

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE**UNIVERSITY COURT**

A meeting of the University Court was held on 22 June 2020 by video conference.

Present:

Ronnie Bowie (in the Chair);
Janice Aitken;
Alan Bainbridge;
Richard Bint;
William Boyd;
Shirley Campbell;
Lady Lynda Clark;
Josh Connor (DUSA President);
David Dorward;
Rumana Kapadia;
Professor Lynn Kilbride;
Rebecca Leiper;
Professor David Maguire (Interim Principal & Vice-Chancellor);
Bernadette Malone;
Jane Marshall;
Dr David Martin;
Karen Reid (items 68 – 74(1));
Professor Mairi Scott;
Jay Surti and
Sharon Sweeney.

In Attendance:

Wendy Alexander (Vice-Principal (International));
Professor Julian Blow (Interim Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance));
GiGi (Jia Hui) Gan (Independent Student Member on Court Elect);
Professor Blair Grubb (Vice-Principal (Education));
Dr Neale Laker (Director of Academic & Corporate Governance);
Dr Jim McGeorge (University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer);
Dr Christine Milburn (Policy Officer (Corporate Governance));
Pam Milne (Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development);
Olaf Postola (Corporate Governance Support Officer);
Carol Prokopyszyn (Director of Finance);
Scott Quinn (DUSA President Elect);
Wesley Rennison (Director of Strategic Planning);
Professor John Rowan (Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange & Wider Impact)); and
Thomas Veit (Director of External Relations).

Apologies:

Lord Provost Ian Borthwick;
Catherine Cavanagh;
Keith Winter; and
Rector, Jim Spence.

68. PRE-COURT SESSION

Prior to the meeting the Court participated in a series of three informal break-out group sessions with the Deans of the Schools of Art & Design, Business and Science & Engineering. The focus of the sessions was to introduce the Court to the new Deans and to explore their thinking on plans for the future given the change in circumstances following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each of the groups reported back at the start of the Court meeting, and consistent themes throughout the discussions included: the noted enthusiasm with which the Schools had tackled the COVID-19 challenges; the schools' focus on employability, equality, and diversity of learning; the value the schools placed on collaborative working within and outwith the University; and efficiency/resilience issues which pre-dated COVID-19.

The Court decided: to suggest that the event be repeated.

69. MINUTES

The Court decided: to approve the minutes of the Court meeting on 28 April 2020.

70. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Action Log

The Court received the action log of Court business.

The Court decided: to note the updates.

(2) Emergency Committee

At its meeting on 28 April 2020 the Court delegated authority to the Emergency Committee of Court constituted by email on 2 April 2020 (referred to in minute 54(2) of the meeting of the Court on 28 April 2020) to 'review, negotiate, finalise and execute a loan agreement as requested and set out' (minute 58 of that meeting refers).

The Court was subsequently advised by email on 18 June 2020 that after reviewing the post-sanction term sheet and covenants, and having received assurance that appropriate legal advice had been taken, the Emergency Committee had approved the extension of financing from Bank of Scotland (BoS) for £40m until May 2022 under the terms offered. The Court also noted that the Emergency Committee had approved the delegation of authority to the Director of Finance to conclude the legal agreement on behalf of the Court.

The Court decided: to homologate the decision of the Emergency Committee to approve the extension of financing from BoS for £40m until May 2022 under the terms offered and the delegation of authority to the Director of Finance to conclude the legal agreement on behalf of the Court.

(3) Update on Senior Appointments (minute 54(3))

The Chair provided an update to members regarding the process and arrangements for the recruitment of a permanent Principal & Vice-Chancellor. The Court expressed an interest in the diversity of the candidate pool and noted the timeline for shortlisting and interview.

The Court decided: to note the update.

71. **CHAIR'S REPORT TO COURT**

The Court received a report from the Chair of Court outlining activities he had undertaken on behalf of the Court and the University since the last meeting of the Court. He highlighted his regular contact with the Interim Principal and his appreciation of the work of the University Executive Group and the University community as a whole in responding to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. He also provided an overview of meetings of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) and of the Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC). He provided the Court with assurance that these meetings had led him to conclude that the University had reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic in a manner which represented best practice within the sector, and that, like many others, it would need to act decisively to ensure its future sustainability.

Members also noted the Chair's update on the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) valuation of March 2020, and that he had been invited to join the CUC Chairs Group working with UUK to formulate a combined response.

The Court decided: to note the update.

72. **UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP REPORT TO COURT**

The Court received the regular report from the University Executive Group (UEG) (**appendix 1**), which provided an update on emerging sectoral issues and internal operational and strategic matters. The report made reference to the UEG's focus on the University's response to the COVID-19 crisis (see minute 73 below) but was otherwise focussed on developments in the priority areas previously endorsed by the Court.

In introducing the report, the Interim Principal drew members' attention to the UEG's response to the Black Lives Matter movement, and in particular the Principal's meetings with staff, students and representative groups and the University's commitment to ensuring fairness, equality, diversity, inclusion and representation at all levels. The Court also noted the University's engagement with the SFC/AHE race project, and suggested that the Governance & Nominations Committee consider aspects of the project which related to the membership and operation of the University Court and that the People & Organisational Development Committee be asked to review it from the perspective of the advancement of the University's policies in this respect.

The Principal also highlighted the Scottish Government review, led by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), into the future provision and sustainability of colleges and universities. In

doing so he set out the two phases for the process – a review of the 2019/20 academic year by August 2020, and a longer review of provision on a five year horizon focussed on the role universities could play in Scotland’s economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, flexible learning, upskilling and online learning.

The Court noted updates on each of the strategic priority areas of: improved performance management; financial sustainability; the School of Business; the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 and broader research strategy; future academic structure and footprint; and Business Transformation (BT). The Principal drew members’ attention to updates relating to the School of Business, and the Court commended the School for the progress made in relation to the workstreams and targets set by the UEG. The Court also noted the BT programme update and was supportive of the approach being taken. Members encouraged engagement with a wide range of stakeholders when considering future requirements for student-related systems.

Turning to the work being led by the Interim Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance) on the future academic footprint, the Court discussed the process and timeline for the review and consultation prior to proposals being prepared for consideration by the Court. Members noted in particular the involvement of the Deans in developing thinking at this stage and the role of the Senate. The Court welcomed the intention to develop a clear long-term future strategy for the academic footprint of the University as a whole. Members also welcomed the joint working between the UEG and Deans’ Group in relation to the consideration of research themes, collaborations and scale.

The Court welcomed the inclusion of references to how the University was assisting in the economic regeneration of the region/Scotland and suggested that it would be helpful to extract these examples into a short document to support members in their role as ambassadors for the University.

The Court decided: to note the update and await further updates in due course.

73. COVID-19 UPDATE

The Interim Principal introduced a report from the University Executive Group (UEG) which provided a comprehensive update on matters relating to the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic since the last meeting of the Court. The Court praised the work of the various COVID-19 Groups established to manage the University’s Business Continuity Planning (BCP) and Business Recovery Planning (BRP). The Court noted the current focus on managing health and safety for staff and students once they were able to return to campus, the continued development of a blended learning offering, and the impact of social distancing in terms of the reconfiguration of space.

Discussions then moved to the increased demand on student hardship funds observed since the start of the pandemic. While the funding available had been supplemented by the University and by fundraising activities, it was noted that demand was expected to continue to rise due to the decrease in part-time employment available in the local economy and members encouraged the University to continue to make representations to the Scottish Government on this matter.

The Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development highlighted the launch of a 4-weekly COVID-19 staff survey in line with discussions at meetings of the Court and the People & Organisational Development Committee (PODCo), and noted that the outputs of the survey would be discussed at an additional meeting of PODCo over the summer. In response to questions the Director provided members with assurance that the University was taking appropriate steps to ensure the well-being of staff who had been placed on furlough.

Finally, members noted that the University had raised an incident of racial abuse against students with Dundee City Council and that a programme of positive joint action was being agreed. The University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer reiterated the University's zero tolerance stance, a position which was strongly supported by the Court.

The Court decided: to note the update and lend its strong support for the University's handling of the COVID-19 response.

74. **FINANCE**

(1) Budget for 2020/21 and Financial Plan to 2024/25

The Director of Finance introduced the proposed budget for 2020/21 and the financial plan to 2024/25. The Court welcomed the detail provided in the proposed budget for 2020/21, the three-year projections for submission to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), and the five-year projections which members noted continued to be developed by the University Executive Group (UEG).

The Court noted that while steps had been taken to account for the financial impact of COVID-19 in the budget, the University's ability to accurately forecast outcomes (particularly in relation to international student recruitment in the Autumn) was significantly impaired at this stage, and that as a result the budget was presented as a range of scenarios based around a 'sharp dip' due to COVID-19 followed by a slow recovery over the remaining four years. The budget predicted a negative net operating cash flow of £12.4m in 2020/21, leading to an operating deficit of £15.6m (an adverse variance to the pre-COVID-19 target of £9.8m). The cash balance was also projected to reduce by £20m in 2020/21, with use of the external financing facility (see minute 70(2)(above)) being required from November 2020. Members noted that as a result of this, action had been taken to significantly reduce the 2020/21 capital programme.

The Court noted that the Finance & Policy Committee (F&PC) had endorsed the proposed budget and five-year plan on the basis that it would continue to be iteratively developed by the F&PC and the Court over successive meetings as forecasting of the impact of COVID-19 became clearer.

Through discussion members noted that the revolving credit facility (RCF) with BoS would need to be reviewed ahead of the signing of the 2020/21 accounts in November 2021, and that the University would need to demonstrate that it was addressing the deficit in advance of the renewal being sought. The Convener of the F&PC highlighted the need identified by the UEG to take urgent action to reduce its cash expenditure, minimise capital expenditure and consider measures such as asset disposal and the reduction of staff costs to maintain cash and achieve the necessary

financial sustainability. The Court noted that the Committee had recommended a target of an 8% (£24m) surplus on operations by the end of 2026/27 and possible deficit reduction measures were discussed in more detail in minute 74(2) (below).

Finally, the Court discussed the significant risk relating to the USS and UoDSS Pension Schemes, the former of which was noted to be outwith the University's control.

The Court decided: to approve the proposed budget for 2020/21 and the indicative budgets for the following two years for submission to the SFC in the context of the scenarios outlined and the expectation that the University Executive Group (UEG) would continue to develop and present iterative updates to the budget and the 5-year plan as forecasting information became clearer and the measures outlined in the budget deficit reduction paper (minute 74(2)(below)) were implemented and/or further developed.

(2) **Reserved Business: Budget Deficit Reduction**

The Director of Finance introduced a paper which proposed an initial pathway to address both long-term structural financial sustainability challenges and the additional short-term cash protection measures required due to the impact of COVID-19. The paper directly addressed the key risks and deficits outlined in the budget above (see also Minute 74(1)).

The Director drew members' attention to the principles guiding the evaluation of options as follows: (1) both the long term structural and COVID-19 financial challenges should be tackled in parallel, (2) the entirety of the projected deficits in the 'Realistic' Budget scenario for 2020/21 (£15.6m) and 2021/21 (£4.9m) should be addressed in cash terms in year, (3) preference should be given, where possible, to measures that did not directly impact staff (for example, capital, non-pay, and asset sales), and (4) any staff measures should ideally apply fairly across all staff groups in keeping with the OneDundee principle (whilst protecting those on the lowest pay). Through discussion members agreed that two additional principles should be added as follows: where possible, the high-quality student experience at Dundee should be protected, and that Equality Impact Assessments would be undertaken where required.

