to include prioritisation of approach, the development of agreed data

definitions, the collection of baseline data and institutional reflection on the strategic direction of each EPI.

e) The <u>external engagement framework</u> was established to provide a mechanism to baseline and reflect upon activities to support our distinctive approach to delivery of an outstanding student experience, in relation to our **external partnerships with industry, business and public sectors**. In turn, **External Engagement Plans** were developed by Departments to identify and better understand institutional external engagement strategies, plans and activities. The Framework, together with the External Engagement Plans, is designed to enable collective reflection upon how we influence and respond to our **institutional KPI for graduate destinations** (HESA benchmark 94%), as well as develop a deeper and broader awareness of development areas and the opportunities we offer all our students through **internships**, **industry** and **internationalisation** (**3Is**).

f) Members were presented with an overview of **early proposals for "The Place" project**, which relates to the development of a <u>new learning and teaching building</u> and the **development of facilities in the heart of the campus to deliver state-of-the-art learning and teaching, co-located with student facing front-office services and the Students' Union**. <u>Project management updates</u> were also provided on the plans which are currently at the **feasibility stage**. A Project Board and Project Sponsors Group has been established, led by **Project Sponsor, Dr Veena O'Halloran** and **stakeholder engagement sessions with staff and students** are underway to inform the future of the University's learning and teaching spaces and the **full business case to Court in November 2016**.

g) An **enhanced approach to reporting and acting on the National Student Survey (NSS) results** was introduced to include the development of <u>NSS ranking sheets</u> (at subject-level JACS code) to clearly articulate our positioning relative to other participating HEIs; an <u>NSS improvement framework</u> was developed to increase **reflection and action to on the institutional KPIs for student satisfaction** across Schools, Departments and Faculties in collaboration with Professional Services; <u>NSS improvement plans were prepared by each Department/School , approved by Faculty</u> and submitted to QAC to articulate areas of positive practice, to address areas for development and to identify means for sharing best practice and communicating improvements to students. An institutional surveys and metrics working group which will report to ESC is also being established.

h) Members were briefed on updates for <u>Widening Access</u> including entrant numbers for 2015-16, an **enhanced approach to target-setting**, an **agreed approach to the 'top-up' programme** and a **unified approach to contextual admissions and the publication of offers**. More specifically, this includes a revised Contextual Data in Admissions Policy, specification of contextual offers for each programme and <u>new web pages</u> to provide details on each programme. This will enable prospective applicants to determine their eligibility for contextual offer as well as details of the offer itself. In addition, a <u>schematic demonstrating our process for reflection on our Widening Access and Participation (WAP) Strategy</u> has been developed, thus providing re-assurance with respect to the delivery of WAP strategic developments and to inform next stage developments. Finally, members were presented with an <u>overview of the Commission on Widening Access final report and technical paper</u>, outlining recommendations to achieve equal access to HE within a generation and supplemented within the context of Strathclyde, which is in an excellent position to respond to these recommendations, having developed a new WP strategy in 2015.

i) Members reviewed the <u>Learning Analytics Readiness Project Report</u>, prepared by JISC in February 2016, which positively confirmed that with respect to our proposed learning

analytics theme to "improve the learner journey and attainment of learning outcomes", **we are ready for this and encouraged to progress towards the pilot phase.**

j) A <u>digital education enhancement framework</u> for Education Strategy at the University has been developed and subsequently **endorsed by members**, focusing on priority areas of development for digital education (see: Ongoing Business and Proposed Areas of Focus for 2016-17g)).

k) Members contributed to a number of **policy revisions**, including <u>Internal Review: Policy, Procedure and Guidelines</u>, the <u>Policy and Code of Practice on Collaborative Education Provision</u> and the Revision and Update of the Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Study.

l) **Key risks for the Education portfolio** and delivery of our strategic priorities within ESC are managed through ongoing monitoring and review of risks ratings, controls and mitigating actions outlined within the <u>Education Portfolio Risk Register</u>. The risk register underpins the Corporate Risk Register for risks pertaining to Education provision and links to local risk registers are encouraged.

m) In relation to **external initiatives and developments**, members discussed developments with respect to the **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)**, including the <u>Green Paper 'Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice'</u>, a <u>TEF presentation to Senate</u>, providing details of the TEF model, key dates and examples of how the proposed metrics could potentially be applied at Strathclyde and the BIS paper <u>"The Teaching Excellence Framework: Assessing quality in Higher Education"</u>.

n) **QAC and LEC** has submitted <u>quarterly progress reports</u> to each meeting of ESC, outlining updates on project progress, issues, decisions and activities which are both underway and planned.

o) The Chair briefed members on a number of items including: the **new Strathclyde Business School building**; our **nominations in the Times Higher Education (THE) awards** 2015; honours at the **"Inspiring City Awards" 2015**; the approval of **extension to Senate Business Committee invitations**; the establishment of the **Collaborative Provision Agreement sub-group**; the launch dates for the **National Student Survey (NSS)**; regular <u>Education input</u> and **feedback from Senate and Court** meetings; **SFC funding** updates; our strategic focus on **work-based learning** and discussions with Skills Development Scotland with respect to the development of a **Graduate Level Apprenticeship degree programme**; our results from the **Complete University Guide** (CUG); the HESA UK wide **consultation on the Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE)** survey, and institutional **updates on industrial action**.

*3. Ongoing Business and Proposed Areas of Focus for 2016-17*

a) **Reflect on all projects within the Education portfolio for 2015-16 to inform the portfolio for 2016-17** and denote projects as 'maintain', 'defer' or 'close' and prioritise remaining portfolio thereafter and **inform the priorities of LEC and QAC** for academic year 2016-17.

b) **Further progress proposals for the development of a new learning and teaching building** through the **development of the full business case** in order to enhance students' learning and teaching and social experience through flexible space to accommodate current and evolving educational pedagogies, encourage engagement and provide personalised student support.

c) **Continue to progress the graduate level apprenticeships/work based learning (GBA/WBL) project**, engaging with Skills Development Scotland and directed by an

internal Project Board and underpinned by our strategic aims for Education, including objectives with respect to diversification and our Digital Education Enhancement Framework (DEEF).

d) Review and refine the methodology and framework for institutional **Education Performance Indicators (EPIs)**, **utilising existing implementation frameworks** where appropriate, including the NSS improvement framework, the external engagement framework and forthcoming retention and progression framework, led by QAC.

e) Review and **utilise metrics and methodologies for institutional performance** across a range of indicators, including progression, retention and attainment; degree outcomes; student/staff ratio and graduate destinations, underpinned by the **creation of a surveys and metrics working group**.

f) **Reflect with internal stakeholders on the effectiveness, development and implementation of our Widening Access and Participation Strategy**, with reference to the recommendations of the final report of the Commission on Widening Access and the sector's response, including considering how we influence and inform the development of the Scottish Framework for Fair Access.

g) **Implement our vision for digital education** as articulated in the digital education enhancement framework, with reference to **priority areas** including: online UG degree programmes focused on WBL; repurposing digital content for on-campus student cohorts; expanding PGT provision through new part-time/online blended delivery; evaluation of MOOCs; expansion of the central digital education team and the development and implementation of annual Faculty 'e-plans'.

h) Review and further define our **learning analytics strategy** and progress learning analytics pilot projects with oversight from the learning analytics steering group.

i) Continue to **review and respond to external developments**, including those related to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE), to assess implications and identify actions as necessary.

j) Through QAC, review the **rolling programme of academic policies, procedures and guidance** to identify and prioritise those eligible for review and/or initiation in academic session 2016-17.

k) **Routine review of the strategic risk register** for the Education portfolio to evaluate and assess the current range and position of risks and to consider any changes to risks, risk rating and mitigating actions arising from changes to the internal or external environment.

*4. Reflections and Recommendations*

*Committee Membership*
a) USSA attendance and Senate representation at ESC meetings has unfortunately been more limited in 2015-16. It is **recommended** that members are reminded to arrange representation in their stead, if on occasion, they are unable to attend an ESC meeting.

*Committee Practice*
a) It is **recommended** that the revised agenda format for ESC in May 2016 is retained (inclusive of the associated ESC priority sub-headings), to encourage holistic reflection on items within the context of the wider Education portfolio.

b) It is **recommended** that a one-page 'USSA highlights' report is developed and submitted to each meeting of ESC, to encourage greater awareness of USSA activities and successes and to identify further synergies and opportunities for partnership working with the University.

*Committee Priorities Progress*

a) Strategic priorities and associated actions for the Education portfolio progressed very well in 2015-16.   Progress has been aided by renewed emphasis on process enhancement to further secure the foundations for future strategic developments through the creation of implementation frameworks to influence and respond to our institutional and educational key performance indicators. Frameworks are in place to support: institutional reflection on external engagement activities; monitoring of our Education provision through the development of EPIs; and structured mechanisms to address findings from student feedback, such as the results of the National Student Survey (NSS).

b) In tandem, we have delivered and continue to inform strategic activities pertaining to the development of the full business case for a new learning and teaching building; graduate-level apprenticeships/work-based learning developments; widening access activities and enhancements; learning analytics pilot projects and planned policy revisions, also within the context of an evolving external landscape, through which we continue to engage with HE sector reform proposals, including the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and the DLHE consultation.

**Annual Committee Report 2015-16: Quality Assurance Committee**

*1.     Statement of Purpose*
In accordance with the annual reporting requirements of the University's Education Committees; this report provides Committee members with an overview of the remit and membership of the Quality Assurance Committee during 2015-16 and includes details and reflection upon highlights, successes and areas for further discussion and/or focus in 2016-17.

*2.     Committee Remit*
The Quality Assurance Committee operates as a high-level compliance Committee and reports directly to the University Senate, with additional reporting to the University Court and Executive Team, as appropriate. The Committee currently meets four times each academic session to oversee and monitor the effectiveness of the University's quality assurance processes in terms of teaching and learning and the student experience. Within this cycle, one joint meeting is held with the Learning Enhancement Committee for the purpose of considering Faculty Annual Reports (FAR): Quality Assurance and Enhancement.   This process helps embed an enhancement-led approach to quality assurance. The responsibilities of the Committee are as follows based on an annual cycle of business for monitoring and review:

- Annual monitoring
  - To monitor data relating to class pass rates, student progress and awards.
  - To oversee the effectiveness of partnerships, joint awards, collaborative activities etc with other institutions, UK and overseas.
  - To monitor the effectiveness of existing process(es) relating to student appeals and discipline cases
- Student Feedback
  - To consider outcomes of student surveys in the context of learning and teaching and the student experience
  - Student-Staff Liaison Committee business as articulated via FARs.
- External Examining
  - To oversee the appointment of External Examiners and consider key trends arising from External Examiners' reports and Departmental responses.
- Internal Review
  - To review and disseminate positive practice and recommendations arising from Faculty Annual Reports: Quality Assurance and Enhancement
  - To consider quinquennial review reports at Faculty, School and Departmental level
  - To oversee external reporting on quality matters e.g. to the QAA and SFC
  - To review the outcomes of PSRB accreditation visits
- Oversight of the Ordinances and Regulations Working Group
  - To oversee updates to the University's Regulatory Framework through the effective operation of Ordinances and Regulations Working Group

The Ordinances and Regulations Working Group reports directly to the Quality Assurance Committee through the submission of regular written and oral reports and Minutes as well as proposing recommendations for broader consideration.  The Convener of O&RWG sits on QAC.

