



Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 23 November 2022

Present:

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Dr Craig Daly (Trade Union Nominee), Professor Nicola Dandridge (Co-opted Member), Theo Frater (SRC Assessor), Professor Dan Haydon (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Stuart Hoggan (General Council Assessor), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Professor Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khalique (Co-opted Member), Jonathan Loukes (Co-opted Member), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Ronnie Mercer (Co-opted Member), Dr Christine Middlemiss (General Council Assessor), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Shan Saba (Co-opted Member), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member), Rinna Väre (SRC President), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member).

Attending:

Gregor Caldwell (Executive Director of Finance), Professor Frank Coton (Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)), Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate), Christine Barr (Executive Director of P&OD), Ian Campbell (Executive Director of Estates), Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith (Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching)), Uzma Khan, (Vice Principal (Economic Development and Innovation)) and Declan Weldon (Executive Director of Innovation and Engagement)

Apologies:

Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Mr David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Lady Rita Rae (Rector)

CRT/2022/12. Announcements and declaration of Interests

The Convener welcomed Professor Dan Haydon (Elected Academic Staff Member) and Theo Frater (SRC Assessor) as new members of Court, to the meeting.

There was the following declaration of interest in relation to business to be conducted at the meeting: Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli as a Trustee of USS, as an ongoing declaration, given the updates on the scheme.

A pre-Court briefing took place on the Innovation Strategy, presented by Uzma Khan, Vice Principal (Economic Development and Innovation) and Declan Weldon Executive Director of Innovation and Engagement. Court's thanks for the briefing were recorded.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2022/13. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 28 September 2022

The minutes were approved.

CRT/2022/14. Matters Arising

No substantive items were raised.

CRT/2022/15. Finance Committee

CRT/2022/15.1 Financial Statements 2020/21

Court having received the statements, the Executive Director of Finance, Gregor Caldwell, gave a presentation on the University's financial statements for the year to 31 July 2022.

Court noted the summarised position, which highlighted the strong financial performance and growth during the year, with a management accounts surplus of £146.5m pre the movement in the USS pension Scheme. The significant adverse movement in the USS pension scheme this year had turned the surplus into a deficit and therefore the overall deficit after tax reported in the financial statements was £73.7m.

Court also noted the main movements within the Management Accounts, which included: an increase in tuition fees of £22.7m, mainly as a result of an increase in overseas students and the January intake; lower-than-budgeted expenditure on staff costs of £17.3m due to voids caused by the impact of Covid-19 on the recruitment market and the current economy; consumables were higher than expected with a £10.9m increase; commercial contribution increased by £22.8m, mainly due to the operation of the Lighthouse Laboratory; and there was a saving of £19.9m to budget with regard to Infrastructure and Strategic Investment spend due to delays in research, learning and teaching, sustainability and innovation strategy spend and college rolled forward spend.

The main movements between the Management Accounts and the Statutory Accounts, which included: a pension charge of £5.6m, reflecting current service cost and interest, mainly in the UGPS pension scheme; a decrease in the required holiday pay accrual of £1.4m (FRS102 adjustment); a £215.6m increase in the USS deficit provision; an actuarial gain of £48.5m, due to the UGPS pension, mainly due to an increase in the discount rate reducing the value of liabilities, were noted.

During the discussion, Court noted the year-on-year movements, which included: an increase in tuition fees of £87.9m, due to higher than expected student numbers; SFC Income decreased by £19m mainly due to the additional funding that had been received in 2021 for one off Covid grants; staff costs increased by £28.7m due to a 6.5% increased staffing levels to support increased student numbers and a 1.5% pay increase; other income and expenses have had a negative impact of around £24.6m mainly as a result of increased student related costs; FRS102 movement of £209.9m, mainly reflected the movement in the USS pension year on year.

Stuart Hoggan on behalf of the Audit and Risk Committee reported that the External Auditors, PwC were expected to issue an unqualified audit opinion and that the Audit and Risk Committee had recommended the Financial accounts for approval.

During the discussion it was noted that Court welcomed the changes to the Reports and Financial statements and the steps to modernise the presentation and move towards integrated reporting. Minor changes to the Financial statements were recommended before final submission to PwC.