With regard to addressing the financial impact of COVID-19, the Director outlined three phases for actions which would have an impact over a short time – Phase 1 being mitigating actions which had already been taken, Phase 2 representing those actions which were considered to be non-controversial and could be implemented with immediate effect (subject to consultation were required), and Phase 3 comprising a range of measures which could be implemented in whole or in part if required once the impact of COVID-19 on matriculations was known in October. Members noted the commitment to follow the University's Redundancy Avoidance Policy, and that the measures set out were proposed in an attempt to avoid any requirement for compulsory redundancies. Measures within Phase 3 included, but were not limited to: the sale of assets; deferring the implementation of the annual

pay award arising from the 2020/21 national pay bargaining round; and pay cuts for all staff. With regard to the latter members noted the proposal that those on the lowest pay would be exempt from any cuts, and that consideration would be given to the implementation of differential levels of cuts across the salary range and the length of time for which any cut would apply.

Members highlighted the importance of ensuring that all measures were subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), and suggested that the people-related measures could be considered by the People & Organisational Development Committee at an additional meeting which was being scheduled for August 2020.

Members acknowledged that the financial circumstances the University faced were so severe that to ensure sustainability the Court might need to take measures that adversely impacted on aspects such as the University's student experience, academic reputation and league table position.

The Court noted a range of measures which had been considered but were not being recommended for implementation for the time being.

The Director set out a fourth phase, aimed at addressing the longer-term structural financial sustainability of the University. The Court noted that a number of project work-streams were underway, while others were yet to be explored. Discussions focussed on work being led by the Interim Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance) in relation to a review of the academic footprint of the University (see also minute 72 (above)), and in response to questions the Interim Principal outlined the timeline for the project reporting to the UEG, the Finance & Policy Committee (F&PC), and the Senate and Court. He also confirmed that the Phase four measures remained subject to appropriate consultation, assessment and approval, but that the Court was being asked to endorse the direction of travel. One member raised the balance between the cost of research and the income generated by teaching as an area for exploration in the review.

Members went on to encourage the UEG to consider proposals for bolstering areas of income growth potential through investment, though noted that this would require savings to be made elsewhere.

The Court noted the commitment to clear, transparent and honest communication with staff and students regarding the University's financial position and the measures being considered. The Court also highlighted the importance of all actions being set in the context of the strategy, and of remaining cognisant of the current Scottish Government Review of coherent provision and sustainability.

In summarising discussions, the Chair highlighted the Court's acknowledgement of the importance of pursuing the measures outlined if the University were to retain control of its own destiny. He confirmed the Court's support for the approach being pursued by the UEG, and the view that it was proportional to the financial risks the University faced. Members noted the narrow margin between the 'realistic' case identified in the budget and a position requiring further actions beyond those set out in Phases 1 and 2, and were supportive of work being commenced to fully consider measures in Phase 3 so that they were in a position to be brought forward for approval and implementation if required come October 2020. Finally, members

strongly supported a fundamental review of the academic footprint in the context of addressing the longer-term structural financial sustainability of the University.

- The Court decided:**
- (i) to approve the continuation and implementation of the measures listed under Phases 1-2;
 - (ii) to approve further work on the preparation of Phase 3 measures, including the development of proposals for potential pay cuts, the sale of assets and shares, noting that individual measures were subject to the review and approval of the Court, and further assessment of their continuing necessity by 1 October 2020; and
 - (iii) to request that the University Executive Group review activities, timelines and milestones for items in Phase 4 by 31 July 2020.

75. CONVENER REPORTS

The Court received reports from the conveners of each of the committees of the Court, highlighting strategically relevant matters for discussion.

The Convener of the Audit & Risk Committee highlighted the Committee's interrogation of the Institutional and COVID-19 Risk Registers. Members noted that the Committee had recommended a review of the Court's risk appetite/tolerance and of the meaning of 'risk mitigation' in a post-COVID-19 world. The Court also noted the report on business transformation and the continuing roles of the Audit & Risk and the Finance & Policy Committees in relation to the programme. The Court approved the recommendation that EY be appointed as external auditors for the University for a further period of 3 years, starting with the 2020/21 accounts. Finally, members' attention was drawn to the external audit process for the 2019/20 accounts, and in particular the division of the audit into two parts, the first part focussed on the figures within the statements and the second focussed on the determination of the University as a going-concern. Members noted that the external auditors had been content with the stress-test approach taken by the University to scenario modelling.

In his report the Convener of the Finance & Policy Committee provided an overview of discussions relating to the budget and 5-year plan and budget deficit measures. In particular, members noted the importance that the Committee had placed on the further development of the 5-year plan to meet requirements to achieve financial sustainability as soon as possible.

The report from the Convener of the Governance & Nominations Committee highlighted the launch of the 2020 survey for the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Court and requested members to complete this as soon as possible. He also provided an update on the process for the appointment of two lay members to the Court and, noting that interviews were to take place later that week, the Court agreed to consider recommendations from the appointing committee via email circulation to enable the successful candidates to attend Court/Court committee meetings from the start of the 2020/21 academic year. Finally, the

Court approved the suggested committee memberships for 2020/21, subject to any updates resulting from the aforementioned lay Court appointments.

The Court noted that the meeting of the People & Organisational Development Committee had focussed on matters relating to the health and wellbeing of staff including, but not limited to: (a) supporting and facilitating staff working from home and associated duty of care issues; (b) identifying and putting in place arrangements for keyworkers; and (c) implementing the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furloughing) across two phases. Members noted that the Committee planned to schedule an additional meeting before the next scheduled date (29 October) to enable full engagement with people aspects of the budget deficit reduction proposals (see minute 74(above)).

The Convener of the Remuneration Committee informed members of changes to the timelines for items on the Committee's schedule of business as a result of the demands associated with the management of the impact of COVID-19. She also provided an overview of the Committee's review of its Remit & Terms of Reference and the University's Severance Policy in light of recent sectoral reports. Members approved the changes proposed to both of these documents.

The Court decided: to thank the conveners for their reports (approvals are noted in item 81 below).

76. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: ANNUAL REPORT**

The Court received the annual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) report for the University Strategy to 2022. Members explored the narrative analysis, data and basket of measures relating each area, recognising the considerable progress that had been made across many aspects. In relation to 'Grow and Diversify our Student Community', members recognised the lag in the available student intake data from HESA, which meant that more recent growth in international student recruitment, including the positive impact of International College Dundee (ICD) on overseas intakes to undergraduate programmes was not yet reflected.

The Court decided: to note the report.

77. **COURT RETREAT PROPOSALS**

The Court received an early outline of proposals under development for the Court Retreat on 3 & 4 September 2020, including the format, likely use of technology and potential topics.

Members noted that it was too early to predict what the COVID-19 social distancing requirements would be come September, and that officers would continue to develop plans which could be delivered in an online format if required. The Court was supportive of the focus as set out and no further suggestions were received.

The Court decided: to note the update and await further information in due course.

78. **REPORT FROM THE CONVENER OF THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS**

The Court received a report from the Chair of the Senatus Academicus and noted the Senate's focus on the University's Business Recovery Plans (BRP) and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members were reassured to note the focus on quality assurance and academic standards through the rapid transition to online teaching and assessment.

The Court also approved the revised Complaints Handling Procedure and new Student Safeguarding Protocol but asked that the Director of Academic & Corporate Governance give consideration to how the Court and its Committees might contribute to future revisions given the inclusion of references to staff.

Finally, the Court noted the update provided on the impact of COVID-19 on research, both at the University and at a sectoral level including the delay to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 process. Members congratulated the research community on securing £19.5m of COVID-related research funding and agreed with the Senate's focus on ensuring a safe return to the campus as soon as was allowed and feasible.

The Court decided: to note the report. Approvals are noted in minute 82 (below).

79. **FORMATION OF AN EMERGENCY COMMITTEE – SUMMER 2020**

The Court decided:

- (i) in accordance with accepted precedent, to remit the transaction of any urgent Court business over the summer to an Emergency Committee, with any action taken by the Committee being reported to the Court as soon as possible with a formal report being submitted to the first business meeting of the Court in 2020/21; and
- (ii) to approve the proposal that the remit for the Emergency Committee established to manage urgent actions arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic be extended to cover this requirement.

80. **NARRATIVE FOR THE SENATE**

The Court suggested that the report from the Chair of Court to the Senate should highlight:

- the Court's positive reflections on discussions with the Deans of the Schools of Art & Design, Business, and Science & Engineering;
- The update on the process for the appointment of a new Principal & Vice-Chancellor;
- The Court's appreciation of the collective effort of staff and students in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The Court's approval of the budget, noting the expectation that it would be iteratively updated at the next 3 successive meetings of the Finance & Policy Committee and Court;
- The Court's discussion of budget deficit reduction measures as set out in minute 74(2) above; and
- The positive trends within the annual Key performance Indicator Report.

The Court decided: to ask that the Chair of Court prepare a report to the Senate on this basis.

81. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(1) Audit & Risk Committee Minutes

(i) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 19 May 2020

The Court received the minutes of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee on 19 May 2020 (**appendix 2**). The Court's discussion of matters raised by the Committee for the attention of the Court is detailed in the Conveners' Report (Minute 75).

The Court decided:

- (i) to approve the appointment of EY as the external auditor for a period of 3 years starting with the 2020/21 accounts;
- (ii) to approve the Institutional Risk Register for publication on the Court website; and
- (iii) otherwise to approve the minutes.

(ii) Reserved Minute from the Committee's meeting on 19 May 2020

The Court received minutes 6,7 and 11 of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee on 19 May 2020. The Court noted that the University claimed exemptions under Sections 30 and 33 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The minutes will be published as an appendix to the minute of the meeting of the Court at which their release is approved.

The Court decided: to approve the minutes.

(2) Finance & Policy Committee Minutes

(i) Minutes of the Committee's meeting on 26 May 2020

The Court received the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee on 26 May 2020 (**appendix 3**). The Court's discussion of matters raised by the Committee for the attention of the Court and its endorsement of the budget and five-year plan is detailed in the Conveners' Report (Minute 75).

The Court decided: to approve the minutes.

(ii) Reserved Minute from the Committee's meeting on 26 May 2020

The Court received minute 5 of the meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee on 26 May 2020. The Court noted that the University claimed exemptions under Sections 30 and 33 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The minutes will be published as an appendix to the minute of the meeting of the Court at which their release is approved.

The Court decided: to approve the minutes.

(3) Governance & Nominations Committee Minutes

The Court received the minutes of the Committee's meeting on 26 May 2020 (**appendix 4**). The Court's discussion of matters raised by the Committee for the attention of the Court is detailed in the Conveners' Report (Minute 75).

- The Court decided:**
- (i) to note the Committee had reviewed the Annual QASC Report and had recommended that the Court consider the quality assurance process to be robust when reviewing the annual report to the SFC on quality later in the year;
 - (ii) to approve proposals that the Court consider recommendations for lay Court appointments by email over the summer;
 - (iii) to approve the membership of the Court committees for 2020/21; and
 - (iv) otherwise, to approve the minutes.

(4) People & Organisational Development Committee

The Court received the minutes of the Committee's meeting on 20 May 2020 (**appendix 5**). The Court's discussion of matters raised by the Committee for the attention of the Court are detailed in the Conveners' Report (Minute 75).

- The Court decided:** to approve the minutes.

(5) Remuneration Committee

The Court received the minutes of the Committee's meeting on 18 May 2020 (**appendix 6**). The Court's discussion of matters raised by the Committee for the attention of the Court are detailed in the Conveners' Report (Minute 75).