*2      Progress and Achievements*
  a. **QAC approved refinements to the FAR template** and continues to use the now well established peer review process. The template is strengthened by further alignment with the ELIR methodology and reflects strategic priorities and the current Enhancement Theme. Signposting of available background data continues to be strengthened with input from the Strategy and Policy Directorate. Key headline

messages were shared at the joint meeting of QAC/LEC and recommendations will be taken forward in 2016/17.

b. The joint meeting of QAC and LEC received the **Faculty Annual Reports for 2014/ 15** as well as a paper outlining Key Themes prepared by Education Enhancement, allowing members to identify collectively key strengths and specific examples of positive practice as well as areas for development. Key messages arising will inform ongoing and priority activities for the next academic session.

c. **Positive feedback was received from the annual discussion with the QAA** in November 2015 regarding Committee progress and support for ongoing and outstanding actions from the ELIR 2014.

d. QAC has continued to engage with and **monitor the implementation of the NSS Improvement Framework**. Departmental/ School NSS Improvement Plans were submitted to QAC at its meeting in December 2015 and key messages were highlighted. The Committee has continued to receive updates and work with other key University committees such as LEC, Senate and the Leadership Group to communicate these key messages.

e. In response to ELIR 2014 the **revised Internal Review Policy, Procedures and Guidelines** was approved at Senate at its meeting in September 2015. A critical analysis of the new process will be undertaken with key stakeholders during the next academic session.

f. The **revised Policy and Code of Practice for PGR Programmes** approved at Senate at its meeting in March 2016. This revision was carried out in partnership with colleagues in RKES. This revision aims to address part of the ELIR 2014 recommendation of promoting the equivalence of the postgraduate student experience. Further work will be carried out in 2016/17 to take forward this recommendation.  It should be noted that this has not yet been uploaded on the Policies and Procedures web page as it does not come into effect until September 2016.

g. The Committee endorsed the **revised University Guidelines for Course Handbooks** at its meeting in September 2015.

h. Committee members had the opportunity to contribute to and endorse the **institutional response to the HEFCE consultation on changes to the National Student Survey, Unistats and information** provided by institutions in December 2015.

i. **Annual review of outcomes of accreditation and re-accreditation visits by PSRBs** for 2014-15 was received by the Committee at its meeting in September 2015.

j. Analysis of **annual class monitoring exercise** to review UG and PG class pass rates for 2014-15 receiving feedback from Faculties on classes categorised as 'at risk' (ie where the pass rate is <75% and the student numbers are >75).

k. Members considered the full reports following **quinquennial reviews** in 2015-16 for the Departments of: Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Biomedical Engineering; Physics; Civil and Environmental Engineering and the School of Education. Headline messages were also received from the Department of Architecture, the School of Social Work and Social Policy, the Law School and the Department of Computer and Information Sciences at QAC's meeting on 6th May 2016.

l. Faculties are required to undertake a review of all current **collaborative provision** (joint degrees, validations, articulations, twinning, provision of services, doctoral supervision) on a regular basis to ensure the quality and maintenance of standards and monitor their ongoing viability. QAC received and noted the reports following the review of collaborative education activity in the Faculties of Science, HaSS and Engineering. The Business School reviews are due to come to the next meeting of QAC.

m. The Committee **continues to endorse the appointment of External Examiners of taught courses**.

n. **Overview and analysis of [Senate appeals and discipline cases in 2014-15](#) against comparative data from 2012-13 onwards**. This was a very robust report and the recommendations are being taken forward by the Faculties.

o. **QAC continues to engage with the International Study Centre (ISC**) – the Committee Manager and another member of the Committee were involved in the one day Centre Review that took place in October 2015. Following this, the Committee welcomed the positive outcome of the QAA Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight (ECREO) conducted in January 2016. QAC also receives [regular update reports](#) from ISC.

p. QAC received regular briefing notes providing an **overview of key external developments relating to quality assurance and enhancement within the UK and Scottish HE sectors**, including recent publications and forthcoming events and papers (particularly from HESA, QAA and Universities Scotland) with hyperlinks provided for additional relevant information and wider dissemination in case of interest.

q. **QAC received regular reports from Student Business for approval *nem con*** including requests for extensions to Moratorium on a Thesis, appointments of External Examiners of taught courses and for research programmes.

r. QAC determined the assignment of **risk ratings** relating to the Education portfolio and the delivery of the University's strategic priorities in accordance with a risk rating matrix.

**2.1   Ordinances & Regulations Working Group Highlights:** O&R Working Group reports have highlighted or initiated discussion on the following points:

i. QAC endorsed the resolution that course regulations would be removed after the maximum period of study for those students currently enrolled on the course had been completed. O&R agreed to be flexible about applying this as the maximum period of study will depend on the degree.

ii. The need for guidance was discussed for incoming exchange students wanting to take additional classes over and above the standard curriculum for a course.

iii. A review of how elective classes are being used in years 1-3 of the undergraduate and Integrated Masters curricula is required. Discussions around the Academic Year and timetabling could inform this debate.

iv. It was agreed that the 20-credit framework permitted leeway to accommodate postgraduate CPD classes of 5 credits.

v. An O&R Sharepoint site has been created and is currently being used by the Faculties to ensure a consistent process is adopted across the O&R Working Group by members and Faculties/Departments. It is recognised that this new approach will take time to embed.

*3   Reflection, Review and Recommendations*

Committee Membership

a. Committee meetings are largely well-attended by members throughout the session.

b. It is important for members to contribute on behalf of the areas they represent and, input to discussions and consultations and cascade information and disseminate papers from QAC within their respective areas as appropriate.

c. Early identification of student members who should sit on the Committee and ensure that an induction/ briefing session is held in advance of the academic session's first meeting of QAC.

*Committee Practice*

    d. Committee business largely follows the schedule of business agreed at the first meeting of the session; however, additional items of importance can also be included. The schedule of business will continue to be reviewed annually at the start of each new session to reflect agreed institutional priorities as well as 'routine' business.

    e. The shift from five to four meetings per annum in 2014-15 (including a joint meeting with LEC) and the timing of meetings to align with ESC and Senate reporting has reduced the opportunity to cover all items of business within the annual cycle of meetings. An additional meeting has been scheduled for February 2017 to allow further items to be considered within the Committee cycle. This is also the case for LEC.

*Committee Business*

    f. Although its potential has not yet been realised in practice, the benchmarking tool bringing together HESA and other HE sector data currently being developed within Strategy and Policy Directorate will facilitate national comparisons across disciplines and provide trend data over 5 years to improve the breadth and depth of our quality assurance and monitoring processes. This is reflected through the increasing use of SUnBIRD data and reporting to QAC. This is a key data source used for metrics and reporting.

    g. An institutional analysis of student feedback was last reported to the joint meeting of QAC/ LEC in 2014/15. This will be reported to the joint meeting again in 2016/ 17 incorporating the key messages from the NSS.

*4    Proposed Areas of Focus for Next Academic Session*

    a. A detailed review of the Schedule of Business and related reporting requirements will be carried out over the next academic session. A small working group is being set up to take this forward.

    b. In response to ELIR 2014 an immediate focus will be placed on PGR student experience – including liaison with the Researcher Development Group to close the gaps between PG committees and processes.

    c. Critical analysis of revised Internal Review Policy process and reporting to be undertaken with key stakeholders. The QAA is seeking consistency of reports across the four faculties which requires a change in structure to the Business School's approach to internal review.

    d. Further engagement with the NSS and highlighting key messages from departmental/ School improvement plans. QAC will explore the use of MyPlace to monitor compliance within stipulated local feedback deadlines.

    e. Continued and proactive monitoring of FAR 14/ 15 actions via a Sharepoint-based action log. This will be a standing agenda item for future Education Enhancement/ Assistant Faculty Managers meetings.

    f. To undertake a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of External Examiner reports and scoring along with departmental responses for 2014-15 undertaken with comparisons across previous years.

    g. To work on developing the process for continued monitoring of student progression and retention.

    h. An external route to the PG Cert in Researcher Professional Development award aligned to the School of Education will continue to be progressed in partnership with RKES.

i.  The Committee will have the opportunity to comment on and endorse the review of the Course and Class Approval Policy in 2016/ 17.

j.  QAC generated a number of actions during 2015-16.  Improved processes for tracking the progress of actions (similar to ESC) will be introduced over the next year to ensure that they are assigned appropriately and completed timeously.

**Annual Committee Report 2015-16: Learning Enhancement Committee**

*Committee Overview*
The Learning Enhancement Committee (LEC) is a high-level strategic Committee of Senate, which reports to the Education Strategy Committee (ESC).  The Committee had four meetings in the 2015-16 session, including a joint meeting with the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). The annual joint meeting of QAC and LEC is a continuation of recent practice which has focused on presentation and discussion issues arising from the Annual Faculty Quality Assurance and Enhancement Reports.

LEC's primary responsibilities are:
- To encourage innovation and enhancement in learning and teaching. Prioritisation, scope, and overall management of enhancement projects.
- To support the development and expansion of flexible technology-enhanced learning across the institution.
- To identify, disseminate and seek to ensure robust replication of good practice.
- To connect with sector-wide activity with respect to learning enhancement and curriculum development

LEC has specific oversight of the Student Transitions Steering Group (which has a specific remit with respect to QAA Enhancement Themes) and the Learning Analytics Steering Group.

 *2. Progress and Achievements*
   a. Following the publication of the 2014/2015 National Student Survey (NSS) results, LEC identified two departments to engage in **pilot projects** for <u>Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment</u> (**TESTA**) and the process outlined to Senate in March. These Departments – **Law and SIPBS** – received their TESTA case study documentation in June 2016.
   b. In response to NSS discussions around assessment and feedback, at LEC's direction, **Myplace was amended** to ensure that assessment is always accompanied by marking criteria, date of return of marks and name of person responsible for returning marks.
   c. NSS workshops were run for staff to share the lessons from academic and professional service areas of the University. The 2015/2016 NSS saw an increase in **response rate to from 71.44%** to **74.04%**. Senate received updates on work on NSS throughout the year.
   d. LEC has overseen the reporting on institutional engagement in the <u>QAA Enhancement Theme</u>, **Student Transitions**, which has included participation in and contribution to, QAA Enhancement Theme Institutional Leaders meetings and events. Strathclyde's **<u>five projects</u> initiated in 2014-15 were completed**. These projects focused on students' **transitions into Strathclyde**, and involved students as research interns undertaking data collection and analysis in order to explore and illuminate a range of transition challenged. An event was held in February to disseminate the findings and outputs from these five projects, three of which were presented by the student interns involved. The programme also included visiting speakers. An open call for further projects to be funded was undertaken in March 2016, focused on transitions *through* Strathclyde. **Six projects were awarded £10,000 in total** and all six projects will employ student interns to undertake the work. Additionally, several members of **staff presented papers and posters at the <u>QAA Enhancement Themes Conference</u>** in June 2016 in Edinburgh.
   e. Blackboard and Jisc undertook a **<u>Learning Analytics Readiness evaluation</u>** which showed Strathclyde to have **no fundamental obstacles** to adoption of learning analytics tools. A fixed-term project officer took up post in April to manage the piloting

of **five learning analytic pilot projects** (MBA, EEE, SW&SP, OSDU and CIS). This was carried out in tangent with work with Jisc to pilot their Learning Analytics mobile app for students, scheduled for September 2016. A steering group oversees the pilots, meeting in February, April and June 2016.

f.  The Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Programme (STEP) ran **31 events with 498 staff engagements**, with progress outlined to Senate in March. The programme will be evaluated at the end of the first year through analysis of attendance and feedback matrices as well as through a consultation process. This will also inform programme development for 2016/17 provision.

g.  A review of Myplace was conducted in light of significant on-going usage growth. LEC agreed to add **a standing item regarding Myplace to the Committee agenda** and item added to LEC agenda. This item will allow the feeding back of the Myplace User Group to the Committee.