Court approved the Financial statements for 2021/22 of the University of Glasgow following minor amendments.

CRT/2022/15.1 CAPEX – Hard Facilities Management Contract

Withheld FOI Exempt/Commercially confidential

CRT/2022/15.3 Finance Committee

It was noted that the Committee had received a number of papers which outlined the current financial position of the University. It was also noted that at its September meeting the Finance Committee had approved the HSBC Facility Renewal letter which now required Court approval.

Court approved the signing of the HSBC Facility Letter.

CRT/2022/16. Innovation Strategy

Court noted that the Innovation Strategy which had been given as part of the pre-Court meeting. During the presentation it was noted that the strategy had been refreshed and that it had set out a clear vision, priorities and the actions required to deliver on our ambitions by 2025. The refresh had drawn on existing and new data and had been undertaken following consultation with stakeholders to inform the approach. The strategy recognised the alignment and synergies with other thematic strategies – including Research Strategy, Learning and Teaching, Global Glasgow and the emerging Civic Strategy.

During the discussion a number of suggestions were made which would be incorporated into future updates.

Court approved the Innovation Strategy 2022-2025 and agreed that Court would receive regular updates as progress was made.

CRT/2022/17. Learning and Teaching Strategy

Court received a presentation by Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith (Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching)) on Learning and Teaching Strategy implementation. The presentation provided an update on the implementation since it was approved in February 2021. The terms of references for the workstreams were outlined: Assessment and Feedback & Policy Changes; Transforming Curricula; Student Skills and Professional Development; and Evolving Teaching Practice. The initial list of proposed performance metrics were discussed during the presentation along with the next steps.

During discussion Court noted that there was still progress to be made on ensuring that there was adequate support in place for staff to make the best use of the technology, redesign curriculum and to ensure that all the IT systems were linked up. Court was pleased to gain visibility of the workstreams which underpinned to strategy as this highlighted the amount of work involved.

Court thanked Professor Fischbacher-Smith for the update.

CRT/2022/18. Report from the Principal

CRT/2022/18.1 Ross Report – Gender Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct

The Principal reported that the draft report by Morag Ross KC had been received recently. The review had been carried out over the last year and had centred on the University's current staff and student procedures and support arrangements in relation to gender-based violence and sexual harassment. Ms Ross had now concluded her review, having interviewed a large number of students and colleagues and given careful consideration to the current processes and how they had been applied in recent cases. The Ross report had made a number of recommendations and it was noted that the University was committed to implementing the recommendations arising from the review. It was also noted that an action plan had been drafted was currently being reviewed which included the establishment of a Working Group to lead the implementation of the recommendations. Regular reports would be provided to POD Committee, Student Experience Committee and Court on the progress of the recommendations with full implementation planned by the start of the next academic session.

Court agreed that Summary of recommendation and action plan would be circulated to members and an additional Court meeting would take place on 1 December 2022 to discuss the matter in more detail.

CRT/2022/18.2 Principal's Report

Court also received the report from the Principal – Paper 7. The following areas were noted:

- Scottish Government Emergency Budget Review – Court noted the funding position and ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government;
- Anti-Racism Campaign – Court noted that the University had launched a campaign entitled Together Against Racism. The campaign was underpinned by real experiences of the student and staff community, and examples of unacceptable racial harassment, and it comprised one strand of the Understanding Racism, Transforming University Cultures action plan. The campaign included posters and other physical assets as well as digital content, including a social media campaign, video clips and a microsite on the web pages. Court welcomed the campaign and looked forward to seeing this format expanded to other areas, such as GBV;
- League tables – Court noted that the University had moved up the THE World Rankings by 4 places to 82nd and had 6 subject areas in the top 100. It was also noted that in the Guardian University Guide the University remained in 11th place. In the inaugural QS Sustainability Rankings the University had been 2nd in UK and 13th in the world.

The Convener thanked the Principal for the update.

CRT/2022/19. Report from the University Secretary

Court noted the report from the University Secretary – Paper 8. The following areas were discussed in further detail.