- The Court decided:**
- (i) to approve the revised Remit & Terms of Reference for the Committee (appendix 6 annex 1);
 - (ii) to approve the amendments to the Severance Policy (appendix 6 annex 2); and
 - (iii) otherwise, to approve the minutes.

82. **REPORTS FROM THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS**

The Court received a report from the meeting of the Senate on 27 May 2020 (**appendix 7**). Matters of interest highlighted to the Court were discussed under item 78 (above).

- The Court decided:**
- (i) to approve the recommendations concerning the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus upon

Professors John Brown; Paul Crocker; Hassan Molana; Graham Ogden; and Jeanette Paul;

- (ii) in accordance with Ordinance 64, to approve the appointment of Yvonne Evans (School of Social Sciences) and Dr Anna Notaro (School of Art & Design) as Students' Assessors on Senate for a period of three-years in the first instance;
- (iii) to approve the revised Complaints Handling Procedure and the Student Safeguarding Protocol; and
- (iv) Otherwise, to note the report.

83. DUSA ANNUAL REPORT TO COURT

The Court received the annual report from the Dundee University Students' Association detailing progress made during the academic year relative to the DUSA Executive manifesto themes of: representation, sustainability, welfare, community and student development. Members noted that the Chair and Deputy Chair of Court were to meet with the DUSA President to discuss aspects of the report in more detail and were encouraged to share feedback with the Court.

The Court decided: to thank the President for the report.

84. SPORTS UNION ANNUAL REPORT TO COURT

The Court noted the 2019/20 annual report from the Dundee University Sports Union (SU). Members noted that the Chair and Deputy Chair of Court were to meet with the SU President later that week to discuss the report in more detail. The report highlighted improvements to the relationship between DUSA, SU and Student Services, and enhancements made to policies and procedures during the year.

The Court decided: to thank the President for the report.

85. RESEARCH GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT

The Court received the annual report from the Research Governance & Policy Sub-Committee of the Senatus Academicus which summarised the activities of the Sub-Committee for the 2018/19 academic year including policy review, alignment with the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity and individual reports on formal investigations. Members noted that the report had been delayed due to the focus on the Research Excellence Framework, and that the 2019/20 report was anticipated in November 2020.

The Court decided: to note the report (**appendix 8**) and await further reports on an annual basis.

86. REPORT FROM THE STAFF COUNCIL

The Court received the minutes from the meeting of the Staff Council on 27 April 2020. The Court noted the focus on staff health and well-being during the COVID-19 crisis; furlough and job protection; recruitment, planning and budgeting processes; financial and cultural implications of COVID-19 for the University; management of the return to campus process; and future flexible working.

The Court decided: to note the report.

87. STAFF: PROFESSORIAL AND GRADE 10 APPOINTMENTS

(1) Appointments

The Court noted the appointment of the following members of staff:

Name	Title	Date
Professor Maria Fusco	Professor (Teaching and Research) School of Art and Design	25 May 2020
Professor Tania Kovats	Professor (Teaching and Research) School of Art and Design	11 May 2020
Professor Michael Gratzke	Academic Director of Doctoral Academy	1 June 2020

The Court decided: to note the appointments.

88. LETTER RECEIVED BY THE COURT

The Court noted a letter which had been distributed directly to members by DUCU. After reflecting on the content, the Court recommended that it be forwarded to the Principal and University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer for response. The Court also agreed that officers should take steps to ensure that the protocol for contacting members was adhered to by DUCU in future, such that the provenance of circulation of documents was verified and guidance could be provided regarding the role of the Court.

The Court decided: to recommend that the letter be forwarded to the Interim Principal and the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer for response.

89. DEPARTURES

The Court paid tribute to Shirley Campbell, Josh Connor and Rumana Kapadia, for whom the meeting would be their last as members of the Court. The Court thanked them for their service to the Court and its committees and wished them well for the future.

APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP REPORT TO COURT (Minute 72)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. As was the case for the last UEG report to the Court, our recent efforts have been concentrated mainly on responding to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are however, as is set out in more detail in the COVID-19 Update, emerging from the crisis management phase, with the focus of the University Executive Group (UEG) and the UEG COVID-19 response groups now moving to the 2020/21 academic year and establishing longer-term plans for a strong and sustainable future for the University. This will include maximising international student admissions, ensuring a strong student experience through online teaching development, developing options for the early return of research to the campus, and establishing health and safety parameters around all of these activities in line with government guidance. Getting to this point is a testament to the hard work and expertise of our staff and their commitment to the University of Dundee in what we recognise can often be challenging personal circumstances. It should be noted also that our students have proven adaptable and resilient throughout.

B. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, FAIRNESS AND INCLUSION

2. Events in the USA have given all of us cause to pause and reflect on what we are doing to tackle racial inequalities, and the University is no different. We stand by our founding principles of equality and fairness, but we are also actively reviewing what more we can do to improve the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education through both our policies and our actions. This will no doubt be a focal area for the upcoming meetings of the People & Organisational Development Committee in a similar way to which the UEG has taken time to challenge itself on what more can be done.
3. The Interim Principal has personally met with a number of staff and students to discuss what steps we might take and is grateful for the insights which these individuals and groups have provided. We can assure you that the UEG is listening and intends to act in a careful and thoughtful way that maximises the chances of long-term improvements. As background to these discussions we would direct members to the '[SFC/AHE Race Project: Tackling Racism in Our Universities and Colleges](#)' report and in particular its references to making governing bodies more attractive to the BAME community, as well as to the [University's Equality Action Plan](#) and we look forward to the Court's input on this.

C. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

4. In the May COVID-19 Court briefing we highlighted the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) [financial impact analysis](#) which set out an early analysis of possible financial impacts and projected operating deficits for the Scottish HE sector of between £383 million and £651 million in 2020-21 alone. The recent announcement by the Scottish Government that in light of COVID-19 it was commissioning a review of the future provision and sustainability of colleges and universities will therefore come as little surprise to members.
5. SFC, the review will focus around the provision and delivery of teaching and research activity, and on the way tertiary education and research is funded to deliver outcomes needed for Scotland. Correspondence to date makes it clear that there is an expectation that existing models of funding, operations, accountability, governance, collaboration, outcomes, targets and delivery will need to shift to meet the new challenges and that the review will consider how best to achieve coherence in FE and HE sectors and ensure the sector is fit for purpose – with reference made to both fair work principles and the financial sustainability of institutions themselves.
6. Following discussions with the Court and its committees, we had already begun to develop a framework for the consideration of what the University of Dundee will need to look like in the future - built around activities planned for the September 2020 Court Retreat and the establishment by the Court of guiding principles for the direction of travel. We will push ahead with this work in parallel to the work to secure our financial sustainability, with the goal of creating an institution which is able to thrive rather than focusing on survival.
7. Elsewhere, Brexit trade deal negotiations continue, with the next significant milestone being the end of June when the deadline for requests for extension to the transition period will pass. While there is little that can be

said by way of an update to the Court on matters affecting the University, we remain cognisant of the potential risks while we navigate through the other challenges we are now facing.

D. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

8. Over the last few reports we have provided members with a status update for our workplan of strategic priority actions for 2020, and in the last update we set out the impact of COVID-19 and associated changes to the HE landscape on these actions. We have now begun work to refresh these priorities for 2020/21, with papers elsewhere on the agenda highlighting some of the future priorities, and will share these with the Court in due course. A short update on each of the current areas can be found below:

Improved Performance Management

Project lead(s): Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development and interim Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance)

9. The review of the Objective Setting & Review (OSaR) process was identified as a strategic priority for 2019/20 and remains on-going. The UEG has, through communications with the University Management and staff, been highlighting the importance of the OSaR process and its relevance - particularly this year when it is even more essential that staff are clear about their aims and objectives, what is strategically important over the next 6 to 12 months, and what activities may need to be paused to deal with immediate strategic priorities. It also provides an important opportunity for staff to discuss any challenges or concerns they have in the current climate.
10. The Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance) has been holding one-to-one structured discussions with all the Deans; the first of these was an orientation discussion around the current position of each School, the second was structured around the response to COVID-19 and the third round (just commenced) is focused on the development of a long-term strategy for the disciplines within each School. The outcome of these discussions will feed into the ongoing strategy discussion about academic footprint and objectives and plans for each School/Discipline.
11. There is now a clear understanding from the Deans that they are responsible for the management of the performance of the academic staff in their School, incorporating Annual Research Review, promotions, probation and OSaR, and that the annual OSaR is the key coordinating part of this process. Discussions are underway with Deans and VP(Education) to incorporate an Annual Teaching Review into the annual cycle. A minimum set of research expectations is also being developed.
12. The need to have a University-wide Organisational Development (OD) programme to support the challenges ahead has also been identified as a priority. Initial discussions have taken place with the Chair and Deputy Chair of Court and a proposal will be developed over the summer.

Financial Sustainability

Project lead(s): Director of Finance and University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer

13. This topic has occupied a considerable proportion of UEG time in the past few weeks. The Court and Finance & Policy Committee receive regular updates on the University's financial position and progress with delivering the strategic financial objectives agreed with Court in September 2019. As members will be aware, following the Covid-19 outbreak, financial sustainability has become a critical priority due to the short term major financial risks for 2020/21 and the longer-term impact of the crisis on our financial position. This may have wider implications both for the implementation of the current strategy and for the consideration of the future strategic direction.
14. The proposed budget for 2020/21 and five-year financial plan to 2024/25 is set out in a separate paper for this meeting. This outlines a realistic budget scenario, with a material uncertainty regarding the student numbers and consequential tuition fees for 2020/21. It also presents the range of risks, opportunities and mitigations facing the University, including a downside financial scenario. Despite significant mitigating actions, the budget proposal for 2020/21 leads to negative net operating cash flow of £12.4m and a deficit of £15.6m. The final two years of the plan include a £5m betterment target required to reach the financial sustainability targets for operating cash flow and UEG will be working on the strategic options to address this gap. Court will have an opportunity to support this work on future strategy at the Court retreat in September.
15. Banking risks also remain high, as an extension to the existing financing arrangement with the Bank of Scotland (£40m) remains under negotiation. Court members will be aware that Court delegated authority for approval of

the details for a financing deal to the Emergency Committee and this will be progressed as soon as possible. Given the continuing uncertainty around securing access to cash beyond May 2021 and the scale of the risk to income from international students, it is paramount that the University secures its cash position. Cash is being protected as far as is operationally feasible, given the volume of additional work required to address COVID-19 issues by the start of Semester 1. Consequently, UEG have proposed additional budget measures to protect cash over the coming months, in addition to the mitigating actions described in the budget proposal. The additional measures are presented for consideration in a separate paper to this meeting of Court.

Business School

Project lead(s): Vice-Principal (International) and Vice-Principal (Education)

16. This strategic priority was divided into 6 workstreams which were outlined to Court in February 2020. The table below summarises the current status of each of these areas in terms of critical milestones. Given this improving picture UEG is in agreement that these workstreams should now be continued under the stewardship of the Dean, School Manager and new School Executive Group, with line management as usual through the Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance). The School can however continue to call on colleagues across the university to support its future development.

Workstream	Title	RAG status
1	Future School Leadership: proposed School Executive	Green
2	Investment Plan; hiring, staffing and budget	Green
3	Programme delivery and Curriculum review	Amber
4	Research Strategy and REF	Green
5	Revised business case for new building	Green
6	School building requirements; interim and longer term	Amber

17. In the last update members noted that the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak was likely to be significant for the School and that capital requirements were being carefully reviewed in light of circumstances and available resource. The Director of Estates & Campus Services will continue to work with the School on arrangements for accommodation for the new staff arriving over the summer/autumn and the new intake of students, and will bring forward costings and recommendations for an interim scaled-down solution for accommodation of the School in due course.