h.  A Digital Education Enhancement Framework for Strathclyde was presented to LEC and **endorsed**. This proposed the development of a portfolio of **online and blended UG degree programmes** focused on Work Based Learning (WBL**), digital content repurposed** for campus-based students, an expansion PGT provision through the development of new digital content for existing programmes and targeted new development for part -time/online/blended delivery (off-campus). Additionally, continued **evaluation and extension of the MOOC model** was proposed and the development of a **central digital education team** providing learning enhancement, IT/technical support and development for new online programmes that can support Faculty and cross-institution digital education initiatives. Also proposed were annual **Faculty plans (e-plans)** related to initiatives in digital education.

i.  LEC oversaw an increased alignment of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to **recruitment and income generation.** "Introduction to Genealogy" MOOC ran in April and May 2016. **700** expressions of interest in further online study on fee-bearing programmes were received. A live Google Hangout video presentation outlining opportunities for further fee-bearing study was viewed **1,150 times**. The Caring for Vulnerable Children (CVC) MOOC **recruited seven students** to the related online Masters programme. Following the success of this MOOC, **CELCIS was awarded a grant from UNICEF** to develop high profile MOOC on UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children. Video from the CVC MOOC won a British Universities Film & Video Council prestigious **"Learning on Screen"** award. Further MOOCs are planned in the area of Gender-based Violence and Lean Six Sigma. To date, Strathclyde's MOOCs have had **189,000 enrolments**. The CEO of FutureLearn stated that he considers Strathclyde to be one of the Partnership's top three producers of the courses in terms of quality, participant numbers and sales of certificates.

j.  In response to the ELIR 2014 recommendations regarding the Graduate Attributes, a workshop was held with VDAs, Careers and Education Enhancement to revisit, work through and report back on the **4Es and 3Is**.

k.  LEC supported the development and promotion of the new good practice – Sharing Practice in Effective Learning & Teaching (SPELT) – website. Work commenced on this in June 2015 by a student intern and **the website contained 67 cases by June 2016**. Eight of these were made available as posters for the Learning and Teaching day in June 2016.

l.  Members of LEC were invited to contribute to the development of the high profile institutional Learning & Teaching event– "**Learning and Teaching in an International Technological University**" which was to take place on 17 June.

*4. Reflection, Review and Recommendations*

Technology has been a significant focus of the Committee in the current year and it is anticipated that it will continue to be.

*Committee Membership*

    a. USSA attendance at ESC meetings has unfortunately been more limited in 2015-16. It is recommended that members are all reminded to arrange representation in their stead, if on occasion, they are unable to attend an LEC meeting.

    b. The Faculties of Business and Science requested additional on-going 'attending' memberships for colleagues to allow subject-matter input and advice on items of Committee business.

*Committee Practice*

    c. It is recommended that the revised 2015/2016 agenda format standardised agenda format has provided greater consistency with regard to Committee business, and provided clear direction on items requiring a decision.

    d. LEC will seek greater awareness of the Committee's remit and activity across the University. Where business is non-reserved, access to papers will be provided to all staff in SharePoint by default. Notice of the availability of the minutes will be added to the Weekly Staff Digest.

*Committee Priorities*

    e. Committee business remained aligned to strategic priorities outlined at the beginning of AY 2015-2016, and progressed well throughout the session. *Contributions were invited from all members and all items were given due consideration.*

*Proposed Committee Priorities*

    f. NSS – LEC will continue to provide a unified and stratified approach to the NSS, supporting work to share expertise and lessons from well-performing academic and professional service areas.

    g. Assessment and Feedback – LEC will consider the report into the TESTA pilot projects and consider whether additional programmes should be provided with the opportunity to engage in the process.

    h. Digital Education – LEC will continue to support the development of the digital education framework including development of Myplace.

    i. Learning Analytics – LEC will continue to support the Learning Analytics Steering Group in its work with learning analytics pilots and the development of an institutional strategy.

    j. Student Transitions – LEC will lead the QAA Enhancement Theme: 'Student Transitions' to provide support for learning enhancement activities, best practice sharing and to further enhance the student experience.

    k. ELIR recommendations – will oversee progress on meeting the requirements of the ELIR recommendations in conjunction with ESC and QAC.

    l. Learning gain – LEC will consider how a focus on learning gain, and consideration of measures, can assist enhancement of learning and teaching.

    m. STEP – LEC will continue to support the STEP programme, assuring strong connection between strategic priorities for learning and teaching and the staff development programme.

**Main Business Considered Annually at Quality Assurance Committee**

### 1. Student Progress

- Student Progression, Retention and Awards
- PGR Monitoring, Completion Rates and Student Experience
- PGT completion rates
- Student Business report on Voluntary Suspension

### 2. Policy Framework

- Policy approval and amendments/ reviews
- Policy evaluation and monitoring eg Assessment and Feedback, Internal Review, Motivational Merit, External Examiners
- Overview and issues arising from Complaints, Senate Discipline and Senate Appeals cases

### 3. Regulatory Framework

- Reports from O&R
- Student Business Approvals
- Report from ERASMUS+ Group

### 4. Collaborative Education Activity

- Collaborative Provision – monitoring of agreements
- ISC Foundation Programmes: Annual Report
- Review of student exchange activity

### 5. Governance

- QAA Annual Discussion
- QAC Annual Report to ESC
- SFC Institutional Statement on Internal Review (approved by Senate and Court)
- Reports to/ from SFC, Senate and Court
- Risk Register

### 6. Student Assessment

- Annual Class Monitoring
- Summary Reports from External Examiners and Departmental Responses
- Extracts from minutes of Faculty Academic Committees
- Overview, key trends and themes
- Appointment of External Examiners of Taught Courses
- Appointment of External Examiners for PGR students

### 7. Student Feedback

- Oversight and review of NSS improvement plans from each Faculty
- Report on outcomes of NSS, high level analysis and identification of areas of good practice  - produced by SEES
- Outcomes and analysis of PRES, PTES, SUS and DLHE using analysis prepared for Performance and Metrics group

- Institutional analysis of student feedback – summary prepared by Student Survey Team
- Module/ class evaluations
- Overview of SSLC's

### 8. Internal Review and Accreditation

- Faculty Annual Reports
- Departmental reviews – issues relating to Learning and Teaching
- PSB accreditation visits – outcomes and recommendations

**Standing items**
- QAC priority projects
- ELIR
- Education Performance Indicators
- SIMS
- Report from USSA
- Matters Arising
- External Updates
- Moratorium extensions (when there are any)

## University of Strathclyde  Schedule of Reviews

| Faculty | Type of Review | Department/School | Next review date | Last Reviewed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engineering | Departmental | Biomedical Engineering (NCPO & Bioengineering merged from 2012/13) | 2019/20 | 2014/15 |
| Engineering | Departmental | Chemical and Process Engineering | 2017/18 | 2012/13; 2007/08 (May 2008); |
| Engineering | Departmental | Design, Manufacture and Engineering Management (DMEM) | 2016/17 | 2011/12 (June 2012); 2006/07 (Apr 2007); |
| Engineering | Departmental | Electronic & Electrical Engineering | 2018/19 | 2008/09 (Jan 09); 2002/03, 2013/14 |
| Engineering | Departmental | Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering | 2019/20 | 2009/10;  2004/05, 2014/15 |
| Engineering | Departmental | Naval Architecture, Ocean and Marine Engineering(NAOME) | 2016/17 | 2011/12 (May 2012); 2006/07 (Apr 2007) |
| Science | Departmental | Computer & Information Science | 2016/17 | 2011/12 (March 2012); 2006/07 - undertaken as a University led review (rather than Faculty-led). |
| Science | Departmental | Mathematics & Statistics (Mathematics and STAMS merged from 2009/10) | 2016/17 | 2011/12 (April 2012); 2006/07 - Maths; 2005/06 - STAMS |
| Science | Departmental | Physics | 2019/20 | 2009/10 (Oct 2009); 2004/05, 2014-15 |
| Science | Departmental | Pure and Applied Chemistry | 2017/18 | 2007/08 (Feb 08); 2012/13 |
| Science | Departmental | Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences | 2018/19 | 2008/09 (Feb 2009), 2013/14 |
| Strathclyde Business School | Faculty | Faculty-Wide Review | 2016/17 | 2011/12 (November 2011) |
| Humanities and Social Sciences | School | Education | 2019/20 | 2014/15 |
| Humanities and Social Sciences | School | Humanities | 2017/18 | 2012/13 |
| Humanities and Social Sciences | School | Psychological Sciences and Health | 2016/17 | 2011/12 (March 2012 |
| Humanities and Social Sciences | School | Government and Public Policy | 2018/19 | 2008/09 (Nov 2008) 2001, 2013/14 |

## COURT MEMBERSHIP GROUP

**Minute of meeting held on 8 September 2016**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Present:** | Ronnie Cleland (Vice-Convener of Court - Chair), Gillian Hastings (Lay Member of Court and Convener of Audit Committee), Professor Sir Jim McDonald (Principal), Professor Scott MacGregor (Vice-Principal), Dr Veena O'Halloran (Senate Member of Court), Raj Jeyaraj (USSA President) Hugh Hall (Chief Operating Officer), David Coyle (Chief Financial Officer) |
| **Attending:** | Darren Thompson |
| **Apologies:** | Jack Perry (Treasurer), Marion Venman (Deputy Convener, Estates) |
| **Not in attendance:** | Richard Hunter (Convener of Court) |

*This was a single-item meeting to consider applications received for the position of Convener of Court.*

### 1. Convener of Court Recruitment 2017

The Vice-Convener of Court welcomed members to the meeting and summarised the recruitment process to date. It was noted that:

- The vacancy, including a full Person Specification, had been advertised widely over a five week period;
- Court members had been notified and encouraged to share the opportunity as widely as possible;
- Lay Members of Court had been approached to seek potential expressions of interest; and
- Over the five week period, six expressions of potential interest were noted, resulting in two formal applications being submitted. These applications were presented here for consideration.

Members were invited to review the two applications received and consider both candidates' suitability against the Candidate Pack and Person Specification.

**Candidate 1:**

Members noted that the candidate's application:

- was of a significantly high calibre;
- was indicative of a wide range of relevant skills and experience which clearly matched all of the essential criteria listed within the Person Specification;
- clearly indicated how the candidate would contribute to the advancement of the University;
- resonated strongly with the University's values and vision.

Members unanimously **agreed** that the candidate should be invited to attend a formal interview.

**Candidate 2:**

Members noted that the candidate's application:

- was indicative of strong skills and experience in specific areas of professional activity;
- was structured in such a way as to make it challenging to fully align skills and experience with all the essential criteria of the Person Specification;

- would benefit from significant amplification and clarification, particularly in details relating to previous experience and education;
- did not illustrate the specific contribution the candidate might make to the University.

Members **agreed** that the candidate should be invited to attend a formal interview. They also **agreed** that the candidate should be offered the opportunity to provide amplification and clarification in regard to certain sections of his/her application prior to the interview.

Members **agreed** that **both candidates** would also be offered the opportunity to meet or speak informally with key University personnel prior to interview. This would include a meeting with a small group of student representatives.

## 2. Any other business

There was no other business.

## Date of next meeting

– Monday, 14 November, 2016

DT, 9 Sep 2016

**Annual Survey of Court Members 2016**
**Summary of Responses**


**Background**

1. The Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance requires Court to keep its effectiveness under annual review. There are currently two elements to this process; the first is the Convener's meetings with individual members over the course of the summer. The second is the survey of members which provides the opportunity for anonymised feedback and it is the summary findings from this survey which are detailed below.

2. Over the month of July 2016. Court members were invited to complete an online survey on their experiences of Court and its effectiveness over the previous 12 months. The survey contained ten questions (see Annex A) and responses were received from 14 members (a response rate of 58%). This was followed up in August with individual meetings between the Convener and Court members.

