

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF COURT

A meeting of the University Court constituted under the University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2019 will be held on **Wednesday 8th February 2023 at 3pm in Room D145, Paisley Campus.**

Donna McMillan
Secretary to Court

AGENDA

Time 3pm		Welcome Apologies for Absence Declaration of Interest		
3:05 pm	1. 1.1 1.2	Minutes Minutes of meeting held on 29 th November 2022 Minutes of Reserved Meeting held on 29 th November 2022	Approval	Documents Attached
	2.	Matters Arising		
	3.	Determination of Any Other Business		
3:10 pm	4.	Chair's Business	Noting	Oral Report
3:15 pm	5. 5.1	Principal's Report Principal & Vice-Chancellor Report	Noting	Paper 5.1
3:25 pm	6. 6.1	UWS Students' Union UWS Students' Union Report	Noting	Paper 6.1
3:35 pm	7. 7.1	Senate Report from meeting of Senate held on 7 th December 2022	Noting	Paper 7.1
3:45 pm	8. 8.1 8.2	Committee Reports Report from meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 18 th January 2023 • Dumfries Campus • Health & Safety Dashboard Report from meetings of Audit & Risk Committee held on 24 th January 2023 <i>The Strategic Risk Register is exempt from disclosure under Section 33 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002</i>	Discussion Discussion & Approval	Paper 8.1 Appendix 1 Appendix 2 Paper 8.2
4:00 pm	9.	UWS Performance Report – February 2023 <i>This item is exempt from disclosure under Section 33 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002</i>	Discussion	Paper 9

4:15 pm	10.	Process for the Annual Appraisal of the Chair	Noting	Oral Report
4:20 pm	11.	Any Other Business		
RECESS				
5:00 pm	12.	Strategic Presentation and Discussion Item: UWS People & Culture	Discussion	Oral Report

London Campus Graduation – 28th March 2023

Court Residential Event : 27th and 28th April 2023 - Dumfries Campus

Paisley, 8th February 2023 being the 71st meeting of the Court of the University of the West of Scotland

Present:

Mrs K Allum (Chair)
Mr O Adams Adamatie
Ms A Buchanan
Professor S Carnicelli (Via MS Teams)
Mr R Doherty
Ms S Elufioye
Mr A Gubbay (via MS Teams)
Ms K Hedge
Ms M Kennedy
Dr D MacLean
Mr A Mallick
Dr I McLellan
Dr L Meredith
Mr A Miller
Professor J Miller
Ms A Mitchell (via MS Teams)
Mr C Morgan (via MS Teams)
Mr J Mone
Mrs L Muazu (via MS Teams)
Mr A Munro
Mr K Murdoch (via MS Teams)
Mr H Stolkin

In attendance:

Mrs A Loudon
Mr A MacIver
Ms D McMillan
Ms F Morton
Professor M Radosavljevic
Mr M Ross

Observers:

Dr E Baumgartner Dean of School
Ms J Edgar Interim Dean of School
Ms R Hill Learning & Teaching Enhancement
Ms J Martin Vice-Chancellor's Office

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Jefferies and Mrs R Paterson and for early departure from Ms A Buchanan, Professor S Carnicelli and Mr C Morgan.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed Mr R Doherty, Ms K Hedge, Ms M Kennedy and Dr D MacLean to their first meeting following their appointment to membership of Court. Court noted that Mrs R Paterson had returned to membership of Court following a period of leave of absence.

Declaration of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were notified.

1. **Minutes**

1.1 **Minutes of Meeting held on 29th November 2022**

1.2 **Minutes of Reserved Meeting held on 29th November 2022**

The Minutes of the above meetings held on 29th November 2022 were approved as a correct record.

2. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising other than those contained elsewhere in the agenda.

3. **Determination of Any Other Business**

No additional items of business had been notified.

4. **Chair's Business**

The Chair reminded members of the importance of Court participation and attendance at University graduation ceremonies which are the culmination of the student experience and a celebration of student success. Noting that the London Campus graduation ceremonies would be held on 28th March 2023, further details of the arrangements for these would be circulated to members by the Court Office. Arrangements for the summer 2023 ceremonies would be circulated in due course.

The annual Court Strategic Residential Event would be held on 27th and 28th April at the Dumfries Campus. Due to logistical arrangements, this event would be "in person" only and would provide an opportunity for Court members to review the new UWS campus accommodation and facilities.

5. **Principal's Report**

5.1 **Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor spoke to the report which provided an update on a range of internal and external strategic matters impacting on the University.

In particular, he drew members' attention to the ongoing dialogue with the Scottish Funding Council to manage the significant challenges being experienced across the Scottish HE Sector in achieving the target student populations set out in the SFC's core teaching grant. Detailed work was ongoing at UWS to understand the impact on recruitment and retention with a number of actions underway. Additional actions for the forthcoming academic year(s) will be outlined by schools and professional services departments as part of the planning and budgeting process underway currently. However, if current SFC rules were implemented, significant financial clawback could be applied next year. The potential impact of this had been reflected in revised financial forecasts.