Research Excellence Framework 2021 and Broader Research Strategy.

Project lead(s): Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange & Wider Impact)

18. Success in REF2021 is a key priority for the University of Dundee, with performance being vital to UK and Scottish reputational rankings, driving c. £240 million of annual allocation from the SFC's Research Excellence Grant (REG), and feeding into national and international institutional league tables. The Court has previously discussed the target to be ranked in the UK top 30 based on our quality profile (expressed as a grade point average (GPA)) and top 35 by power (= GPA x staff volume) to maximise REG income. Strong performance in REF reflects the vitality of the research environment and how this feeds into our ambitions to undertake impactful research that transforms lives and plays out positively in world-class infrastructure and facilities which greatly enhance student experience.
19. Planning for the best possible REF2021 outcome began by reflecting on previous assessment cycles. Departing from prior practice we have taken a much more centralised approach, meaning that planning is more actively controlled and ensuring we share and incorporate best institutional practices. The focus on excellence has also been unrelenting by concentrating on fewer Units of Assessment (UoA) and driving up academic performance through all research-active staff benefitting from an Annual Review of Research process introduced in 2016.

20. Our internal timetable was well on track to deliver to the original submission deadline of 27 November 2020. However, responding to the widespread impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic the central UK REF team announced an open postponement. A revised date has yet to be confirmed, but following an extensive national consultation exercise there is a strong likelihood that 31 March 2021 will shortly be confirmed as the new submission date.
21. The University's REF Steering Group agreed in April to a two-month extension to our internal planning milestones, the next most significant being the completion of the second full draft of our submission acknowledging the disruption caused by the pandemic across a wide range of the University's activities. The second full draft of our 16 UoAs (with updated outputs, impact case-studies and environment templates) is now due to be sent to external reviewers in week commencing Monday 6th July.
22. We will have a comprehensive update on our quality and volume profile available ahead of the Court Retreat in September. Our analysis to date indicates significant progress as compared with the submission in REF2014. However, it is vital to remember that all other institutions will also be making progress so it remains an institutional priority and we cannot afford to lose momentum around continuous iterative improvement ahead of final submission.

Future Academic Structure and Footprint

Project lead(s): Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance), Vice-Principal (Education) and Director of External Relations

23. Working with the Vice-Principal (Education) and the Towards 20/21 Group (new teaching arrangements for 20/21), Deans and the Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance) are considering the current portfolio of taught programmes and how this could be rationalised to increase teaching efficiency.
24. The critical mass required to support sustainable cutting-edge research is lacking in some disciplines, particularly in the non-STEM subjects. Deans and the Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance) are currently involved in jointly identifying a select number of research themes that can be further developed to the required level of research excellence and scale, and which can then contribute to novel and distinctive programmes for attracting UG, TPG and RPG students to Dundee. Information from the current REF2021 preparations is being used to identify where critical mass seems to be missing and what themes should be prioritised.
25. Confidential discussions with Deans about School restructuring involving Humanities, Social Sciences, Health Sciences and Education/Social Work have been expanded to include Dentistry which, because of its small size, would be greatly enhanced by closer structural and academic alignment with other Schools. Consistent with the earlier analysis of this project by the UEG, this group of Deans is now aiming to use the conclusions of discussions around academic alignment to guide proposals for structural re-organisation. It is anticipated that this process will lead to new structures for supporting research and teaching excellence and a reduction in the total number of Schools with accordant efficiencies.
26. As mentioned in the Budget Deficit Reduction paper elsewhere on the agenda the VP (APP) will be bringing forward an outline plan by 31 July 2020 for optimizing academic performance and structures.

RESERVED BUSINESS: Business Transformation

[Secretary's note: The University asserts that the below information is exempt from public disclosure and claims exemptions in S.30(b), 30(c) and S.33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. At the point at which the exemptions are deemed to no longer apply the Court will be asked to note the release of this section which will then be included as an appendix to the Court minute.]

E. INTERNAL MATTERS

Student Recruitment

27. The Finance & Policy Committee has remained vigilant with regard to the context in which recruitment for entry in 2020/21 is taking place. At this stage it is exceptionally difficult to predict the outcome, however the budget takes account of modelling based on all available data, including surveys by the British Council regarding applicants' intentions. The following paragraphs provide an overview of current expectations.
28. Student recruitment and admissions activities (as well as those in marketing) continue at full pace to ensure maximum conversion of all potential student categories for autumn 2020 and January 2021. The student

recruitment and admissions update to the Finance & Policy Committee for this Court meeting provided the latest estimate as to our recruitment position. Clearly there is still uncertainty around speed of movement around re-turn to campus, travel restrictions and other COVID-19 related items. All of those have some impact on student recruitment and mitigating actions are covered in the various operations groups.

29. Our expectations are still that we will meet our Home/EU targets for Undergraduate recruitment as well as our Widening Access targets, not least because interest in the latter has been substantial. RUK recruitment might be affected by the controversial and short-term policy change by the UK government to introduce caps for English students in England and Scotland. We have a large contingent of Northern Ireland students as part of RUK which are not affected by this policy.
30. International student recruitment was buoyant and ahead of target before COVID-19 started in February. We are trying hard to convert as many students as possible, some of which are now already undertaking on-line pre-sessional English language programmes. International College Dundee exceeded its intake targets for 2019/20 and continues to recruit well on-line for next year's entry, pending the aforementioned restrictions.
31. We expect there to be recruitment opportunities for PG home students as those graduating this summer defer entering the challenging job market. PGR recruitment will receive renewed focus with our new Director of the Doctoral Academy Professor Michael Gratzke who has now joined the University.

Awards and Accolades

32. A list of awards and accolades won by staff and students since the last report to Court is included in **Annex 3**.
33. In addition, we would like to highlight the University's performance across a number of League Tables.
 - In April 2020 the University of Dundee placed in the top 50 in the world in the 2020 edition of the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings. The rankings recognise that the role of universities extends beyond research and teaching to a third mission revolving around engagement, knowledge exchange and innovation for societal good. These rankings measure the global higher education sector's success in delivering the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The rankings include more than 800 universities worldwide and Dundee is ranked 44th overall and 9th in the world against the Sustainable Development Goal of Good Health & Wellbeing. Dundee was also ranked inside the top 50 against the SDGs of Climate Action, Responsible Consumption and Production, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and Partnership for the Goals. Full data is available from <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/rankings/impact/2020>.
 - The 2020 Complete University Guide where we came 31st in the overall table for the third consecutive year. We have eleven subjects in the UK top ten, with Medicine joint 1st (with Glasgow) and Medical Technology 1st. We are also in the UK top five for Dentistry (2nd), Forensic Science (2nd), Pharmacology & Pharmacy (2nd) and Biological Sciences (3rd) and in the top 10 for Anatomy & Physiology (6th), Education (7th), General Engineering (7th), Social Work (8th) and Art & Design (9th). There was also a significant rise in the tables for Nursing, which is now 24th in the table (previously 46th). As is always the case, our Strategic Planning Directorate will further analyse the data and this will be included in the usual annual league tables report to the Court, however the full data is available from <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings>.
 - QS World Rankings were less positive, where we dropped slightly to 319 (previously 302) amidst a disappointing showing for the UK sector generally, and we have identified specific mitigating actions to try and turn around our performance in these rankings.
34. The annual league tables report to the Court will set out in further detail the performance and actions being undertaken. The rankings highlight where we are doing well and where we must do better. It is important that we celebrate the successes and the great strengths we have in research and teaching across the University, while also addressing areas where improvement is possible.

Graduation

35. We would normally be reminding Court members of the schedule for our summer graduation. While the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that we have had to take the difficult decision to postpone our summer graduation ceremonies we will nevertheless be marking the incredible achievements of our students through a series of online degree celebrations. This will provide our students with an opportunity to celebrate their success with their families and friends whilst also sharing the experience with their classmates. Owing to the nature of the

events planned it is likely that these virtual events will take place towards the end of August and we will share further information with the Court in due course.

University Executive Group
10 June 2020

Annex 1: University Executive Group Meetings

The University Executive Group has met formally on 6 May, 11 May, 18 May, 20 May, 25 May, 1 June, 3 June, and 5 June. The following items were considered:

1. **CORPORATE ISSUES**
 - COVID-19
 - Student mobility
 - Business recovery
 - COVID-19 Group updates
 - Student Residences
 - Health & Safety Considerations
 - HE contribution to COVID-19
 - UEG Actions and Priorities for 2020
 - Business Transformation
2. **FINANCIAL ISSUES**
 - Budget, 5-year plan, scenarios and assumptions
 - Budget deficit reduction options
 - School and Directorate budgets
 - Student Numbers Update
3. **ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES**
 - Course availability for 2020/21
 - School of Business update
 - Elevator collaboration
 - REF Readiness
 - NSS Response Rate
4. **HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES**
 - Strategy to 2020 performance measures
5. **STRATEGIC MATTERS**
 - Current Strategic Priorities
 - Future strategy and priorities

Annex 2: Details of Research & Related Awards

The selection of grants and awards detailed below have been selected in order to showcase the diverse range of research undertaken across the University, enabled by funding sources that include research councils, charities and industrial sponsors. Please note that any joint awards listed below state the University of Dundee value only.

RESEARCH AWARDS >£500,000

- (i) **Dr G B Schweikert (School of Life Sciences)**
Machine Learning Methods to Re-Annotate Histone Modifications with Locus-specific Functional Classification (Future Leaders Fellowship)
£1,286,338 (including £575,877 overhead) from the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

- (ii) **Professor J D Chalmers (School of Medicine)**
STOP-COVID19
£672,306 (including £121,388 overhead) from INSMED LTD, USA

This is a randomized controlled trial of the anti-inflammatory drug brensocatib in bronchiectasis and the only Scottish led randomized controlled trial of a novel therapy for COVID-19. This trial has received urgent public health designation by the National Institute for Healthcare Research (NIHR).

- (iii) **Dr M M A A De Rycker (School of Life Sciences)**
Elucidating molecular determinants of *Trypanosoma cruzi* persisters (New Investigator Research Grant) (Joint with the University of Glasgow)
£666,296 (including £339,390 overhead) from the Medical Research Council

Around 70 million people are at risk of infection with Chagas disease, a potentially deadly neglected tropical disease caused by the protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*. Persister parasites that are much less sensitive to drug treatment pose a major challenge for the development of new Chagas disease drugs, however they remain very poorly understood. This lack of basic biology understanding is seriously hampering the development of new drugs. In this collaborative project with the University of Glasgow we will use state of the art technologies, such as single-cell transcriptomics and high-content screening, to gain a better understanding of persister parasites at the molecular level and to test a new treatment paradigm. We will exploit this knowledge to develop new and better drugs in our already well-established Chagas disease drug discovery programme.

- (iv) **Professor K D Read (School of Life Sciences)**
Assessing the Humanised 8HUM Model
£236,295 the Tres Cantos Open Lab Foundation

Professor Kevin Read and his team have recently been awarded a grant from the GSK Openlab foundation to work with GSK, Tres Cantos, Spain to explore the utility of a novel humanised mouse model ("8HUM") in global health drug discovery. Research will focus on tuberculosis and Chagas disease drug discovery and development, answering two key questions. Firstly, does "8HUM" deliver preclinical efficacy data more directly relevant to humans and secondly, in light of the increasing use of drug combinations in global health diseases, does "8HUM" better predict drug interactions compared to current industry approaches. The humanised ("8HUM") model was developed by Dr Colin Henderson and Professor Roland Wolf in the School of Medicine and already demonstrated to accurately reflect human pathways of drug metabolism and disposition in terms of human-like pharmacokinetics and in the generation of human drug metabolites.