**Summary findings**

3. An analysis of the survey responses indicated that Court members generally:

- Get a high level of fulfilment from their involvement with Court, evidenced by:
  - 6 ratings of 'Very High'
  - 7 ratings of ' High'
  - 1 rating of 'Satisfactory'
- Feel they have made positive and evident contributions to the work of University
- Are pleased with the level of support provided by other Court members, senior officers, and Professional Services staff
- Are Content with Court's oversight of delivery of the University's Strategic Plan and the appropriateness/completeness of performance information provided
- Appreciate recent efforts to provide a variety of venues for Court meetings
- Feel that the quality of analysis, debate and discussion at Court meetings is high

4. Suggestions for improvements made by respondents included:

- Potential for greater utilisation of Court members to discuss/support particular strategic challenges or difficult areas (1 respondent)
- Dedicating more time on agendas to support detailed consideration of topics and issues of key importance (1 respondent)
- Consider whether current KPIs cover all relevant factors, particularly those which impact upon performance in league table rankings (1 respondent)
- Consider centralised coordination of Court and its committees rather than the current practice of splitting support arrangements by Professional Services area (1 respondent)
- Consider seeking views from wider stakeholders on critical issues such as fee income to provide reassurance to Court members on the robustness of current growth strategies (1 respondent)
- Remind members that they may request or suggest items for inclusion on Court agendas (1 respondent)
- Instruct those making presentations to Court to be sharp and succinct (1 respondent)
- Consider dedicated networking events or assigned seating to help members get to know each other better (1 respondent)

- Longer term forecasting and scenario planning to anticipate/mitigate potential financial shocks (1 respondent)

5. Suggested areas/issues for focus as part of a future externally-facilitated review of effectiveness included:

- The role of Court Business Group (1 respondent)
- Court's oversight of delivery of the Strategic Plan (1 respondent)
- Basis of appointments to Committees of Court (1 respondent)
- Securing a continued diversity of experience and opinion amongst members (1 respondent)
- Ensuring an environment where members can share their thoughts and opinions (1 respondent)
- Ensuring that any review is appropriately tailored to the University's needs (1 respondent)
- Evidencing how decisions or recommendations by Court and its committees link to the agreed Strategic Plan and desired outcomes (1 respondent)

6. Along with the direct feedback from the Convener's 1-to-1 meetings with members, this information will be used to enhance and improve the operation of Court.

**Action requested**

7. Court is invited to:

- **Note** the summary findings of the 2016 survey.

**Annex A – Survey Questions**

*Question 1: What contribution do you think you have made to the work of the University in the last 12 months?*

*Question 2: Are there any further contributions you would have liked to have made? If so, what prevented you from doing so?*

*Question 3: Would you have liked more help/support during the last 12 months e.g:*
*        a. from other members of Court, including the Convener?*
*        b. from the Principal and other senior officers?*
*        c. from the Strategy and Policy Directorate in Professional Services?*
*If so, please comment on the nature and range of additional help/support that you would have found useful.*

*Question 4: How would you rate the level of fulfilment you get from your involvement with the work of the University Court? Please add any comments if you wish.(Members were invited to rate their level of fulfilment on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being 'Very High' and 1 being 'Very Low')*

*Question 5: What do you like least about the work of the Court?*

*Question 6: What do you like most about the work of the Court?*

*Question 7: Are you content with Court's oversight of the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan? Performance is formally reported through the quarterly Business Reports, and (as of 2015/16) twice annually through progress reports in February (mid-year) and November (year-end). Please add any comments if you wish.*

*Question 8: Have you any suggestions on how to improve the effectiveness of Court meetings in the coming year?*

*Question 9: It is anticipated that the Court will undertake an externally-facilitated review of its own effectiveness, and that of its committees, during 2017/18 (a requirement of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance). Please comment on any specific areas of effectiveness on which you think the review should focus.*

*Question 10: Do you have any suggestions on how the Convener might improve the effectiveness of Court? Please note that any comments will be shared in confidence with the Vice-Convener, who is collating feedback for the Convener.*

**Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016: Update**

**Introduction**

1.   This paper provides information on the key provisions contained within the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act, passed by the Scottish Parliament on 8 March 2016. The Act received Royal Assent on 13 April and the full text is available here. The Act is not yet in force; it is expected to be implemented from late 2016/early 2017, with a transitional period for some elements of up to 4 years.

**Background and context**

2.   A Bill was originally introduced to the Scottish Parliament in June 2015 with the stated intention to 'enable a framework for higher education governance that is more modern, inclusive and accountable' and to implement some of the recommendations of the 2012 von Prondzynski Review of Higher Education Governance in Scotland requiring primary legislation.

3.   The University responded to the consultation held prior to the introduction of the Bill and to calls for evidence initiated by the Parliamentary Finance Committee and Education & Culture Committee. In all instances, the University, in line with peer institutions and Universities Scotland, expressed concerns about the scope and provisions of the Bill. As the Bill progressed through Parliament, the Scottish Government made a number of concessions, which addressed some but not all of the concerns raised.

4.   The Act received Royal Assent on 13 April and implementation arrangements were the subject of discussions between Scottish Ministers and key sector stakeholders over the summer of 2016.

**Key provisions**

5.   The key provisions in the Act are:

*Senior lay member position*
6.   The governing body must include a senior lay member (however the institution chooses to name the position) elected by all staff, students and Court members who has duties equivalent to the Convener of Court including specific responsibility for:

-   The leadership and effectiveness of the governing body; and
-   Ensuring there is an appropriate balance of authority between the governing body and the Principal.

7.   The period of appointment and extension for the senior lay member is to be decided by Court. Another Court member may be selected to exercise these functions in the absence of the 'senior lay member' or while this position is vacant.

*Election of senior lay member*
8.   Court shall delegate to a committee responsibility for devising the relevant criteria and ensuring the efficiency and fairness of the election process. The committee must include a staff and student member (note: the Court Membership Group at Strathclyde meets these requirements). The post of senior lay member must be widely advertised and all applicants who appear to meet

the criteria invited for interview. All candidates that demonstrate at interview that they meet the criteria are eligible to stand for election.

9. Candidates will have interview and election expenses reimbursed, up to a limit specified by Court. The committee must make publicly available an overview report of the number of applicants and of any disclosed protected characteristics data (under the Equality Act 2010).

10. An election will be held if two or more candidates pass the interview stage. The election franchise consists of staff, students and Court members and is won by simple majority vote (note: the internal voting system used by the University Senate to appoint Senate members is Single Transferable Vote).

11. Where fewer than two candidates successfully pass the interview stage, there is a requirement to re-advertise the position.

*Remuneration of senior lay member*
12. The senior lay member, on their request, is to receive such remuneration and allowances as Court considers reasonable.

*Composition of the governing body*
13. The Act's provisions on the composition of governing bodies will have an impact on the current membership of Court. These provisions should also be considered alongside the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance which specifies as one of its main principles that a governing body should maintain a lay majority and an upper limit of 25 members.

14. The University Court is currently limited by Statute to a maximum of 24 members. This includes two elected student representatives drawn from the democratic processes administered by the Students' Association, five members of staff elected by the University Senate from amongst its membership, and one member of non-academic staff elected by the Professional Services staff of the University. The table below provides a comparison between current membership and the composition required by the Act.

| University Statute 2.5 (currently in force) | Governance Act requirements |
|---|---|
| The Court shall consist of the following persons, namely:<br>• The Principal<br>• The Vice-Principal<br>• 1 person appointed by The City of Glasgow Council<br>• 5 members of Senate, appointed by the Senate<br>• 2 members appointed by the Students' Association (one of whom shall be the President of the Students' Association)<br>• 1 person to be appointed by and from among the Graduates Association<br>• 1 person appointed by the Professional Services staff<br>• Up to 12 other persons co-opted by the Court (must not be students or staff of the University)<br><br>Total membership = 24 | The Court is to be composed of:<br><br>• The person to be appointed to the position of senior lay member<br>• 2 persons elected by staff from among their own number<br>• 1 person nominated by a trade union from among the academic staff<br>• 1 person nominated by a trade union from among the support staff<br>• 2 persons nominated by the students' association, from among the students<br>• Such other persons as are appointed by virtue of an enactment, or in accordance with the governing instruments of the institution<br><br>Maximum membership = 25 |

*Resignation and removal of Court members*

15. Rules made by Court may contain provision about the procedure for the resignation or removal of the senior lay member and other members.

*Academic Board (Senate)*

16. The Act specifies that the membership of Senate is to include:

- the Principal;
- the heads of school of the institution;
- persons elected by academic staff from among their own number;
- persons elected by students from among their own number; and
- such other persons as are appointed in accordance with the governing instruments of the institution.

17. At least 50% of the membership of Senate is to be elected and 10% is to be elected by students (capped at an upper limit of 30 students). The term 'heads of school' requires further clarification as this has a range of definitions across the sector.

*Academic Freedom*

18. The Act includes amendments to the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005, expanding the definition of academic freedom to include the freedom 'to develop and advance new ideas or innovative proposals'. The University's Charter currently defines the concept of Academic Freedom and will need to be revised to reflect this change.

**Impact on governing instruments**

19. Implementation of the provisions of the Act will require detailed review and revision of the University's governing instruments, including the Charter and Statutes. Revisions to these latter documents are subject to approval by the Privy Council.

**Resource implications**

20. There are likely resource implications arising from the cost of a recruitment and election process for the senior lay member including advertisement costs, reimbursement of candidates' expenses and staff time in running the process. Resource implications will also arise from the potential remuneration of the senior lay member. There are further resource implications in relation to staff time and resource in preparation for implementation of the Act and the required revisions of the Charter and Statutes through the Privy Council.

**Implementation timeline**

21. Following discussions with key sector stakeholders over the summer, the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science issued a letter on 30 June indicating a broad timeline for implementation of the Act. Although further clarification is still required, the following timeline was indicated:

- Late 2016/early 2017: commencement of the Act (with the provision on Academic Freedom coming into force from day one)
- Summer 2017: provisions relating to the senior lay member (ensuring no disruption to any recruitment campaigns already underway)

- Late 2016/early 2017: provisions relating to the membership of Court and composition of Senate come into force (with a transitional period of around 4 years to ensure sufficient time to amend governing instruments and to avoid the need to remove existing members prior to the end of their current tenures)

**Next steps**

22. Further clarification is required on several elements of the Act and implementation timelines are not yet specific. Nonetheless, the University is committed to ensuring compliance with the new legislative requirements.

23. Court invited to **note** the following next steps:

- the Strategy & Policy Directorate will review the University's current governing instruments to identify the specific implications and impacts of the Act for the University;
- Court Membership Group will be asked to consider options for the University's future corporate governance arrangements, including the composition of Court, and to make recommendations for Court's consideration and approval; and
- Senate will be asked to consider the implications of the Act for its own future composition and operation and make recommendations for Court's consideration and approval.

24. It is anticipated that, following a decision by Court on the appropriate future corporate and academic governance arrangements for the University, detailed work will need to be undertaken to make consequent revisions to the University's governing instruments, including seeking approval from the Privy Council for revisions to the Charter and Statutes.

**Complaints Handling Procedure
Annual Report 2015-16**

**Background**

1.  The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 gave the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) responsibilities and powers, specifically, to oversee the development of model Complaints Handling Procedures (CHPs) for each sector including higher education.  The main aims of the model CHP are early resolution of a complaint as close to the point of contact as possible and making best use of lessons learned from complaints.

