

COURT - REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Scottish Code expects the Court to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness, and that of its Committees, at least every five years.

An externally facilitated review of the effectiveness of the Court was undertaken during the 2019/2020 academic session. The report concluded that “whilst improvements can always be made - governance works really well at University of the West of Scotland”. An action plan was developed to take forward recommendations for enhancements to current practices highlighted within the report. This process was overseen by the Governance & Nominations Committee and all actions completed and/or mainstreamed. The next externally facilitated review is due in academic year 2024/2025.

Review of Effectiveness - Academic Year - 2020/2021

Court and its Committees have maintained a full programme of business during the pandemic, including recruitment of new members, a review of the methodology and categories of the skills analysis of the membership of Court and a refresh of the Induction and CPD arrangements for members of Court.

In addition, a short life working group was established to undertake a holistic review of the terms of reference and membership of the sub-Committees of Court. The remit of the working group was to ensure that the Court Committee structure effectively supports the work of the Court; that there is clarity of roles and responsibilities; that duplication of business is avoided and that the membership of each Court Committee includes appropriate skills and expertise to enable the committee to fulfil its remit.

The Group concluded that the that the number of sub-Committees was broadly appropriate but that the Policy & Resources Committee should be disbanded, and a newly constituted committee established with a focus which would include *People* (UWS Staff and students), *Infrastructure* (including capital projects, campus developments and IT) and *Institutional Culture* (including sustainability, fundraising and stakeholder engagement). This recommendation was endorsed by Court and the first meeting of the newly constituted Resources & People Committee was held in October 2021.

The Court Office ensures that a range of activities are undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the Court. This includes a self-evaluation questionnaire of members of Court focussing on individual requirements, 1-1 meetings between members and the Chair of Court, a questionnaire addressing the overall effectiveness of the Court and the annual appraisal of the Chair of Court. These confirmed the overall effectiveness of the Court of UWS, although some areas were highlighted where more could be done.

A session will be included within the Strategic Residential Event for Court in February 2022 where members will be invited to consider opportunities to further enhance the effectiveness of the University Court.

Donna McMillan
Secretary to Court
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