- (v) **Professor J D Chalmers (School of Medicine)**
Rapid Diagnosis of Bacterial Co-Infection and Antimicrobial Resistance in Patients with Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 Infection (SARS-CoV-2)
£231,890 (including £73,890 overhead) from the Chief Scientist Office

This School of Medicine project is testing novel technologies to diagnose severe acute respiratory illness including COVID-19 using point of care devices that can give clinicians answers within minutes.

Funded by CSO as part of their rapid response to COVID19.

- (vi) **Dr D Connell (NHS Tayside)**
Identifying the burden of post-COVID19 lung disease in Scotland
£193,818 (including £5,793 overhead) from the Chief Scientist Office
- (vii) **Dr S J Halliday (School of Social Sciences)**
Future-proofing Scotland's Water Security: Delivering Safe and Resilient Water Supplies
£163,372 from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
- (viii) **Professor K A Mills (School of Social Sciences)**
Scottish Human Rights Defender Fellowship (2020)
£90,000 (including £8,996 overhead) from the Scottish Government

The Scottish Human Rights Defenders Fellowship was established in 2018 by the University of Dundee and the Scottish Government to support those at risk for their work in protecting human rights around the world. Through relocation at the University of Dundee, and in collaboration with supporting organisations Amnesty International Scotland and Front Line Defenders, the Fellowship provides a period of rest and respite to build defenders' resilience and wellbeing, the chance to strengthen their human rights work through research and study at the University, and capacity building, advocacy and networking opportunities with civil society organisations, government and universities in Scotland and beyond. Over the past two years, the Fellowship has hosted defenders from Burundi, Malawi, Russia, Turkey, and Zambia, and will host two more defenders from January 2021.

- (ix) **Dr T D Dyer (School of Science and Engineering)**
Development of a Geopolymer Cement from Waste Boiler Ash
£39,957 (including £37,557 overhead) from the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre

This project aims to reduce carbon emissions associated with concrete production by developing blends of materials capable of developing high strengths with little or no Portland cement. The blends will combine by-products from other industries, a key component being boiler ash produced by the industrial partner, Levenseat Ltd. The company operates a materials recovery facility which processes household and commercial waste for high-level recycling of materials, with the ash being produced by a combined heat and power plant used to generate electricity from the remaining material. The project is funded by the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre with Levenseat Ltd, Levenseat Renewable Energy Holdings, WRC, OIS Ltd, Zero Waste Scotland and Scottish Environment Protection Agency as contributing partners.

A. RESEARCH AWARDS >£100,000<£500,000

Name	Discipline	Project Title	Total Value	Funder
Prof. J D Chalmers	Molecular and Clinical Medicine	Host biomarkers of acute respiratory distress syndrome in COVID-19	£293,892 (including £5,179 overhead)	Chief Scientist Office

B. RESEARCH AWARDS >£50,000<£100,000

Name	Discipline	Project Title	Total Value	Funder
Dr A S F Doney	Population Health and Genomics	Learning Healthcare System for Stroke Precision Medicine Pathway (P4Me)	£95,490.20 (including £22,655.20 overhead)	Data Lab
Prof. L A Colvin	Population Health and Genomics	Early Life Adversity in Pain and Depression (E-PaiD): Linking Structural and Functional Neuroimaging with Healthcare Data to Explore the Effects of Early Life	£86,685	Tenovus Tayside

		Adversity on Chronic Pain, Depression and Analgesic Use (PhD Studentship)		
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Annex 3: People and Prizes

Geoscientists **Professor Sue Dawson** and **Dr Simon Cook**, from the University's Geography and Environmental Science department, have been named recipients of the Geographical Association's prestigious Silver Publishers Award for highlighting evidence of extreme geographical events on our own shores.

It is with great sadness that we relay news of the [death of our former Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Hamlin CBE, FREng, FRSE](#). Professor Hamlin was Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University from 1987 to 1994. He came to Dundee with a wealth of experience in the academic world having been Vice-Principal and Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham. Over his tenure Professor Hamlin generally helped place the University on a much more secure footing and encouraged the growth of the institution, He played a significant role in strengthening the Students' Association, working in tandem with the students. He also worked to create a much stronger bond between the University and the city of Dundee.

APPENDIX 2

AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES (Minute 81 (1)(i))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 19 May 2020 via TEAMS online meeting.

Present: Karen Reid (Convener);
Karen Bassett;
Lady Lynda Clark;
Colin Clunie;
Gordon Weir; and
Keith Winter.

<u>In Attendance:</u>	Wendy Alexander	Vice-Principal (International);
	Richard Bint	Convener of Finance & Policy Committee;
	Chris Brown	Scott-Moncrieff (excluding item 7);
	Dr Neale Laker	Director of Academic & Corporate Governance;
	Ian Leith	Director of Business Transformation (item 6);
	Dr Jim McGeorge	University Secretary;
	Dr Christine Milburn	Policy Officer (Corporate Governance)
	Olga Potopova	Ernst & Young (excluding item 7);
	Carol Prokopyszyn	Director of Finance;
	Stephen Reid	Ernst & Young (excluding item 7);
	Dr Liz Rogers	Assistant Policy Officer (Risk & Audit); and
	Matthew Swann	Scott-Moncrieff (excluding item 7).

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes from the meeting of 3 March 2019 including reserved minutes 4 and 11.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Action Log

The Committee noted the log of ongoing actions and the impact of COVID-19 on the timings of some items coming to the Committee.

Resolved: to approve the Audit & Risk Committee action log as presented.

3. CONVENER'S REPORT

The Convener informed the Committee that she had spoken with the internal auditors since the last meeting and outlined her support for the proposed amendments to the internal audit plan as set out below (item 9(2)). Members noted that she had been in regular contact with officers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resolved: to note the update.

4. BUSINESS CONTINUITY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Committee considered an update on the University's COVID-19 response. Members also received a copy of the report which had been provided to the Court meeting on 28 April 2020, and noted that the Court had highlighted the Committee's role in assessing the University's response and reviewing the Business Continuity and Business Recovery processes which had been put in place.

The Committee welcomed the reports and through discussion explored scenario modelling undertaken by the University, the nature of the financial challenge, and mitigating actions taken. The Committee also noted the University's financial exposure, and in particular its lower exposure to losses from the commercial letting market and international market than many competitors. The Committee also noted that it was unlikely that there would be additional government funding to support the Higher Education Sector in managing the impact of the pandemic.

The Committee also reviewed the operational COVID-19 Risk Register which had also been provided to the Court. Discussions focussed on risks relating to homeworking, including insurance implications and data security. With regard to the latter the Committee were pleased to note that the Director of UoDIT had reviewed and prioritised improvements and training which would reduce the cyber security risks and that the Head of Information Governance had issued guidance to staff to reinforce the importance of staying alert to risks. The Committee also discussed the potential impact of the pandemic on relationships with overseas partners and league tables. Members were pleased to note that the Vice-Principal (International) continued to have positive and regular interactions with these partners and that a number of agreements had proceeded to signature during the pandemic. Members however also noted the risk that delays to decision-making in China could delay the launch of the Joint Educational Institute by 12 months, and the associated impact on the University's budget projections. Finally, the Committee reflected on the impact of homeworking on the workforce and noted measures which the University was taking to promote health and wellbeing during this period, including the provision of 'institutional rest days'.

The Committee went on to discuss the importance of reviewing the Risk Appetite Statement in light of the pandemic and noted that officers would take forward work in this area in the short-term to ensure that it accurately captured tolerances.

The Committee also highlighted the importance of moving beyond the management of risks and toward the optimisation of growth opportunities. In this respect members noted that the University Executive Group had begun groundwork on the development of processes for the review of longer-term strategic planning, with a view to the Court and the new Principal & Vice Chancellor (when appointed) providing strategic direction later in the year. Members highlighted articles in the press relating to the potential for the government to seek mergers within the Higher Education Sector and encouraged officers to review any potential risks relating to the University in this respect.

- Resolved:**
- (i) to note the update;
 - (ii) to endorse the COVID-19 Risk Register and note that it would continue to be updated in line with discussions; and
 - (iii) to note that the Director of Academic & Corporate Governance would bring forward proposals for the review of the University Risk Appetite Statement by the Committee, the UEG and the Court.

5. INSTITUTIONAL RISK REGISTER

The Committee received and reviewed the Institutional Risk Register which had been provided to the Court at its meeting on 28 April 2020. The Committee recommended that the register be updated to ensure that it reflected current mitigation/control options, noting that new working practices introduced post-COVID-19 may be of relevance.

- Resolved:** to endorse the Institutional Risk Register to the Court subject to a further review of current mitigation/control options.

6. RESERVED BUSINESS: BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

[Secretary's note: Members should note that this item is considered strictly confidential. The University claims the exemptions in Sections 30 and 33 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The minute has been redacted and is provided under separate cover and will be published as an appendix to the minute of the Court meeting at which its release is approved.]

7. **RESERVED BUSINESS: AUDIT TENDERS**

[Secretary's note: Members should note that this item is considered strictly confidential. The University claims the exemptions in Sections 33(1)b of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The minute was redacted and provided under separate. The internal and external auditors left the meeting for the duration of discussion of this item.]

The Committee formally noted the decision taken at the Committee's Risk Session on 24 February 2020 to approve the process for tendering for the internal and external audit contracts. Members however noted that as a result of COVID-19 the processes had been paused. After reviewing options, risks, benefits and timelines the Committee agreed to delay the process for the Internal Audit Tender with a view to a recommendation being presented to the August meeting of the Committee, and to use the Direct Award process permissible under the APUC Framework to award a three year External Audit Contract to EY, subject to the approval of the Court at its next meeting.

Resolved:

- (i) to endorse the changes to the timeline for the Internal Audit Process; and
- (ii) to recommend to the Court that EY be appointed as the External Auditor under the APUC Direct Award process for a further period of 3 years starting with the 2020/21 accounts.

8. **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

(1) 2019/20 Provisional External Audit Plan

The External Auditors outlined the approach to be taken in carrying out the external audit for the year ending 31 July 2020, and in doing so set out the scope, fee and materiality thresholds for the audit. Members noted that this year the plan could only be provisionally agreed as the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was not known. The Committee was however reassured to note that it was anticipated that the audit could be completed fully online.

The Auditor drew members' attention to the anticipated impacts of change to the USS contributions on the balance sheet and the reduction of the materiality threshold to 1% and the likelihood of this being further reduced during the audit as COVID-19 risks became clearer.

In summarising the plan, the auditor set out the two-phased approach – the audit of financial data and statements and separately the review of the University as a going concern. In particular members noted that this would now include a requirement for the stress-testing of budget scenarios and their approval by the Audit & Risk Committee, Finance & Policy Committee and the Court. The Committee noted that the External Auditor was assured that all necessary financial scenario modelling was being carried out and that the approach taken by the University was considered to be sound.

In response to questions, the Director of Finance confirmed that the University was actively reducing the number of subsidiary companies considered to be inactive, and that further reductions would be made in the coming year to reduce the audit costs.

The Committee also explored the process for the provision of an audit opinion to the banks in relation to the covenants in place.

Resolved: to note the update.

(2) Audit Market Reform

The External Auditor introduced a report summarising changes to the audit market and auditing standards/guidance following six recent regulatory and independent reviews.