2.  All Scottish universities were required to adopt the two stage model CHP by 30 August 2013. Following the internal approval of a suitable procedure by Court, on the recommendation of Senate, the University implemented the CHP on 27 August 2013.  The University's Complaints Handling Procedure is available here:
    http://www.strath.ac.uk/media/ps/strategyandpolicy/ComplaintsHandlingProcedure.pdf

**Recording and Reporting**

3.  It is a requirement of the SPSO's model CHP that the University records all complaints and that reports detailing key performance information are submitted quarterly to the Executive Team and annually to Court. SPSO Guidance indicates that such reports are expected to contain:

    - performance statistics detailing: complaints volumes, types and key performance information, e.g. on the time taken and the stage at which complaints were resolved
    - the trends and outcomes of complaints and the actions taken in response including examples to demonstrate how complaints have helped improve services

4.  Annex A provides key performance information on the volume and types of complaints received during 2015/16 and on the resolution times achieved.  It also provides qualitative information on some of the actions taken or recommendations made to deliver service improvement in response to complaints received by the University during 2015/16.  In parallel with the introduction of the CHP, the University has developed a central recording system enabling the production of the statistical reports at **Annex A**.

**Summary Analysis**

5.  The University has recorded 72 complaints since the start of the 2015/16 academic year on 1 August 2015. The majority of complaints were received from students or former students of the University. Additionally, a number of complaints were received from members of the public and prospective applicants, making up around 13% of the total number of complaints.

6.  Complaints were received in all Faculties and across key Professional Services areas with the University's largest Faculty (by student numbers), Humanities and Social Sciences, receiving the highest number.  21% of complaints were received in the Professional Services areas, mainly Estates Services and Student Experience and Enhancement Services.

7.  The percentage of complaints resolved at frontline fluctuated throughout the year, averaging 47% with a greater percentage of complaints being escalated to investigation stage in the 3rd quarter than in previous quarters, dropping slightly in the final quarter.

8.  The relatively high percentage of complaints being escalated to investigation stage has been noted and discussions are underway to explore methods of encouraging more
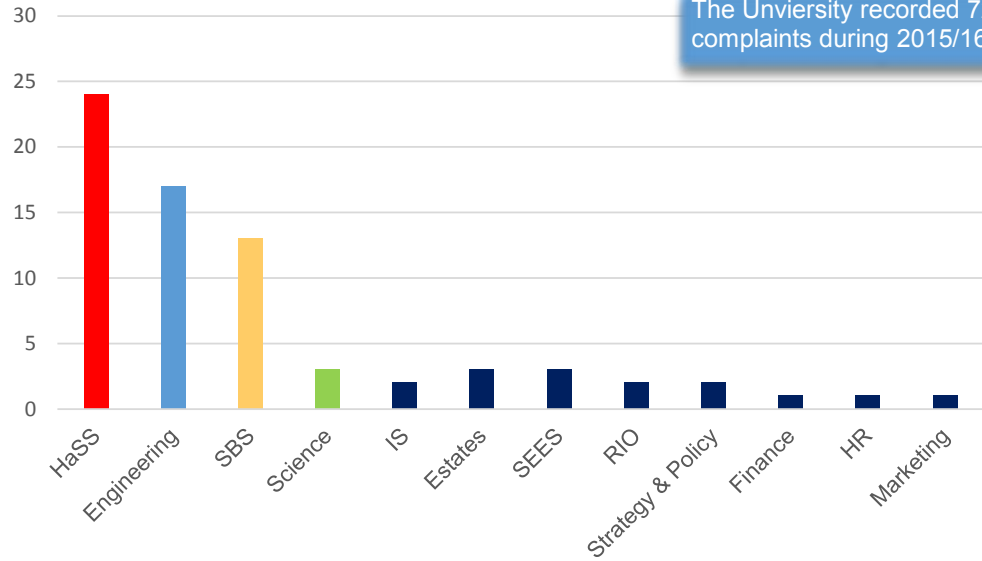
frequent frontline resolution and recording.  The slight decrease in the final quarter would suggest recent and positive movement in this area.

9.   The average time taken to resolve frontline complaints fluctuated slightly throughout the year, averaging 5.6 days, slightly above the 5 working day target.  2015/16 reversed the previous year's drop in the number of complaints resolved at Frontline within 5 working days with 74% resolved in that timescale compared to 54% in 2014/15.  This rose to 100% in the second half of the year.

10.  Investigations carried during 2015/16 (Stage 2 of the CHP) took, on average, 24.7 days, slightly above the 20 working days anticipated. This is reflective of the number of complex complaints received which often require consultation with outside agencies and partners. However, investigations conducted during the final quarter of 2015/16 took an average of 19.6 days.

11.  The most frequent types of complaints recorded throughout the year were those relating to:
        1. Teaching and/or assessment (29%)
        2. Staff Attitude and/or Conduct (18%)
        3. University Policy, Procedures or Administration (16%)

12.  Staff are required to record lessons learned and actions taken to improve services and some key examples of the learning points recorded are included at **Annex B**.

13.  Generally, staff are engaging well with the CHP and its requirements, although more can be done and is being done to encourage earlier resolution (Stage 1).  A need to reduce the proportion of complaints being escalated to the investigation stage has been noted and discussions are underway to explore methods of encouraging more frequent frontline resolution.  The slight decrease in the final quarter would suggest recent and positive movement in this area.

**Recommendation**

14.  Court is invited to **note** the Complaints Handling Annual Report for 2015/16.

# Complaints Recorded 2015-16

## Complaints Received by Area 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2016

The Unviersity recorded 72 complaints during 2015/16.

Categories (x-axis): HaSS, Engineering, SBS, Science, IS, Estates, SEES, RIO, Strategy & Policy, Finance, HR, Marketing
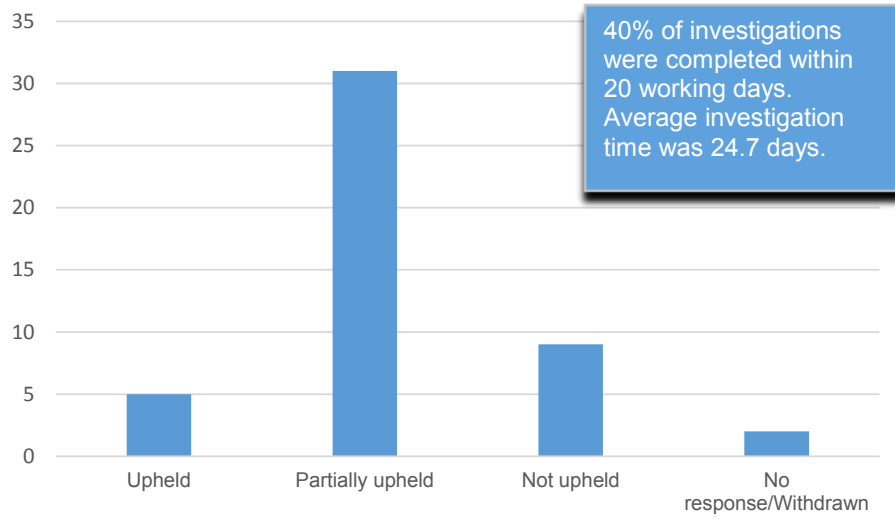
y-axis: 0 to 30

## Frontline (Stage 1) - 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2016

74% of complaints resolved at Frontline stage were handled within 5 working days

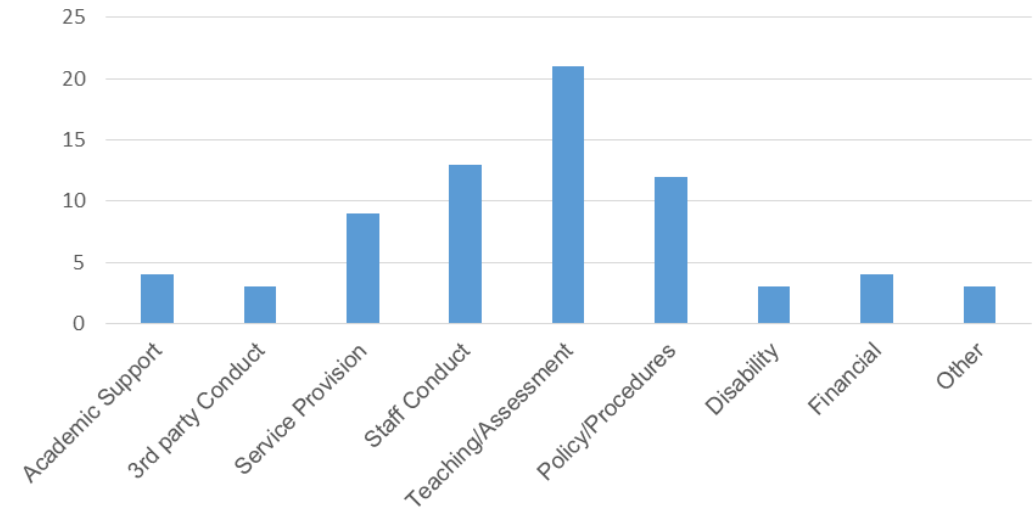Number escalated to Investigation 53%

Number resolved at Frontline 47%
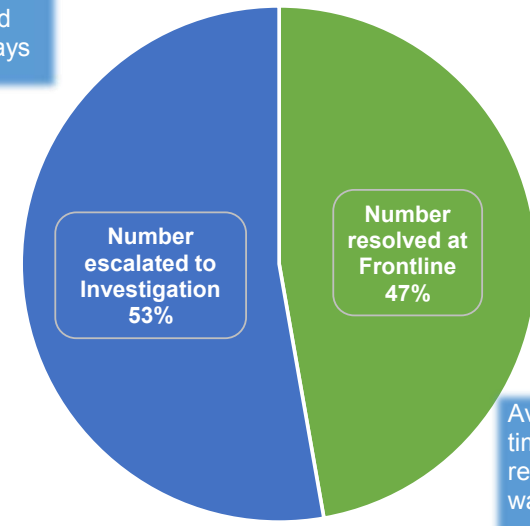
Average resolution time for complaints resolved at Frontline was 5.6 working days.

## Investigations (Stage 2) 1 August 2015 - 31 July 2016

40% of investigations were completed within 20 working days. Average investigation time was 24.7 days.