CRT 2022.19.1 Disability Services Review

Court noted that the matter was currently with the University's insurers and their solicitors and that they were trying to reach a resolution. It was also noted that the recommendations from the recent reviews continued to be implemented and good progress was being made.

CRT 2022.19.2 Industrial Tribunal

It was reported that the University was recently involved in an employment tribunal brought by a member of academic staff and that the outcome was anticipated by the end of November.

CRT 2022.19.3 Conflict of Interest Policy

Court noted that as part of the annual internal audit plan, the internal auditors had recently reviewed the University's Conflict of Interest policy and identified a number of actions which included updating the policy itself.

Court approved the updated Conflict of Interest Policy.

CRT 2022.19.4 SFC Outcome Agreement

Court approved the SFC Outcome Agreement which reflected the progress towards meeting key SFC and Scottish Government priorities.

CRT 2022.19.5 New and continuing Court Members

Court noted that Theo Frater had begun his term on Court from the 1 November 2022 as Assessor for SRC, for one year.

CRT 2022.19.6 Organisational Change

Court noted a proposal for the future shape of Centre for Open Studies in University Services which delivered the University's Open Programme of Studies. Change proposal would include a full review of the portfolio of courses, alongside reviewing administrative and academic staff roles, level of FTE, and the contractual arrangements for tutors. It was noted that the change programme would be carried out in three phases. OCGC had approved Phase 1 of the proposal, which would see a review and a reduction in the number of tutors in Short Courses who deliver the Access Programme as well as the Open Learning Courses across Access, Languages and Counselling.

CRT 2022.19.7 Student Accommodation Issues

As discussed previously, Court noted that as in other cities across the UK, the contraction in the private rental Sector had affected the ability of students to find residential accommodation at the start of the academic year. Currently around 90% of students were housed outwith the University owned accommodation. It was noted that University had no control over the private rental sector or the legislation that governed this area at a local or national level. Court noted the open letter that the University had received from the SRC Executive and the University's response. It was noted that there would be an increase in nominations on student accommodation which had been taken for the next three years but this would have no impact on the amount of private rental accommodation available for students to rent.

The SRC President and SRC assessor expressed concerns about the lack of space for teaching and student activities and the effect this was having on students. The SRC President also stated that the University had a duty of care towards students and should ensure that students were able to find suitable residential accommodation. During the discussion concerns were also noted from staff in relation to the teaching accommodation available and the increasing student numbers.

Court noted that in October 2022 SMG had agreed to hold student numbers at flat growth for 2023/24 and that student numbers would be stabilised to allow for the new buildings to come online and to allow for the transformation project on timetabling to be fully implemented. This would ensure that timetabling was optimised before the next academic year starts.

It was noted that due to increase in funded places, as a result of the teacher assessed grades during the pandemic, there was a bulge of students working its way through the cohorts which had exacerbated the lack of student accommodation.

Court agreed to continue to monitor student numbers and the impact on the student experience.

CRT 2022.19.8 Pay and Pensions – industrial action

Court noted that the University had agreed to award an extra pay increase to colleagues across the University in addition to the average 3.18% uplift awarded nationally on 1 August. In light of the exceptional nature of this pay uplift, the University would not be proceeding with the annual Rewarding Contribution arrangements for this year.

The University had also committed to working in partnership with the trade unions on a revised pay structure to be introduced in Academic Year 2023-24. This would address pay anomalies and the erosion of pay differentials with a particular emphasis on those currently on grades 5 and 6.

CRT 2022.19.9 Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance.

Court noted the revised draft Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance and members were invited to make further comments directly to the University Secretary.

CRT 2022.19.10 Honorary Fellowship

Withheld FOI Exempt/Commercially confidential

CRT/2022/20. Student Matters, including: SEC Report; SRC President update

Court noted the SEC report and also noted that the SEC Strategy and action plan would come to the next Court meeting for discussion and approval.

CRT/2022/21. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2022/21.1 Estates Committee

Ronnie Mercer, chair of the Committee, outlined the report from the Committee which provided an update on the issues in relation to space with accommodation on campus and the recommendation for the approval of the Hard Facilities Management Contract. It was also noted that a sub group had been formed to consider future contractor appointments for the proposed Multi-Use Facility which was the next major build planned for the Western Site.