It was noted that parliament was yet to consider the reviews and implement reform, however the auditor drew members' attention to the potential implications of 4 key recommendations: greater scrutiny of audit committees; mandatory joint audit or peer review for FTSE 350 companies; operational split between the big four's audit and non-audit functions; and a 5-year implementation review including changes to tendering period and independent appointment of auditors. In doing so he

highlighted the impact on business processes, quality, choice and cost. Through questions the Committee explored the drivers for cost increases.

Resolved: to thank the Auditor for the report.

(3) COVID-19 UK HE Impacts and Considerations

The External Auditor provided a report outlining the significant change to the risk profile of HE institutions across the UK, and insights on planning for resilience and re-emergence from the crisis to support institutions in navigating through the stages of the crisis in an optimal manner.

Resolved: to thank the Auditor for the report.

9. **INTERNAL AUDIT**

(1) Curriculum Review

The internal auditor introduced the report from the audit undertaken in the area of Curriculum Review. Members noted that the auditors had made one low grade (limited exposure) recommendation which related to the schedule of review of policies in this area. The Committee noted that management had recommended that these policies be reviewed every two years.

Through discussion the Committee noted that the University, as was the case with most HE institutions, did not review all policies on an annual basis, and that the frequency of review was determined individually for each policy. The Director of Academic & Corporate Governance undertook to provide the Committee with an overview of the policy review process at a future meeting.

Resolved: to note the report and await an update on the policy review process in due course.

(2) Internal Audit Progress Report

Members reviewed the internal audit progress report. Noting the impact of COVID-19 on both the timing and suitability of a number of the audits within the 2019/20 internal audit plan, the Committee approved a series of amendments to the plan. In particular the Committee approved the recommendation from the Internal Auditor that the Schools Operational Review be recast as a consultation rather than a review. The Committee also recommended that the Student Experience Audit be replaced with a review of controls which would be potentially relevant to the change in working practices (e.g. working from home) in order that the Committee could be assured that these controls remained effective.

Resolved: to note the report and approve changes to the 2019/20 internal audit plan.

10. **ANNUAL WHISTLEBLOWING REPORT**

The University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer informed members that there had been one instance of Whistleblowing in the 2019/20 academic year which members noted had been previously reported to the Committee.

Resolved: to note the report.

11. **RESERVED BUSINESS: LEGAL RISK REPORT**

[Secretary's note: Members should note that this item is considered strictly confidential. The University claims the exemptions in Sections 30b and 30c of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The minute has been redacted and is provided under separate cover and will be published as an appendix to the minute of the Court meeting at which its release is approved.]

Resolved: to note the update.

12. UNIVERSITY STRATEGY TO 2022: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Committee received a summary from the Director of Strategic Planning which set out the status of composite KPIs previously approved by the Court. While none of the measures which made up the composite KPIs had been assigned to the Audit & Risk Committee for monitoring, the Committee was invited to review the performance measure data within the dashboard and highlight to the Director any areas which they felt should be discussed within the Annual Report to the Court.

Resolved: to provide feedback to the Director of Strategic Planning as appropriate.

13. NARRATIVE FOR COURT

During the meeting it was agreed that the Convener's report to Court on 22 June 2020 would include the following: the Committee's review of the COVID-19 and Institutional Risk Register, and in particular the importance of reviewing the Institutional Risk Appetite and balancing the focus on mitigation with the need to be able to pursue opportunities; the update on Business Transformation and areas for future consideration by the Finance & Policy Committee; the External Audit Plan, including the importance of a 'stress test' in the current environment; and amendments to the internal audit plan, including the introduction of an audit to provide assurances in relation to controls which may be affected by the change to homeworking.

14. HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee reviewed minutes from the Health, Safety & Welfare Sub-Committee meeting on 27 April 2020 along with the Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report. Members noted aspects relating to homeworking which were of interest given the current COVID-19 circumstances.

Resolved: to note the minutes.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: 3 August 2020.

Karen Reid
Convener

APPENDIX 3

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Minute 81 (2)(i))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 26 May 2020 via video conference.

Present: Richard Bint (Convener);
Alan Bainbridge;
Ronald Bowie;
Dr William Boyd;
David Dorward;
Professor David Maguire (Interim Principal & Vice-Chancellor);
Professor Mairi Scott; and
Sharon Sweeney.

In Attendance: Bernadette Malone (Deputy Chair of Court);
Professor Julian Blow (Interim Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance));
Peter Fotheringham (Deputy Director of Finance);
Rose Jenkins (Director of Estates & Campus Services);
Dr Neale Laker (Director of Academic & Corporate Governance) (with the exception of item 13);
Dr Jim McGeorge (University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer);
Dr Christine Milburn (Policy Officer (Corporate Governance));
Carol Prokopyszyn (Director of Finance);
Scott Quinn (DUSA President elect);
Wesley Rennison (Director of Strategic Planning); and
Professor John Rowan (Vice-Principal Research, Knowledge Exchange & Wider Impact); and
Jay Surti (Lay member of Court in attendance of the Committee).

Apologies: Josh Connor (DUSA President).

Prior to the start of the meeting the Convener welcomed Scott Quinn, who was attending in a shadow capacity as the DUSA President elect, and Jay Surti, a lay member of the Court who was attending the meeting as part of her development as a Court member. The Convener reminded members that the meeting would have been the last meeting for Josh Connor as the current DUSA President, and in his absence the Committee asked that their thanks be noted for his contributions to the work of the Committee over the previous 12 months.

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting of 24 March 2020 including reserved minute 6.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Action Log

Members noted the action log for the Committee and the Convener drew members' attention to items which had been deferred due to COVID-19 and their tracking on the log.

Resolved: to approve the action log.

3. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT

The Director of Finance focussed her report on progress in relation to financing facility negotiations. In doing so she informed members that as a result of COVID-19 the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) was no longer taking new credit clients and so negotiations had not proceeded with this bank. Members however noted that the University was an existing client with the Bank of Scotland (BoS), and that negotiations had continued to the credit approval stage for a one-year extension to the existing £40m facility to May 2022. Members noted that a decision from BoS was expected imminently.

The Director set out the risks and probabilities of successfully renewing the financing facility as well as the cascade of options which the University would need to pursue should it be unsuccessful in its negotiations with BoS. In particular she outlined the terms of government COVID-19 Schemes relevant to the sector, including the CCFF and CLBILS, and members noted that beyond these *in extremis* the University would need to seek financial support from the Scottish Funding Council. In this respect, members with experience of the government schemes highlighted potential challenges in terms of when funding would be required, when it would become available, and when it would need to be repaid.

The Committee also noted that beyond an additional £75m research funding announcement from the SFC, of which the University was anticipated to receive £4-5m, additional funding in the form of a large-scale sector bail-out appeared unlikely at this point.

The Director went on to highlight the timing of the negotiations relative to the review of the annual accounts and in particular the process for the University being confirmed as a going-concern. The Committee noted that due to complications for the sector in terms of institutions reworking their forecasts in the time available, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had been approached regarding the timing of the deadline for the submission of the annual accounts for 2019/20, and the Director agreed to keep the Committee informed of any developments in this respect. Members also noted that the financial position would become clearer closer to the start of the next academic year, and that the University would need to have financing in place for at least 12 months beyond the date of signing the accounts. The current revolving credit facility agreement expires in May 2021.

The Committee also discussed the repayment of borrowings and noted that this would be via renewal of the financing arrangements as the budget projections anticipated using £28m of the facility within the 2020/21 academic year. The Committee also reviewed the cash flow projections, with a focus on the point at which the requirement to use the financing facility was likely to begin based on current projections.

Resolved: to the update and await further information in due course.

4. 2020/21 BUDGET AND 5 YEAR SCENARIO AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: PLAN B SCENARIOS

The '2020/21 budget and 5-year scenario' and 'Financial Sustainability: Plan B' papers were noted to be significantly interlinked, and as such discussion on these papers was taken as one item to ensure continuity and alignment in decision-making.

The Director of Finance began by highlighting key aspects of the paper which set out the proposed budget for 2020/21 and the financial plan to 2024/25. Members noted that at the time of the meeting there was material uncertainty as to the scale of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on University finances, especially in relation to international student number projections. The first three years of the plans presented were proposed to form the basis of the submission to the Scottish Funding Council on 30 June 2020. The University Executive Group (UEG) would continue to iteratively develop the 5 year-plan with input from the Committee and the Court over the coming months as the COVID-19 situation changed and greater certainty emerged in relation to key assumptions.

In introducing the budget report, the Director told members that the focus to date had been on the University's response to the immediate crisis, and in particular on addressing the projected dip in finances in the 2020/21 academic year. In this respect members noted that despite mitigating actions in place, the University was projecting a deficit of £16m - largely as a result of anticipated reductions in international student recruitment. The Director went on to provide the Committee with an overview of the University's approach to modelling projections for later years. It was noted that the longer-term financial profile was extremely difficult to predict, and that changing global mobility and economic instability were expected to have an on-going impact on recruitment and

finances. This had been reflected in reductions to recruitment international student growth targets. However these would still include ambitious growth targets of 48% for new intakes and 84% overall (previously 58% and 124% respectively).

Looking at the overall projections the Committee was advised that if the outcomes were to follow those presented, the University would need to extend its revolving credit facility to meet working capital needs, but that the level of financing required was within previously discussed borrowing ranges.

The Committee went on to explore the challenges relating to rising operational costs such as pensions and with this in mind discussed the gap between the financial plan agreed in 2019 and the projections presented. Members noted that the University would need to add a further c.£5m saving target (in addition to the £15m challenge previously set) in the last 3 years of the financial plan as presented in order meet the previously agreed financial strategy targets. It was noted that the 5-year plan as presented would not lead to the achievement of finalisation sustainability for University.

The Committee was keen to ensure that the University stayed within its borrowing capabilities over the period and encouraged officers to continue their work on developing options which would address deeper structural issues and secure the future financial sustainability of the University. In this respect members noted that the University had previously defined sustainability as ‘achieving a surplus of 8% of operating cash flow within the next 8 years.’, and that the five-year plan from 2019-2024 (before taking into account the impact of COVID-19) was £11m short of that target despite the agreed savings measures. The Committee evaluated the achievability of this target in light of the new circumstances and after considering a range of possible cost-saving options which may need to be pursued to achieve this in addition to growth, the Committee recommended that the University pursue the development of proposals to meet this target. It was noted that managing risks to the University’s financial position meant it was desirable to achieve this over as short a timeframe as possible.

The Committee briefly considered the various possibilities set out in the Plan B paper and members highlighted the need to think creatively to achieve the savings, for example through the re-evaluation of future campus requirements, but the Committee recognised that there would be a need to make staff cost savings. In this respect the Director drew members’ attention to the range of tools within the University’s Redundancy Avoidance Policy, which were currently in the early stages of consideration by the UEG. The Committee noted that the UEG would review benchmarking data relating to staff numbers, staff income and staff-to-student ratios to inform judgements on how realistic cost savings would be and consider the ‘achievability’, timescales and levels of risk associated with each of the possible steps that could be taken. Following discussion members agreed that the use of compulsory redundancies should be a last resort, but at this stage could not be ruled out.

The Deputy Director of Finance then provided an overview of the details of the budget, with members noting in particular the nature and range of assumptions used. He confirmed that the details of individual school contributions were still being finalised due to the complex nature of the assumptions. In response to questions he confirmed that the increases in staff costs noted resulted from rises in pensions costs, incremental progression and an estimate of the annual pay award, but members noted that staff numbers were projected to decrease during the period due to measures already being taken. The Deputy Director also highlighted other areas in which savings were being made during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example in the running costs for buildings. Finally, members noted that the budget proposed significant cuts to the capital programme and that officers continued to pursue options to increase savings in areas other than those required for health and safety or compliance. Members highlighted the importance of continuing with the policy of restricting non-essential cash flows in the short-term and, over the longer-term period of the plan, pursue opportunities for new ways of operating in the post-COVID-19 world. Officers emphasised, however that as a result of previous underinvestment in the campus, reductions to maintenance activities in the short term needed to be balanced against their potential to lead to longer term costs and/or impact on the University’s attractiveness to potential students.