Categories (x-axis): Upheld, Partially upheld, Not upheld, No response/Withdrawn

y-axis: 0 to 35

## Complaints Received by Category 1 August 2015 to 31 July 2016

Categories (x-axis): Academic Support, 3rd party Conduct, Service Provision, Staff Conduct, Teaching/Assessment, Policy/Procedures, Disability, Financial, Other

y-axis: 0 to 25

**Learning from Complaints – Examples**

| Complaint Category | Complainant | Complaint | Outcome | Learning/Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| University Policy, Procedures or Administration | Applicant for employment | A candidate who applied for two posts within the same team was invited to attend one interview which covered both posts but was not made aware of this in advance. | No response | Interview invitations sent from the e-recruitment system to be manually changed to ensure candidates are advised when they are being invited to one interview for two posts. |
| Financial Issues | Student | Complainant not happy with increase in tuition fees. | Resolved | Faculty Manager to confirm that the new student record system specification contains the facility to set a fee per student as opposed to a fee per course, to avoid any change being copied to all students on all years of that course. |
| Academic Support | Student | Student unaware of procedure for submission of Personal Circumstances. | Partially Upheld | 1. Course Handbook to be updated to identify the process and forms to be used to report Personal Circumstances.<br>2. An enhanced message in the signature section of tutor e-mails should include text and links to remind students about the processes and where to find the relevant forms. |
| Teaching and/or Assessment | Student | Complaint concerning inconsistent advice regarding the word count of an assignment. | Resolved | Department to standardise assignment cover sheets in future years. |
| Service Provision | Applicant for employment | Delayed payment of claim for interview expenses. | Resolved | Actions in progress within Finance:<br>1. examining the end to end progress of the claim to identify point(s) of delay and reasons<br>2. implementing corrective actions to minimise the risk of recurrence<br>3. customer service champions to lead on improved customer service |
| Other | Student | Student refused Erasmus application based on results and language ability. | Partially Upheld | Department will review guidance given to students on requirements and process for Erasmus exchanges. |

| Complaint Category | Complainant | Complaint | Outcome | Learning/Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching and/or Assessment | Student | Student dissatisfied with the quality of the course. | Partially Upheld | Course Team to ensure that Student Staff Committee meets at least once per session and preferably once per semester. |
| University Policy, Procedures or Administration | Student | An error in the system which allocated extra graduation guest tickets resulted in only students with a low registration number receiving extra tickets. | Partially Upheld | 1. An additional randomisation of the students to receive additional tickets to be conducted in future. 2. Where tickets are returned by students a more transparent process for distribution of these tickets is recommended for future graduation ceremonies. |
| University Policy, Procedures or Administration | Student | 1. Potentially misleading advice regarding timing of visa application. 2. Reasons for withdrawal on PEGASUS letter were not sufficiently detailed to guide an appeal. | Partially Upheld | 1. Advice messages should contain a caveat about the timing being an estimate and dependant on the time of year. 2. The reasons for withdrawal given on PEGASUS should be revised to ensure that students understand the key points on which the decision to withdraw them from their studies was made. |
| Staff Attitude and/or Conduct | Student | Issues with behaviour of Security staff. | Partially Upheld | 1. Refresher training for staff on cultural diversity. 2. Reinforce the requirement for staff to provide details of their name when asked to do so. 3. Security staff to be reminded to treat students with respect at all times. |

# Report to Court from Senate

Senate met on 28 September 2016.

The following item was discussed by Senate and is provided here to Court **for approval**:

1. **Annual Statement to the Scottish Funding Council on Institutional Quality 2015-16**
   Senate **endorsed** the Annual Statement on Institutional Quality for Academic Year 2015-16. The University is required to submit a final report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) by 30 September 2016. Senate **recommends** to Court that the report be approved (retrospectively).

The following items were discussed or approved by Senate and are provided here to Court **for noting**:

2. **Student Recruitment**
   Senate members received an update on the current recruitment cycle noting that the University had either reached or exceeded student recruitment targets in a number of categories. In the Undergraduate category the only area of recruitment that was currently slightly below target was overseas UG students. Core SIMD40 targets had been exceeded in the Home/EU UG category. Recruitment of PGT RUK students had exceeded targets, with recruitment of Home/EU students close to target, however PGT overseas student recruitment was below target. Senate members discussed ways of meeting shortfalls in targets, with a proposal of a stronger focus on recruitment of international and PG students. Members recognised that work was already being done in this area. A change in approach towards handling recruitment was proposed, with focus on earlier recruitment and stronger prioritisation of recruitment and conversion activity at Department level as well as closer working between Faculties where recruitment was successful.

3. **NSS**
   Senate considered the results from the National Student Survey (NSS). Senate noted that the Overall Satisfaction rate had remained the same as the previous year at 87%, but that this was short of the institutional KPI target of 90%. There had been some clear areas of success and a range of improvements was evident, for example with two subject areas scoring in the top quartiles in every category, however individual departments varied significantly in terms of their performance. Whilst it was acknowledged that the satisfaction rating was good relative to the sector (UK and Scotland), there was disappointment that the institutional results had not been better. Members discussed the results, noting the importance of careful analysis of the areas where improvements had been made, and the need for these areas to share their success more widely, and stressing the need to maintain the current position and avoid oscillation in results. An overview of NSS improvement framework actions for 2016-17 was given, with the key messages of managing and embedding departmental implementation plans being stressed. Regular reporting to Senate and updates to Executive Team were planned. Senate members noted that Faculties were working with USSA to develop closer engagement and improved communications and would continue to build on this.

4. **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Update**
   Members were given an update since the previous Senate on developments on the Teaching Excellence Framework. It was noted that the Scottish Government is increasingly well-engaged with the sector on participation in TEF2. The TEF technical consultation outcome is due at the end of September and Universities Scotland had formed a TEF group which included representation from the University of Strathclyde. Senate welcomed that the University was well placed to navigate the best possible route and would ensure that clear mechanisms for communicating with the wider University on TEF developments would be established.

**5.** The Principal included the following points in his update to Senate:
- An EU Exit Working and Advisory group had been established, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, to look at the issues and opportunities in relation to Brexit. The group would provide updates to Senate on developments.
- The Principal had approved an Honorary nomination of Mme Xu Lin. The nomination had been put forward by the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools.
- Plans for the new Sports, Health and Wellbeing Centre were well underway. Investment in the centre and the new teaching and learning building taken together would constitute the University's largest investment in its estate.
- A survey of Senate had been circulated to Senate members (2015-16) help to inform the future direction of Senate. Members were encouraged to participate in the survey.

**Executive Team Report to Court**

The Executive Team met on 15 June, 5 July, 29 August (Strategy Session) and 5 September 2016.

The following key items were discussed by the Executive Team and are provided here for Court to note:

## 1. Health and Safety

Under the 'Safety Moment' held at the opening of each Executive Team meeting, the Team took the opportunity to share reflections and experiences in regard to health and safety issues, led by the Chief Operating Officer. These included:

- Noting Court's approval on 22 June of the University's Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy;
- Work underway to enhance the University's approach to Business Continuity Management (BCM) with the results of this to be presented to a future meeting of the Team;
- Increased levels of engagement between Faculties and the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Team;
- Safety audit processes were commencing and a statistical report was being prepared for the Executive Team;
- A need to ensure appropriate protocols were in place to enable the University to respond to potential incidents involving staff and students on social media platforms; and
- The University's ongoing implementation of 'Equally Safe', the Scottish Government's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women.

## 2. EU Referendum implications and impacts

The Team discussed various risks, impacts and opportunities that might arise for the University as a result of a future UK exit from the European Union (EU). A range of potential implications were considered in relation to the recruitment and retention of EU students and staff, continued access to EU funding programmes and research networks, and the wider legislative and constitutional environment.

In discussion, the Team noted the likelihood of a sustained period of political and constitutional uncertainty and agreed a range of initial actions to ensure that the University was appropriately prepared to meet the challenges ahead. These included:

- Continuing to seek clarification from the Scottish Government on the funding arrangements for EU students applying for entry in 2017/18;
- Continued communications to promote the University's strong international orientation, reemphasise its desire to work and collaborate with EU and international partners, and to reassure current and prospective staff and students;
- Identifying examples of immediate and direct institutional impacts arising in the wake of the EU Referendum in order to inform the University's consideration of risks and opportunities and to support sector-level lobbying efforts; and
- Adopting a project-oriented approach to assessing the short-term impacts and potential long-term implications for the University and identifying actions required to mitigate these.

### 3. Corporate Risk Register

In addition to specific discussions on EU-related risks, the Team considered a summary of the University's other top risks and opportunities and the mitigating actions taken or proposed. It was agreed that the Corporate Risk Register should be updated to appropriately reflect:

- The need to be alert to any consequences arising from the evolution and implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);
- Any potential developments arising from the anticipated publication of Audit Scotland's Report on Scottish universities;
- Any impacts for the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) arising as a result of the EU Referendum (the NPL's own risk register would be considered in the first instance)

### 4. Biomedical Engineering redevelopment proposals

The Team considered a proposal and business case for the redevelopment of the Wolfson Building (Department of Biomedical Engineering). The Team heard that the building did not currently meet the growing research and teaching needs of the Department, particularly in light of increasing competition from other institutions. The project proposal was aligned with the University's strategy and the preferred option was to undertake a comprehensive refurbishment of the building at a total cost of **[RESERVED SECTION]** This cost would be met through a co-investment model which included contributions from the University, the Faculty, and by fundraising from external sources. The Team was invited to discuss and endorse the business case prior to seeking Court approval on 6 October.

The Executive Team **endorsed** the business case and **recommended** the proposal to Court for approval.

### 5. National Student Survey results 2016

The Team discussed the University's NSS 2016 results and the proposed follow-on actions intended to deliver future improvements. The University had received an overall satisfaction score of 87%, remaining the same when compared to 2015. This score was one point higher than the UK and Scottish averages and three points below a top quartile position.

Whilst noting its disappointment that the overall satisfaction score had remained the same as the previous year, the Team recognised that improvements had been achieved in specific areas. It was agreed that there was a need to build swiftly on the experience of recent activity and deliver continued change at pace in order to impact upon performance in 2017. The Education Strategy Committee would lead on developing the University's NSS 2017 Improvement Framework with a significant and targeted focus on Department/School level improvement plans. The Executive Team would play a key role in ensuring that the importance of delivery and the need for a sustained focus on improvement was understood across the University, and that Faculties were aware of the need to monitor and mandate the delivery of Department/School-specific improvement actions. It was noted that performance issues could also be addressed by identifying best practice and sharing experiences across all four Faculties.

### 6. Research Audits 2016

In June, the Team considered a report detailing the outcomes of the Institutional Research Audit 2016 and recommendations to enhance preparations for a future Research Excellence Framework. The Team noted the intention that the next Research Audit should incorporate a fuller range of staff

outputs and include modelling of the weightings to be applied to each Unit of Assessment to inform strategic decisions about alignment of the University's return by UoA. It was anticipated that this would also support efforts to predict potential impacts on future research funding allocations.

## 7. Student Recruitment update

The Team received an update on the forecast UG and PGT recruitment out-turn against intake targets for 2016/17 (as of 31 August 2016) and welcomed the intention to finalise UG Scot/EU intakes at the earliest possible stage of future recruitment cycles. The Team considered the need for consistency across Faculties in the operation of key recruitment-related processes, including the balance of central versus distributed control in this area. The need to ensure appropriate Professional Services capacity within Faculties in order to support release of academic staff time was recognised.

## 8. University Values Survey 2016

In early July, the Team considered an initial analysis of the results of the University Values Survey. The following key points were noted:

- The overall response rate had increased compared to the previous survey in 2013 and represented around a third of staff, thereby providing a strong indication of staff opinion;
- Response volumes disaggregated by Faculty and Professional Services were largely representative of the staff population in each area, although the response rate was notably higher amongst Professional Services staff;
- The proportions of staff respondents who 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the University Values of People Oriented, Bold and Collaborative reflected the core values of the University had increased;
- A more detailed analysis would be undertaken, including further disaggregation of the results by Faculty, Department/School, and Directorate;

## 9. Positioning Strathclyde as a Socially Progressive Employer

The Team discussed proposed steps to promote the University's status as a Socially Progressive Institution and considered a range of headline messages intended to support communications in this area. Information would be updated as new activity emerged and the messages and evidence would be utilised in key marketing materials. The Team welcomed the development of clear and concise marketing messages based on the existing evidence base and approved the proposed approach.

## 10. Performance Development Group – update on PDG engagements

The Team completed its consideration of the outcome of Performance Development Group's engagements with Departments/Schools since January 2016, where the focus was on supporting improvements in financial performance. All of the agreed Financial Action Plans have been presented by respective Deans and the Team has noted the range of focused activity planned or underway to address deficit positions of individual Departments/Schools.

## 11. TIC Catering, Conferencing & Events

The Team received an update on the delivery of conferencing and events activity since December 2015 and the range of future bookings secured for 2016/17 and beyond. Levels of growth and demand

continued to be strong, with a financial surplus forecast for the year ending 31 July 2016. In discussion, it was noted that:

- The range and type of conferences and events delivered were closely aligned with the University's strategy and this approach should continue;
- Rates would be reviewed in the coming months and the outcome of this process should ensure that costs accurately reflect the quality of the University's offering; and
- New sales and marketing opportunities should continue to be vigorously pursued.