The report was noted.

CRT/2022/21.2 Audit & Risk Committee

Stuart Hoggan updated Court on behalf of the chair of the Committee. Court noted that the Committee had received the University's financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2022. The Committee heard that on the basis of the work performed, the external auditors anticipated issuing unqualified audit opinions on the Group and University's financial statements, and on the University's subsidiary financial statements.

It was also noted that the Committee had received internal audit reports on reviews of: Core Financial Controls – Accounts Receivable and Credit Control; Compliance – Data Quality; HESA (Student) Return; Student Experience.

Court noted that the Committee had received the internal auditor's annual report and for the 12 reviews completed in 2021/22: 2 were green; 6 were green-amber; 3 were amber-red; and one was an advisory report. The internal auditors had issued an annual report for 2021/22, which included an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control, and of the University's economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money)

arrangements. The opinion for 2021/22 was that “significant assurance with minor improvement opportunities” could be given on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation’s framework of governance, risk management and control.

Court also noted the approval of the Annual Statement on Compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity 2022.

The report and the Annual report to Court were noted.

CRT/2022/21.3 IPSC

Frank Coton, chair of the Committee reported that that the Committee had covered several topics including cyber security, a financial report of the investment plan, and a new business case for Infrastructure as a Service which was presented for initial review and feedback.

Court also noted that 98.3% of staff in the University had completed the enrolment for multi-factor authentication (MFA) and work was ongoing to enable MFA for associate, affiliate and honorary staff. It was also reported that communications had been launched to start the process of MFA enrolment for students.

The report was noted.

CRT/2022/21.4 People and Organisational Development Committee

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had heard a progress update from the People First: New Ways of Working theme leads and that the Executive Director of P&OD had given an update on strategic activity including the latest employee relations landscape, recruitment activity, diversity & inclusion, pay & reward, and colleague wellbeing.

The report was noted.

CRT/2022/21.5 Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

Court noted the report and no substantive items were raised.

CRT/2022/21.6 Remuneration Committee

SMG members left the meeting for this item.

CRT 2022.21.6.1 SMG and Principal’s Remuneration

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had met in November to discuss senior staff remuneration. Business at the meeting had also covered the Committee’s annual report, which had included: a summary of the current strategic context and institutional performance; the Principal’s report on SMG performance and reward; the review of the Principal’s performance, which had been undertaken by the Convener of Court and the Chair of the Remuneration Committee, following consultation with Court members; Grade 10 Professorial and Professional Staff performance and reward; and Voluntary Severance cases.

Court noted that the Committee had agreed with the proposal outlined by the Principal at the meeting, that SMG would receive the 3% national pay uplift and the 3% agreed locally backdated to 1 August 2022. It was also noted that the Committee had agreed with the proposal outlined by the Convener of Court at the meeting, that the Principal would receive the 3% national pay uplift and the 3% agreed locally backdated to 1 August 2022. Court noted that the Principal’s salary uplift had been in line with the contractual arrangements agreed by Court and had been subject to satisfactory performance, which had been confirmed.

The Convener of Court left the meeting for this item and Gavin Stewart assumed the Chair of the meeting.

The University Secretary returned to the meeting.

CRT 2022.21.6.2 Convener of Court Remuneration

June Milligan, chair of the Committee, reported that the Committee had noted that in 2017 Court had agreed remuneration for the role of Convener of Court set at a rate of £500 per day up to a maximum of 50 days a year. Court noted that a proposal had been put forward to uplift the rate to £550 per day. It was noted that the remuneration claimed in AY2021-22 had totalled £6.4k and that the role of Convener of Court allowed for loss of earnings to be claimed. Court was asked to approve the recommendation that the daily rate be increased to £550 per day for remuneration incurred during the remainder of the Convener's term.

Court approved the uplift of the daily rate to £550 for the remainder of the term of the current Convener of Court.

Court noted that the nature of the Convener's remuneration would be discussed at the next Remuneration Committee meeting with a formal proposal on the approach to remuneration for the Convener appointed following election in 2024 put to Court in June 2023.