Throughout its discussions the Committee recognised the importance of taking a fair, even and evidence-based approach to cost savings. Members also noted that officers would look further at ways in which assets might be realised over the medium-to-longer term – though recognised that in relation to buildings the current market conditions could make this difficult.

In closing the item the Convener summarised the Committee’s recognition that the University faced a period of difficult decision making, but that the University Executive Group (UEG) would develop a balanced package of measures and options to improve on the budget as presented through a range of measures, including further reductions in staffing and other costs to: (1) address the shorter term (2-year) dip and keep the University within borrowing limits; and (2) provide the Court with a well-considered and prioritised list of recommendations to

address the structural financial sustainability issues within the medium (5 year) term. In this respect members noted that the UEG would continue to expand and evaluate the options in the Financial Sustainability: Plan B paper. Consequently, the Committee recommended that the Court approved the budget and 3-year plan for submission to the Scottish Funding Council, while continuing to develop a 5-year plan which targeted the achievement of the approved financial strategy.

Resolved: to note the reports and endorse the budget and 3-year plan for submission to the SFC to the Court for approval, requesting that the UEG continue to develop a 5-year plan which targeted the achievement of the approved financial strategy.

5. **RESERVED BUSINESS: BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION**

[Secretary's note: The Committee considered the item as reserved business. The University asserts that the paper is exempt from public disclosure and claims exemptions in S.30(b), 30(c) and 33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.]

6. **QUARTER 3 ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received the Quarter 3 Management Accounts and noted that the forecast remained ahead of budget but that there had been an adverse movement of £2.4m relative to the second quarter operating forecast. As such the accounts now projected a deficit of £4.5m (excluding USS provision adjustment of +£40.4m), £1.8m ahead of budget. Cash at the end of the period was £26.1m.

In introducing the accounts the Deputy Director of Finance outlined the nature of the movements from Quarter 2, and members noted that these had been split between those due to COVID-19, and 'normal' movements to support analysis. The Committee noted that the most significant cost reductions related to the freeze on recruitment put in place by the UEG from the start of the crisis, and reductions in operating expenses due to the lockdown of the campus. The Deputy Director also drew members attention to losses in catering/sports facilities, and the impairment of BT costs.

Resolved: to note the accounts.

7. **STUDENT NUMBERS REPORT**

The Committee reviewed a paper which outlined student intake indicators and provided context to the 2020/21 student intake - including a summary of market surveys which suggested a significant increase in international students planning to defer entry to 2021/22, and those expecting that fees would be reduced if one or more semesters had to be delivered fully online. Members noted that the market was evolving rapidly and that the University would continue to closely monitor the situation, which was so critical to financial performance in 2020/21.

Resolved: to note the report and await further updates.

8. **ESTATES & CAMPUS SERVICES REPORT**

The Committee received a paper from the Director of Estates & Campus Services which set out changes to the Estates Strategy programme which had resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, capital plan amendments for the current academic year, and on-going estates issues of interest to the Committee. Members noted that the capital programme had largely been halted with the exception of reactive maintenance.

The Committee also noted that the University Executive Group (UEG) had reviewed all projects, and that the three continuing projects were ones which had either been considered to be essential for health and safety reasons, or ones where money had already been committed through pre-orders of materials. Members noted that the timelines for all projects had increased due to lockdown restrictions and that the Director would work within available budget to prioritise the delivery of a safe, compliant campus which was fit for purpose.

Returning to earlier discussions, members encouraged UEG to take all opportunities to minimise expenditure wherever possible, but to balance this with the longer-term costs of deferring works, and to be supporting of growth opportunities which may require some capital investment but could lead to additional income streams.

Resolved: to note the update.

9. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Committee reviewed a summary of the composite KPIs, and in particular individual measures where the Finance & Policy Committee was responsible for monitoring progress toward targets. The Committee reviewed the latest information on the performance measures and members agreed to advise the Director of Strategic Planning of any areas which they felt should be highlighted in the Annual Key performance Indicator Report to the Court in June.

Resolved: to note the report.

10. NARRATIVE FOR THE COURT

The Committee recommended that the Convener focus his report to the Court on matters covered in minute 4 (above) - '2020/21 budget & 5-year scenario and Financial Sustainability: Plan B'.

Resolved: to ask the Convener to highlight these discussions to the Court in his report.

11. RESERVED BUSINESS: BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION STEERING GROUP

[Secretary's note: The Committee considered the item as reserved business. The University asserts that the paper is exempt from public disclosure and claims exemptions in S.30(b), 30(c) and 33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.]

The Committee noted that the minutes from the meetings of the Business Transformation Steering Group on 26 February and 1 April 2020 had been made available to all members via the Court One-Drive area.

Resolved: to note the minutes.

12. RESEARCH GRANT APPROVALS

The Committee noted the regular report of research grant awards since the last meeting. The Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange & Wider Impact) told the Committee that until Period 8 the value of awards was significantly lower than at the same period in 2018/19, but that two large awards in period 9, with a combined value of £12m, had brought the total inline with that from 2018/19. The Committee noted the spread of awards was fairly even across UKRI Research Councils (19), UK Charity (27), UK Industry (17), UK Government (31) and other sources. The Vice-Principal also highlighted a number of COVID-19 related awards and members congratulated the research teams involved.

Resolved: to note the report.

13. PENSION SUB-GROUP MINUTES

[Secretary's note: In his capacity as a Trustee of the University of Dundee Superannuation Scheme, Dr Neale Laker declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting for the duration of this item. Dr Laker did not receive the paper for this item.]

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Pension Sub-Group on 24 March 2020. The Director of Finance updated members on discussions with the University of Dundee Superannuation Scheme (UoDSS) Trustees

and campus unions regarding the substantial deficit of the Scheme. Members noted that the Pension Sub-Group would meet later that day and that the Finance & Policy Committee would be kept informed of any recommendations from its Sub-Group.

Resolved: to approve the minutes.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved: to note that the next meeting would take place on 11 August 2020.

Richard S Bint
(Convener)

APPENDIX 4

GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES (Minute 81 (3))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 26 May 2020 by videoconference.

Present: Ronald Bowie (Convener);
Janice Aitken;
Principal, Professor David Maguire;
Bernadette Malone;
Jane Marshall; and
Professor Mairi Scott.

In Attendance: Gigi Gan (in shadow capacity as the Independent Student Member on Court elect);
Dr Neale Laker (Director of Academic & Corporate Governance);
Dr Jim McGeorge (University Secretary); and
Dr Christine Milburn (Policy Officer (Corporate Governance)).

Apologies: Rumana Kapadia;
Professor Blair Grubb (Vice-Principal (Education)).

The Convener welcomed Gigi Gan to the meeting and members noted that she was attending in a shadow capacity prior to taking up the position of Independent Student Member on Court from 1 August 2020. Members also noted that the meeting would have been the last meeting for Rumana Kapadia as the outgoing Independent Student Member on Court and the Committee asked that their thanks be recorded to her for her input to the work of the Committee over the last 2 years.

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting of 24 March 2020.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Action Log

The Committee received an action log summarising progress in relation to outstanding actions from previous meetings. An update on progress in relation to the implementation of recommendations from the Quinquennial Review of the Effectiveness of the Court (QQR) was also provided. Members highlighted areas where they believed that the assessment provided was overly critical of progress made and officers undertook to update the QQR tracker accordingly.

Resolved: to note the log.

3. CONVENER'S UPDATE

The Convener updated the Committee on his activities and interactions at a sectoral level which were of relevance to its business. The Chair highlighted his attendance at online meetings of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) and Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC) as had been reported to the first of the additional Court briefings which had taken place on 13 May 2020.

Members noted in particular the sharing of best practice in terms of the sector's response to the challenge of maintaining effective governance during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and moving to online-only interactions. The Committee praised the introduction of the monthly Court briefings from the Interim Principal and noted that officers would continue to review the operation of the Court through this period and implement supportive initiatives where possible and appropriate.

Turning to the CSC meeting, members noted that it was increasingly unlikely that additional government funding would be forthcoming to support Universities through the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and that it was therefore of vital importance that the University was able to independently achieve a financially sustainable position if it were to maintain control of its own future.

The Committee also noted that the three new Deans (Schools of Science & Engineering, Art & Design and Business) had been invited to make short presentations to Court members during a session prior to the Court meeting on 22 June 2020.

Officers encouraged members to provide feedback on the initiatives in place and indicate any further requirements that they might have. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring that there was both clarity over processes and timely sharing of top-level planning.

Resolved: to note the updates.

4. **SECTORAL UPDATE**

The Committee was content to note that the experience of the University during the COVID-19 pandemic was similar to that across the HE sector and that the focus remained on ensuring appropriate agility and flexibility within the decision-making framework provided by the Court in order that the University could quickly and effectively respond to UK and Scottish Government restrictions, financial sustainability and staffing matters resulting from the pandemic. Through discussion members however noted the expectation that the focus would shortly move to planning for the longer-term future.

The Committee briefly discussed the University's approach to considering the financial implications of COVID-19 and, noting that the Finance & Policy Committee would consider the budget and 5-year plan at its meeting later that same day, members highlighted the importance of ensuring that the Court as a whole was informed and able to constructively test the recommendation of the Finance & Policy Committee when proposals were presented in June. In particular members recommended that the Court agree a framework within which the University Executive Group could operate along with any suitable additional delegation of decision making and that it openly discuss objectives, timescale and strategic implications. The University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer told members that he expected that, given the uncertainty and rapidly changing nature of the COVID-19 challenge, the Court would be asked to consider the budget on an iterative basis over the coming 3 month period as more accurate forecasting became possible.

Turning to the newly introduced Court briefings, members proposed that in his next update it would be valuable for the Interim Principal to focus on managing Court expectations on how the Court and University Executive Group would work together over the coming month as well as providing his regular update on developments.

The Committee also asked that its recognition of the fantastic response from all staff and of the strong leadership over the last few months be noted by the Court.

Resolved: to highlight to the Court the Committee's confidence in the robustness of the governance processes at the University of Dundee

5. **ITEMS CIRCULATED FOR EMAIL CONSIDERATION**

(1) Draft Court Agenda

Resolved: Members noted this had been approved by email subject to minor re-ordering of items.

(2) Annual QASC report

The Committee welcomed the report and discussions focussed on the number of modules added during the previous 12 months and the number terminated/amended in the same period. Members also explored the University's ability to adapt to changes to the approach to teaching due to COVID-19 while maintaining the quality and academic standards of the modules. In response the Vice-Principal (Education) outlined the top-level approach to ensuring that the adaptation of modules met quality standards, including the use of external examiners, the prioritisation of module adaptation, and use of module templates to consider efficiency, workload and resourcing. Members indicated that it would be helpful if a further short report could be provided to a future meeting, building on the tables provided in the COVID-19 annex to the report and outlining changes to modules and the associated processes undertaken to maintain academic oversight of quality.

In response to questions the University Secretary confirmed that the Court would also continue to receive assurance of academic oversight through the University Executive Group (UEG) report to Court, Court briefings and the ELIR reports.

The Vice-Principal also outlined planned University-wide communications regarding timelines and expectations and members welcomed the plan for sharing these more widely across the University community.