## 12. Executive Team Composition

The Team noted Court's approval of the revisions to Ordinances and Regulations required allowing the planned changes to the composition of the Team to proceed. It was confirmed that appropriate revisions would be made to the Staff Appointment Protocols, in liaison with the Vice-Principal as convener of Staff Committee. Senate members had been notified of the changes and invited to provide comments.

## 13. Admissions Process Review

The Team was provided with an update on the work of the Admissions Process Review Group, which had been formed to review current admissions processes and inform the design of the SIMS (replacement Student Record) system. The Team was supportive of the direction of travel.

## 14. League Tables

In the context of recent performance in the Complete University Guide and Guardian League Tables, briefings have been circulated to the Team. Whilst the potential impacts of this were recognised it was hoped that the strategic activity underway in response to the 2015 NSS and DLHE results would have a more positive effect in future years.

## 15. 2016 University Human Resources (UHR) Awards

The Team has taken the opportunity to congratulate the University's Business Improvement Team on winning a UHR Award for Excellence in HR (Business Effectiveness & Organisational Development).

## 16. Values Survey

The Team received updates on the Values Survey and considered a summary of results on XX July.

## 17. THE Leadership & Management Awards (THELMAs)

The Team congratulated the Business Improvement Team on winning the award for *Outstanding Administrative Services Team* on 23 June. This represented strong external recognition of the Team's significant achievements. Opportunities to further develop the University's activity in this area were being considered, including options for the provision of external consultancy and joint ventures.

## 18. Project updates:

- Research Output Quality and Citations: the Team considered a paper on the progress achieved in relation to the project on Research Output Quality and Citations. Activity to date

had been successful in establishing an appropriate institutional framework to support performance improvements. The measures and activities introduced under the three established work streams of: *Improving output quality*, *Improving visibility*, and *Evaluating and monitoring impact*, were now being mainstreamed across Faculties and Professional Services.

- Marketing: the Team received an update on the delivery of the Marketing Project. The Strategic Marketing Delivery Group (SMDG) had produced outcomes and recommendations across four thematic areas during 2015/16 to shape the delivery of marketing activity across the University. The SMDG was currently in the process of identifying areas of focus for the coming academic year. The Team welcomed the update presented and the following key points were noted in discussion:
  - o The desire to enhance the quality of corporate gifts available within the University;
  - o The understanding that the introduction of shared media buying would retain flexibility whilst maximising value for money.
- Staff Recruitment Marketing Review: The Team considered a report on staff recruitment marketing practices, conducted as part of the project on Global Talent Attraction, and a range of related recommendations. The appropriateness of psychometric testing in academic appointments was discussed and it was agreed that this particular activity should be limited to a structured pilot project in the recruitment of Professional Services staff in the first instance. Subject to this condition, the Team approved the recommendations included within the report.

## 19. Executive Team Strategy Session, 29 August 2016

This was a full day session held on 29 August 2016. Attendees included Executive Team members, Deputy Associate Principals, Professional Services Directors, and the Principal's Special Advisors.

Team members met in closed session in the morning and this provided an opportunity to reflect on the University's performance in the preceding year and on the current challenges and opportunities relevant to the delivery of the University's strategic objectives. Some broad areas were highlighted for consideration, including:

- Ensuring the optimal use of resources, time and people in order to derive the greatest level of positive impact;
- Ensuring that University structures are appropriately aligned at all levels to support delivery;
- Ensuring consistency of practice and approach in those activities that contribute most to the delivery of our Strategic Plan and related Key Performance Indicators; and
- Prioritisation of activities and efforts.

It was anticipated that a detailed discussion of these areas would support the identification of a small number of appropriately focused, high-level projects to be delivered by the Team over the course of 2016/17.

During the afternoon session, Team members and attendees undertook a frank and open discussion on how best to respond to the current challenges and opportunities facing the University. The following key points were discussed:

- The relative size and structures of current Departments/Schools. The optimal size would vary by subject discipline and according to external requirements. Consideration should be given to a variety of factors including current income level, staffing complement and the overall alignment of activity with the University's vision, mission and strategy.

- The potential for more effective processes and structures to enhance delivery. For example, recent work by the Strategic Marketing Group was likely to lead to a shared recruitment marketing strategy and process. Further work was required to review and realign budgeting and financial planning processes.
- The twin imperatives of reducing expenditure and growing income and surpluses in the context of an increasingly challenging public funding environment. There was a requirement to continue to communicate across the University the reality of the funding challenges and to make clear the range of collective activity required to meet these.
- The importance of planning for a variety of financial scenarios, including the possibility of not meeting annual forecast outturns and the potential subsequent need for greater cost reductions in future. This should be a key part of a revised budgeting process.
- The need to drive surplus generation by consolidating activity and prioritising investment that provides the greatest return and by considering areas for potential de-prioritisation or disinvestment. Proposals should be developed by each of the major budget-holders to inform appropriate financial scenarios for presentation to Court in November.

**Court Business Group Report to Court**

**The following items were discussed by Court Business Group on 22 September 2016 and are provided here for Court to note.**

1. **Biomedical Engineering redevelopment proposal**

The Head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering presented a summary of the business case to be provided to Court. Members noted the information presented and were supportive of the business case for redevelopment. During discussions, members considered the following key points:

- The national significance of Biomedical Engineering provision, demonstrated by the allocation of additional SFC places in recent years;
- The Department's clear historical and potential growth and the need to support this through investment in renewed facilities;
- The anticipated future benefits of redevelopment, including increased income from research and student recruitment, and their clear alignment with the University's strategic priorities;
- The desire for greater detail on the types and range of 'additional strategic partners' referenced within the paper;
- The welcome use of a co-investment model, bring together funding from the University, Faculty and external partners.

Members suggested that Court would benefit from a graphical illustration of the historical and projected growth in income from research and international recruitment.

2. **Combined Heat and Power District Energy Project – tender return**

The Assistant Director (Sustainability), Estates Services presented a proposal which sought Court's approval to increase the budget allocation for this project, following a recently completed tender and review exercise. He highlighted the specific reasons for the additional costs, the robust nature of the scheme design and the significant experience that the preferred tender would bring to the project.

The following key points were discussed:

- Court would benefit from a clear and concise statement which explained the difference between the original amount approved and the tender return;
- The need to fully demonstrate the project's importance, the benefits it will bring and its commercial viability;
- The evidence from similar projects undertaken by peer institutions that suggests changes in costs and specifications  are not unusual in this area;

Members noted the proposal and were supportive of the recommendation to allocate the additional funding required to allow the project to proceed.

Members requested that a short set of presentation slides be developed for Court to highlight the projected benefits and to provide a timeline of the relevant approval and decision points to date.

## 3. Treasury Management Policy

The Chief Financial Officer invited CBG members to comment on proposed revisions to the University's Treasury Management Policy, prior to formal approval being sought from Court. He informed members that the revised Policy had been considered by the Audit Committee and reviewed by the Treasurer, with suggested amendments being reflected in the most recent version.

Members **endorsed** the proposed revisions and suggested that additional information be provided to Court to illustrate the future projection of the University's cash balances.

## 4. Student Recruitment Update

The Director of Student Experience and Enhancement Services (SEES) presented an update for Court on the current undergraduate (UG) and taught postgraduate (PGT) student recruitment position. She indicated that the recruitment cycle was ongoing and that the final paper for Court would reflect the most up-to-date figures available.

Members welcomed the generally positive position indicated within the paper and by the updated figures presented. The key messages for Court were:

- An improved recruitment position, compared to the same stage in the previous year's recruitment cycle, due to a more strategic and cohesive approach;
- The positive impact of stretch targets on a significant increase in projected overseas fee income;
- The achievement of a higher market share of international students in an increasingly competitive environment.

The Director of SEES **agreed** to prepare a slide for Court illustrating recruitment/fee income growth and future trajectory.

## 5. National Student Survey 2016

Members were invited to comment on the 2016 NSS results prior to submission to Court. During discussions, it was noted that:

- The overall result was disappointing in light of recent efforts but significant progress had been achieved in individual areas;
- The issues to be addressed had been identified and action plans were being developed with a greater focus on action within Departments/Schools;
- Information presented to Court should include a clear indication of next steps which were reflective of the challenge and which demonstrated decisive and strategic action;
- Heat map slides showing results by Department/School would be provided to Court;
- The University would consider the future results of other relevant surveys, including the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES);

**6. EU Exit - update**

Members considered an update paper to be provided to Court, following the EU Referendum, on key issues, potential implications for the University, and activities undertaken and ongoing. In addition, it was noted that a new risk relating to the EU Referendum result had been added to the University's Corporate Risk Register.

It was **agreed** that the paper for Court should comprise the first four pages of key information with the more detailed annexes (including the latest information from Universities UK) being provided as background information via the Court SharePoint site.

**7. Governance Act 2016 - update**

Members **agreed** that the paper should be provided to Court as an update on the implementation of the provisions of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

**8. Draft Agenda for Court, 6 October**

Members considered and **approved** the draft agenda for the October meeting of Court (subject to the inclusion requested below).

**9. Court Strategy Session, 24-25 November - initial discussion**

The Principal proposed that the Strategy Session should feature discussion of a number of project streams which focused on all aspects of university performance consistent with the Strategic Plan. These streams were currently being developed and would be presented to the October Court meeting for approval as the basis for the Court's strategic discussions in November. CBG agreed that this approach would form the basis for a stimulating session at Residential Court.

The Director of the Fraser of Allander Institute should be invited to present on issues relating to the UK exit from the EU, supported by key University personnel.

**10. AOB**

There was none noted.

**Report to Court from Audit Committee**

**The Audit Committee met on 8 September 2016. A summary of the items discussed by the Audit Committee is provided here for Court to note:**

**1.  Preparations for the next REF – Outcomes of 2016 Research Audit**

The Head of Researcher Enhancement presented a paper setting out the outcomes of the 2016 Research Audit and discussing the University's preparedness for a future Research Excellence Framework (REF).

The 2016 Audit focused on outputs of 3 and 4 star quality.  The volume of outputs deemed to be of 3 or 4 star quality placed the University in the top quartile of REF2014 institutions, when taking into consideration the stage of assessment period.  Across the University, 140 impact case studies had been submitted and evaluated so far and the University was in a strong position to be able to show evidence of impact.

Members noted the recommendations in the Stern report, particularly those around the potential non-portability of outputs.  It was noted that the Research Audit was only one part of the management process which was also reinforced by annual Accountability & Development Reviews (ADR) of all staff.  The annual Research Audit was an iterative process and the 2017 Audit would be designed to address any issues raised during 2016.

**2.  Corporate Risk Register**

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the paper, highlighting an addition which reflected the risks, impacts and opportunities which might arise as a result of a future UK exit from the European Union.  Members discussed the potential impacts on the recruitment of international (non-EU) students. At present, the uncertainty facing EU students did not appear to be having a significant impact in this area.

The Committee **endorsed** the University's top risks and mitigating actions for onward transmission to Court noting that a more substantive discussion on the above, at a future meeting, would be appropriate.

**3.  External Auditors' Interim Review**

The External Auditor presented the Interim Review noting that there were no key matters of concern to report.  The University's approach to the transition to FRS102 reporting was considered positive.  The degree of complexity currently facing the sector was noted.  Audit Committee welcomed the report as helpful and positive.

**4.  Treasury Management Policy**

The Director of Finance explained the proposed changes to the Treasury Management policy which were designed to respond to changes in the external environment.  The main proposals were:

- the University reduce its *minimum acceptable long term rating slightly to the lowest level at which counterparties are regarded as 'upper medium grade' for investment;*
- the University continue to use RLAM but introduce the use of pooled funds.