The Convener of Court and SMG members returned to the meeting.

CRT/2022/22. Annual Report for the Scottish Funding Council – Institution Review of Quality Academic Year 2021-22

Court had received a copy of the University's draft annual report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on institution-led review of quality for 2021-22. The contents were specified by the SFC. The statement summarised activity undertaken by the University in reviewing its provision for students, including: Periodic Subject Review; annual monitoring, course evaluation and Graduate School review; professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) activity; the University's strategic review of student-related services; and reflective overview, including the University's use of contextual information such as performance data and data from student surveys, both external and internal.

Having noted details of how the University assured the effectiveness of arrangements for maintaining academic standards and quality, Court agreed that the Convener of Court could sign off the required statement of assurance.

Court approved the Annual report to the Scottish Funding Council.

CRT/2022/23. Senate Matters

Court noted the report from the Senate meeting held on the 6 October 2022.

CRT/2022/24. Any Other Business

The Convener reported that no substantive business had been raised.

The Convener conveyed her thanks to the executive for their leadership during the calendar year, and also to court members for their contributions.

The Convener also thanked the School of Interdisciplinary Studies for hosting Court so warmly.

CRT/2022/25. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 15 February 2023 at 2pm in the Senate Room. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm.

Court

Minute of Meeting held on Thursday 1 December 2022

Present:

Ms Elizabeth Passey Co-opted Member (Convener of Court), Dr Craig Daly (Trade Union Nominee), Professor Nicola Dandridge (Co-opted Member), Theo Frater (SRC Assessor), Professor Dan Haydon (Elected Academic Staff Member), Professor Nick Hill (Elected Academic Staff Member), Stuart Hoggan (General Council Assessor), Mr Christopher Kennedy (Elected Professional Services Representative), Professor Simon Kennedy (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Laic Khaliq (Co-opted Member), Jonathan Loukes (Co-opted Member), Professor Kirsteen McCue (Elected Academic Staff Member), Mr Ronnie Mercer (Co-opted Member), Dr Christine Middlemiss (General Council Assessor), Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal), Dr June Milligan (Co-opted Member), Shan Saba (Co-opted Member), Mr Gavin Stewart (Co-opted Member), Rinna Väre (SRC President), Dr Bethan Wood (Elected Academic Staff Member).

Attending:

Dr David Duncan (Chief Operating Officer [COO] & University Secretary), Amber Higgins (Executive Officer and Clerk to Court), Professor Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate), Christine Barr (Executive Director of P&OD).

Apologies:

Cllr Susan Aitken (Glasgow City Council Assessor), Mr David Finlayson (Co-opted Member), Paula McKerrow (Trade Union Nominee), Ms Elspeth Orcharton (Co-opted Member), Lady Rita Rae (Rector)

CRT/2022/26. Welcome

The Convener welcomed everyone to the extraordinary meeting.

Court was reminded that papers and business were confidential.

CRT/2022/27. Ross Report – Gender Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct

The Principal reported that the full report by Morag Ross KC had now been received (the Ross Report". The review had been carried out over the last year and had centred on the University's current staff and student procedures and support arrangements in relation to gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

Court had now received the summary of the Ross Report, the recommendations and a draft action plan. It was also noted that a Working Group (consisting of members of the executive) had been established to lead the implementation of the recommendations which would include external input. The University was committed to implementing the recommendations arising from the review with full implementation planned before the start of the next academic session.

During the discussion a number of areas were highlighted and it was reported that the timelines would be reviewed to ensure that the recommendations were implemented in a timely manner. It was noted that Court had fully considered the summary report,

recommendations and action and agreed that Court would receive regular updates on the implementation alongside more in-depth discussion taking place at the POD Committee and sub committees, and at the Student Experience Committee.

Members of Court welcomed the commissioning of the report by SMG and although the report highlighted areas that required improvement, it was acknowledged that the University's key priority was supporting the safety and wellbeing of its staff and students.

Court agreed that the action plan was the most appropriate way forward and would receive an update at its next meeting.

CRT/2022/28. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Court will be held on Wednesday 15 February 2023 at 2pm in the Senate Room. A Pre-Court briefing will take place at 12pm.