Members discussed the number of contributing external factors which had given rise to these student population challenges and noted the significant financial implications for higher education in Scotland. It was important for the University to consider additional opportunities for growth in domestic student population and

mitigate against the impact of the student population challenges. This would be further explored as part of the April strategic workshop event.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

6. **UWS Students' Union**

6.1 **Union Report**

The Union Vice-President, Student Development spoke to the report which updated Court on recent activities of the Students' Union. She drew members' attention in particular to the work being done in preparation for the next student officer election cycle and the Union's forthcoming AGM which had a theme of "Celebrating Student Engagement" and would include a showcase of societies activities and achievements. The appointment of Students' Union staff at the London Campus was welcomed.

The increase in the number of instances of academic misconduct where support was provided to students by the Students' Union was noted. In this connection, the Union Vice-President, Student Development highlighted the importance of close collaboration between the Union and the University to ensure that students fully understood the causes and implications of plagiarism. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor outlined for the information of Court plans in place to enhance induction and start of year activities across all levels of study together with changes to the design of assessments which had at front and centre the removal of opportunities for plagiarism where possible.

A web link to the Students' Union's Financial Statements for year ended 31st July 2022 had been provided to Court for information.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

7. **Senate**

7.1 **Report from Meeting of Senate held on 7th December 2022**

Court noted the report from the meeting of Senate held on 7th December 2022, noting in particular the enhanced strategic focus on retention analysis and the review of School Board reporting to Senate as part of the regular review of Senate effectiveness.

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor reminded Court of the opportunity for members to attend meetings of Senate as observers.

8. **Committee Reports**

8.1 **Report from meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 18th January 2023**

The Chair of the Resources & People Committee spoke to the report from the meeting held on 18th January 2023.

Court noted the current status of asset disposals, noting the approval given for essential repairs to be carried out to the tenement student residences in Paisley

with disposal of these properties deferred for at least one academic year. This was due to current economic and market conditions and to ensure that the University safeguarded the supply of affordable and appropriate student accommodation.

Members were interested to note the progress being made with the Dumfries Campus Relocation Project and welcomed the updated snapshot images of the new Campus facilities. The Health & Safety Dashboard report was noted for information.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

8.2 Report from Meeting of Audit & Risk Committee held on 24th January 2023

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee spoke to the report from the meeting held on 24th January 2023.

Court noted that the forecast outturn for 2022-2023 had been revised to reflect an adverse position in SFC income relative to the 2022/2023 budget and the period 2 forecast following an accrual for a potential clawback due to the shortfall in recruitment of both controlled and non-controlled domestic students.

Court approved the recommendation that the University's External Auditors be re-appointed for a further two years, ie to February 2025.

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee drew members' attention to the updated Strategic Risk Register highlighting that the risk from reduced SFC income was now the highest scoring risk. In response to a question on the time horizon for this risk, the Vice Principal (Governance) & University Secretary confirmed that scenario planning and horizon scanning was undertaken by the Risk Group, which consisted of internal stakeholders, when considering any changes to the Strategic Risk Register.

With regard to the scoring of the risk of Cyber Security, further consideration would be given to the presentation of the residual risk rating following mitigating actions.

It was suggested that the risks associated with developments in AI and/or ChatGPT technologies should be considered for inclusion within the Strategic Risk Register. Although this risk was kept under review as part of the Student Experience Project and Digital Transformation Focus Group and was embedded within SR4 (failure to achieve teaching/learning and education excellence), further consideration would be given to specifying different aspects of this risk.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

9. Performance Report February 2023

The Vice-Principal, Planning & Recruitment spoke to the report which outlined performance across 7 measures as at 17th January.

Members were reminded that at the last meeting Court approved a revision to the Research Funding Awards KPI, noting that the research funding environment continued to be challenging. In this connection, the Vice Principal (Research,

Innovation & Engagement) outlined the strategy in place to focus on attracting larger substantial grants and on increasing and projecting the profile of colleagues to enhance their ability to win further grant awards. This would also support preparation for the next REF.

In relation to the decrease in the number of key worker student cohorts, Court noted that a project focusing on maximising student recruitment from current markets and developing new markets had been markets, together with a project focusing efforts to identify trends and identifiers for non-retention.

Members acknowledged that, due to the dynamic environment, a greater level of judgement should be applied in considering performance against KPIs, whilst maintaining Court's role of ensuring accountability. It was suggested that it may be timely for Court to reflect and revisit the KPIs in the light of changes to the operating environment and the impact of external factors. The April strategic workshop event would include a session led by the Principal & Vice-Chancellor reflecting on the evolving size and shape of the University and consideration of the UWS KPIs may form part of that discussion.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

10. **Process for the Annual Appraisal of the Chair**

Court noted the endorsed the process for the annual appraisal of the Chair which would be led by the intermediary of Court.

11. **Strategic Presentation and Discussion Item**

Colleague Engagement

The Interim Vice-Principal (People) made a presentation to Court covering the recent colleague engagement survey. Informed by the quantitative data, thematic analysis, core discussions and additional HR metrics, an action plan had been developed which focused on 5 key themes:

- Strengthen Employee Voice
- Promote Wellbeing
- Support a culture of change
- Develop our People
- Ensure sustainable reward and recognition

Members welcomed the interesting and informative presentation and the discussion which followed. A copy of the slide presentation had been circulated to members for information following the meeting. Progress in meeting the objectives of the action plan would be monitored by the Resources & People Committee.

There being no further items, the Chair declared the meeting closed.