In discussion, it was noted that RLAM was used by 50% of Universities and that the majority of these institutions were moving to the pooled fund model. RLAM had been chosen in 2012 after appropriate research but this could be revisited as part of a future tender exercise. RLAM managed the funds for the University but did not and would not own them. It was believed that the planned changes would substantively reduce the risk to the University as it would provide a greater spread of higher rated counterparties than could be achieved by depositing directly with banks. The position would be kept under review as the UK's plans to leave the EU became clearer.

The revised Treasury Management Policy would now be considered by Court Business Group before being put forward to Court for final approval.

## 5. IAS Annual Report 2015/16 (Draft)

Members discussed the Draft Report and the following points were noted:

- Action plans had been agreed with the appropriate Department/School/Directorate to address all risks identified;
- Work was ongoing to pull together the detail of what was being done by the University management in the area of Value for Money and this activity would be reflected in the final Internal Audit Report and in the Audit Committee's Annual Report;
- Internal Audit performance had been peer reviewed 2 years previously and it had been decided that the process should be repeated every 3 years. In the interim, additional methods of independent assurance would be sought. Discussion with the Convener and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) would be held to consider appropriate methods of seeking qualitative feedback.

## 6. Internal Audit

### i) IAS Activity Report

The Committee noted the progress made against the delivery of the Audit Plan for the current academic year.

## 7. Internal Audit Reports

### a) Expenses Review

Members noted a draft report following a review of expenses across the University and were satisfied that the new Financial Management System (FMS) appeared to be working efficiently and effectively. The Head of Internal Audit explained that there were one or two compliance issues to be addressed but that these related to the understanding and use of the system among staff and were not indicative of issues with the system itself. Once all of the issues had been reviewed the final report would be submitted to Audit Committee at a future meeting.

### b) Faculty of Engineering Revisit

Members noted the Report on the review of the Faculty of Engineering.

### c) Data Protection Review

The Head of Internal Audit introduced the Report on the review of Data Protection Arrangements noting that, in the area of identifiable medical-related data, further meetings had been held with the Information Governance Unit (IGU) and Research and Knowledge Exchange Services (RKES). There was no requirement for University policies or procedures to be amended but the University may need to consider introducing detailed, local protocols for the collection, management, sharing and disposal of such data as some funders required extra assurances. There was no evidence that regulatory requirements were not being met currently and further discussions would be held in this area.

### d) Conferences Review

Members noted the Report on the review of Conferencing & Events. Members queried the management response to the findings, which had all been rated as 'low risk'. The Head of Internal Audit confirmed that the recommendations had been accepted at the clearance meeting and that he was content that they would be followed.

## 8. Appointment of External Auditors

**[RESERVED ITEM]**

## 9. Review of 2015/16 Accounts Direction from the Scottish Funding Council

Audit Committee noted the paper.

## 10. Statement on Corporate Governance and Internal Control

Audit Committee noted and **approved** the Statement on Corporate Governance and Internal Control.

## 11. Audit Committee Annual Report 2015/16 (Draft)

Audit Committee noted the draft report and the opportunity to provide comments directly to the Committee Manager ahead of the November meeting.

## 12. Annual Report on Audit Committee Attendance

Audit Committee noted the Report.

## 13. Information Security Annual Report 2015/16

Audit Committee noted the Information Security Annual Report and requested that the Director of Information Services be invited to the February Workshop to discuss Information Security.

**Report to Court from Estates Committee**

The Estates Committee met on 23 August 2016 and the following items were discussed:

**For approval by Court:**

**1.   Wolfson Building Refurbishment – Full Business Case**

The Committee considered the Full Business Case for the Wolfson Building refurbishment project, and a presentation by Prof T Gourlay, Head of Department of Biomedical Engineering, supported by Professor D Drikakis, the Executive Dean, Faculty of Engineering. Professor Gourlay provided the Committee with information on the work of the Department, its ambitions and the restrictions under which it is currently operating due to the size limitations of its existing accommodation.  The Wolfson Building is currently operating at maximum capacity and, in its present state, will not permit the Department to realise its growth ambitions. The presentation also examined the growth of the Department to date, its success in recent years, and its future strategy.

The Committee was advised of four options which had been considered for the Wolfson building, namely:

1.   status quo, with backlog maintenance expenditure only
2.   a partial refurbishment covering three out of six floors
3.   a comprehensiv e refurbishment involving a full decant and retention and development of the existing facilities to provide additional teaching and research facilities
4.   a new build facility to include both the Curran and Wolfson buildings.

It was noted that the costings for options 2 and 3 were similar. This was mainly due to the fact that major services within the building (e.g. heating, ventilation) are at the end of their working life and will need replaced irrespective of whether all six floors are refurbished or only three floors.  While both options would impact on the entire building, only option 3 would meet the future growth needs of the Department.

The Committee was advised that option 3, at a cost of **[RESERVED SECTION]**, was the recommended option. It was noted that this option would contribute to an enhanced student experience, improved staff and student retention, and enhance research and knowledge exchange opportunities. Some assurances were sought whether all elements of this proposal were required, in light of future plans to construct a new Teaching and Learning Building (the Place).  The Committee was reassured that the discipline specific needs of the Biomedical Department would not be met within the proposed Place project.

Fundraising efforts to date were detailed.  A fundraising campaign has been established with a target of securing **[RESERVED SECTION]**, with the Wolfson Foundation expected to be a major donor. The Faculty itself would contribute a further **[RESERVED SECTION]** to the overall project cost. Available funding of **[RESERVED SECTION]** has also been identified within the 10 year Capital Investment Plan and a sum of **[RESERVED SECTION]** will be provided from the backlog maintenance budget.

**The Committee**

> **Recommends to the Executive Team and Court that Option 3 is approved in the sum of [RESERVED SECTION], for the full refurbishment of the Wolfson building, and that Estates Services be authorised to procure a Design Team to enable the project to be progressed.**

**For information:**

**1.  Sports, Health and Wellbeing**

It was reported that planning permission for this development had been granted.  The Committee acknowledged this major milestone for the project and noted that the next milestone would be the return of tenders on 9 September 2016.

**2.  Kilmardinny**

The Committee was informed that the legal matters regarding the sale of Kilmardinny had been concluded on 3 August 2016 and that the first payment had now been received, with further instalments to follow in financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18.   The Convener expressed his appreciation to Estates Services for concluding this complex matter.

**3.  The Place – Revised Programme**

At its last meeting, the Committee had indicated that it wished to see a reduced timeline for completion of this project, from the originally estimated date of January 2021.  In the interim period, Estates Services and the Design Team had reviewed the programme and identified those items where some improvement on timescale could be realised.  The outcome of this work was a revised programme which was presented to the Committee.  The Director of Estates Services detailed a number of areas in which time savings could potentially be achieved:

   i.   Procuring the Project Team by using the NHS Frameworks agreement instead of the OJEU procedure.  It was reported that Estates Services had sought appropriate advice from the University legal advisers with regard to alternative Public Sector Procurement Frameworks that could be used to procure the Integrated Design Team for this project in the most time efficient manner.  The Committee was assured that this framework is not restricted to the Healthcare market and is currently being used by a number of Universities on a regular basis.
   ii.  Commencing the procurement of the Project Team prior to receiving full Court approval.  It was stressed that no appointment, or any financial commitment, would be made before the Full Business Case was considered by Court in November 2016.
   iii. Carrying out an enabling works package to strip out the Colville building in preparation for construction – the timing to be determined after assessing the potential impact on the provision of teaching accommodation.
   iv.  Procuring the Contractor using the University's Main Contractor Framework, instead of the OJEU approach.

It was reported that taking the action detailed above could realise a combined saving of 33 weeks. This re-worked programme would achieve an earlier completion date of December 2019. It was noted that normal practice would be to align the completion of all such major projects with the academic year and it was recognised that it may be preferable to align the completion date to the start of the 2020 academic year.

Following discussion, the Committee **agreed** to authorise the Director of Estates Services to proceed as proposed.

## 4. Campus Visual Improvements – High Level Signage

At its meeting of 22 March 2016, the Committee approved the installation of signage at various locations across Campus, subject to confirmation of final costs and the securing of planning permission.  The Committee was updated on progress to date on this matter.  Estates Services had been working with Glasgow City Council Planning department in the interim and it was reported that 'Consent to Advertise' approval was anticipated within two weeks of the meeting. Final costs were estimated at **[RESERVED SECTION]** for six signs, being one sign on each of the Curran, McCance, Strathclyde Business School and Technology and Innovation Centre buildings and two signs on the Graham Hills building.

The Committee **agreed** to approve the proposals in the sum of **[RESERVED SECTION]**, to be funded from the Capital Investment Plan and authorised Estates Services to proceed with delivery of the project.

## 5. Martha Street Car Park

At its last meeting, the Committee considered a tabled report on negotiations with the potential developer of the site.  It was agreed, at that time, that a further meeting of a Sub Group of the Committee be arranged, to review the proposals and plans in detail.  The Committee was informed that, since the last meeting, Savills had been appointed to assist with the negotiations and to provide planning advice following which a "final" offer has been submitted by the developer. However, it was reported that fresh concerns had been raised by the University over the height of the proposed tower at the rear of the development and therefore discussions are still ongoing with the developer.

*AL  15/9/16*

**Enterprise and Investment Committee Report to Court**
**[RESERVED ITEM]**

**REPORT OF THE REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 JULY 2016**

The following items are provided for Court to **note**:

Remuneration Committee members were reminded that the Deputy Convener of Court (Staffing), who is also Convener of the Remuneration Committee, had sought Court members' guidance on any issues which Remuneration Committee should take into account in its decision making.  No comments had been received.

- **Executive Team plus Associate Deputy Principals' Remuneration and Performance**

  The Remuneration Committee **noted** a range of benchmarked sector data on Senior Officer/ Executive Deans' Remuneration and **resolved** that a small number of salary increases should be awarded in cases where there had been clearly evidenced exceptional performance over a sustained period.  In other cases, a one-off bonus for exceptional performance during the review year was awarded. Due to potential salary implications from Professorial Zoning, it was determined that no consolidated salary increases should be awarded to Associate Deputy Principals but that bonus payments for excellent performance should be considered. In all cases, Remuneration Committee's decision making was guided by the 'Contribution Pay Policy: Remuneration Committee', which had been approved by Court in October 2014.

- **Directors of Professional Services' Remuneration and Performance**

  The Remuneration Committee **noted** a range of benchmarked sector data on Professional Services Directors' Remuneration and **agreed** a small number of recommendations for a salary increase following sustained exceptional performance. In all cases, Remuneration Committee's decision making was guided by the 'Contribution Pay Policy: Remuneration Committee', which had been approved by Court in October 2014.

- **Principal's Remuneration**

  The Remuneration Committee **noted** two sets of benchmarked sector data on Vice Chancellors' remuneration.  The Convener of Court confirmed that, as required within the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, he had sought feedback on the Principal's performance from all Court members prior to the meeting. Feedback received had been universally positive. The Committee **agreed** that the Principal's performance in recent years had continued to be outstanding, with clear progress in the planning and execution of the University's strategy and in the operational delivery against KPIs. The Convener of Court reminded the Committee that the Principal did not receive the nationally negotiated general pay increase.  The Committee **agreed** a consolidated pay increase in line with the expected level of the national pay award.

- **Items for noting**

  The Committee noted a small number of exceptional salary increases which had been agreed outwith the standard contribution pay processes and a number of voluntary severance cases which had been agreed during 2015.

  SH/CS
  22.09.16