Resolved: to note the report and recommend to the Court that it consider the quality assurance process to be robust when reviewing the annual report to the SFC on quality.

(3) Effectiveness Questionnaires

Resolved: Members endorsed the use of the survey as drafted in the 2020 reviews of the Effectiveness of the Court and the Chair of Court.

(4) Court Membership (update on Lay Recruitment)

Resolved: Members noted the updates as circulated, including the dates for shortlisting and interviews and recommended to the Court that it consider a recommendation from the panel via email circulation to enable suitable candidates to be appointed in time to attend the Court Retreat.

(5) Committee membership for 2020/21

Resolved: to endorse to the Court proposals for membership of Court Committees for the 2020/21 academic year, noting that the Committee would further review these once the lay vacancies had been filled and that it would review succession planning in relation to Committee conveners at that time.

6. **SENIOR APPOINTMENTS**

The Committee noted progress in relation to the appointment of a permanent Principal & Vice-Chancellor and noted that after a first short-listing process a number of candidates would proceed to psychometric testing and further interview. Members however noted that as a result of COVID-19 there would be delays to the overall process to enable meetings with stakeholder groups to take place.

Resolved: to note the update.

7. **NARRATIVE FOR COURT**

The Committee recommended that the Convener highlight to the Court its discussions relating to engagement with the Court over the summer period, its recommendation that the Court consider recommendations for Lay Court appointment via email over the summer, and its suggestions for the regular Court briefings.

Resolved: to note that the Convener would include these matters in his report to the Court.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved: to note that the next meeting would be held on 11 August 2020.

Ronald Bowie

Convener

APPENDIX 5

PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Minute 81 (4))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 20 May 2020.

Present: Shirley Campbell (Convener);
Dr William Boyd;
Catherine Cavanagh;
Professor Lynn Kilbride;
Rebecca Leiper;
Bernadette Malone;
Jane Marshall;
Dr William Boyd; and
Jay Surti

<u>In Attendance:</u>	Professor Julian Blow	Vice-Principal (Academic Planning & Performance);
	Claire Glancy	Executive Support Officer;
	Dr Jim McGeorge	University Secretary;
	Pamela Milne	Director of Human Resources & Organisational
		Development; and
	Julie Strachan	Deputy Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development.

Apologies: Dr David Martin

1. MINUTES

The Committee approved the minutes from the previous meeting.

Resolved: to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Action Log

The Committee noted the log of ongoing actions and progress against the target completion dates provided.

Resolved: to approve the action log as presented.

3. CONVENER'S UPDATE

The Convener began by outlining the decision to focus the agenda on COVID-19 related matters, and to defer other items to meetings later in the year or take them as read. Members noted that this was primarily to enable the Human Resources & Organisational Development Directorate to focus on urgent matters relating to the pandemic and were supportive of the approach. The Committee however also noted a number of areas where it would be important to ensure that the Committee was fully sighted and in a position to provide assurance to the Court, and suggested that if thinking in relation to these areas was sufficiently developed an additional meeting of the Committee could be held in advance of the June meeting of the Court to facilitate this. Noting challenges relating to the timing of information being made available by the Scottish/UK Governments, the rapidly changing nature of the restrictions, and the need for the University Executive Group to formulate recommendations, the Committee agreed that if time did not allow for an additional Committee meeting in advance of Court papers being issued these discussion should take place at the Court meeting where all members of the Committee would be present.

The Convener advised that at the meeting of the Chair's Committee she had been updated on discussions by the Pension Sub-Group of the Finance & Policy Committee, the UEG and an initial consultation with the Campus Unions regarding the exploration of potential changes to UoDSS benefits. Members note that an update on this would be provided at the June meeting of Court. Members were advised that to coincide with this, the Pension Subgroup would also consider the institutional position in respect of the USS scheme and its potential reform.

The Committee was informed that discussions had begun between the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development, the Court Secretariat and the respective Conveners in respect of the future alignment of the remits of the People & Organisational Development Committee and the Remuneration Committee, and that a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

Resolved: to note the update.

4. **DIRECTOR'S STRATEGIC REPORT**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development providing an update on strategic people-related developments and activity since the last meeting. Members were advised that the primary focus for the University over this period had been their response to the Covid-19 outbreak.

The Committee noted that a number of the subgroups established to deal with different aspects of the University's response to the crisis covered people-related matters. However, the main focus of such work was the Staff Sub-Group, which had been meeting on a weekly basis.

The Director advised that the health and wellbeing of staff had been the primary concern, alongside actions required to mitigate the financial impact on the University. She outlined key activities undertaken to date, including but not limited to: (a) supporting and facilitating staff working from home and associated duty of care issues; (b) identifying and putting in place arrangements for keyworkers; and (c) implementing the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furloughing) across two phases. Members were advised that to date, reported levels of Covid-19 related illness among the staff population had remained low, but that the University was following up in every case to support the staff concerned.

The Committee was advised that in continuing to manage the ongoing situation, the University was already planning for the phased return to campus, as well as reviewing the possibility that some staff would need to continue to work from home for some or all of the week for a longer period. Implications being explored included providing additional equipment as required, exploring measures to support workload management, supporting wellbeing, addressing performance management issues, and encouraging rest days.

The Committee was informed that, as part of contingency planning to mitigate the financial impact of Covid-19, UEG was now exploring a range of potential measures to reduce staff costs that could be considered, if necessary, to help secure the University's financial sustainability. The Director emphasised that this review was being guided by the University's values and its Redundancy Avoidance Policy, and that the campus unions were being consulted as appropriate. The Committee noted that an update would be provided at the June meeting of the Court once this early thinking had been progressed and there was greater clarity emerging around both the financial impact of the Covid-19 outbreak and the likely scale of action required.

The Committee was satisfied that the University was monitoring and acting to safeguard health and wellbeing of staff in a manner that aligned with Scottish and UK Government and NHS advice, and members commended the efforts of the Human Resources team during these particularly challenging and unprecedented circumstances.

The Director then provided members with an update on other key activities of the Directorate at present. Members were advised that first stage interviews for the substantive Principal & Vice-Chancellor position had been held on 7 May and that the second phase, comprising psychometric testing by an independent company was planned for June. The Committee also noted that Professor Mark Hector had agreed to extend his contract as Dean of the School of Dentistry until 31 July 2021 and Professor Inke Nathke had been appointed as interim Dean of the School of Life Sciences until 31 December 2020.

In discussion, the Committee noted the revised schedule for action planning and staff engagement around the outcomes of the 2019 staff survey as endorsed at the April meeting of Court.

Resolved: to note the update.

5. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

(i) Minutes from the Meeting of 30 April

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the meeting of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee on 30 April.

(ii) Annual Report

The Committee reviewed the annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) report which outlined key University activities undertaken to advance the institutional EDI agenda. In doing-so, members noted that while two Schools had not yet received Athena Swan accreditation, both Schools had made and continued to make considerable progress towards doing so and, more generally, to advance the University's Equality and Diversity agenda within their areas.

Resolved: to note the update.

6. TRANS INCLUSION POLICY

The Committee reviewed a draft institutional trans inclusion policy and noted the consultation process undertaken in its development, including with staff networks, campus unions and the Stonewall Organisation. The Committee recognised the importance of the policy and welcomed the draft. Members made a number of observations and suggestions for enhancement and further development, asking in particular that issues around the use of sports facilities and changing rooms be further considered.

Resolved: to endorse the policy for submission to the June meeting of Court, subject to further consultation and refinement.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY

(1) Health, Safety & Welfare Sub-committee Minutes

The Group reviewed and approved the minutes from the meeting of the Health, Safety & Welfare Sub-committee on 27/04/2020.

(2) Health, Safety & Welfare Annual Report

The Group reviewed the annual Health, Safety & Welfare report which outlined the work and activities completed by Safety Services in the previous year. In doing-so, members noted that whilst overall compliance with Health & Safety training requirements was high, variation existed in completion rates at school and directorate-level. Members noted the factors causing this, such as under-reporting and local norms determined by the types of staff and the frequency of their engagement with the University. The Committee was advised that University was exploring options to improve the University's ability to provide more frequent information on completion rates by individuals to Deans and Directors, which it was considered was central to enhancing core staff completion levels.

Resolved: to note the update.

8. COURT NARRATIVE

The Committee agreed that the Convener should highlight the following matters to the Court at its meeting on 22 June: the Committee's discussion on the University's management of the COVID-19 crisis; the update provided on

senior staff appointments and the Committee's discussion of the early exploration of benefit changes to the UoDSS pension.

Resolved: to note the update.

9. **UNIVERSITY STRATEGY TO 2022: PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The Committee noted an update from the Director of Strategic Planning outlining performance measures in respect of delivery of the University Strategy to 2022.

Resolved: to note the update and to encourage members to provide feedback to the Director.

10. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Acknowledging that it was the current Convener's last formal meeting in the role, the Committee thanked her for her outstanding service to both the People & Organisational Development Committee and the Court.

Resolved: to thank the current Convener for her service to the People & Organisational Development Committee and the Court.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved: Thursday 29 October 2020.

Shirley Campbell
Convener

APPENDIX 6

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MINUTES (Minute 81 (5))

A meeting of the Committee was held on 18 May 2020 via TEAMS online meeting.

Present: Bernadette Malone (Convener);
Richard Bint;
Ronald Bowie;
Shirley Campbell;
Rumana Kapadia; and
Sharon Sweeney.

In Attendance: Professor David Maguire (Principal & Vice-Chancellor) by invitation of the Convener;
Dr Jim McGeorge (University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer) by invitation of the Convener;
Pam Milne (Director of HR and Organisational Development) by invitation of the Convener;
and
Dr Christine Milburn (Policy Officer (Corporate Governance)).

1. MINUTES

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meetings of the Committee on 11 December 2019 and 25 February 2020.

2. MATTERS ARISING

(1) Action Log

The Committee received the action log and noted the updates provided. The Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR & OD) advised that the University had prioritised its response to COVID-19 and that as a result a number of items on the action log had been delayed. Members however noted that these items, including the development of a process and timeline for the introduction of Grade 10 Banding, would be progressed as soon as was practical.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that a possible additional meeting of the should be planned for September/October to take forward items on the action log if circumstances allowed. Members also agreed that the University Executive Group (UEG) be invited to prepare a paper for that additional meeting setting out the wider context for the 2020/21 remuneration round, including the challenging financial environment for the Higher Education Sector and options/recommendations in light of this.

Resolved:

- (i) to note the updates and ask officers to plan a possible additional meeting of the Committee in September/October 2020; and
- (ii) to ask the UEG to prepare a report for the additional meeting of the Committee setting out the wider context for, and recommendations relating to, the 2020/21 remuneration round.

(2) Annual Remuneration Report to Court

The Convener confirmed that the Annual Report from the Remuneration Committee had been considered by the Court at its meeting on 25 February 2020. The Convener also confirmed that she would provide a contextual report to the Local Joint Committee (LJC) before the end of the academic year.

Resolved: to note the submission of the Annual Report to the Court.

(3) Benchmarking Data

The Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR & OD) confirmed that the consideration of the procurement of additional benchmarking data had been deferred due to COVID-19 delays and would now be provided within the University Executive Group report requested in 2(1) above.

Resolved: to note the update.

3. **CONVENER'S UPDATE**

The Convener outlined her discussions with the Convener of the People & Organisational Development (POD) Committee, the incoming Convener of POD Committee, the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer (University Secretary & COO) and the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR & OD) regarding the remits for the Remuneration and POD Committees. It was noted that a proposal was being developed for consideration by the Court at the Court Retreat and would be circulated to the Committees prior to that.

The Convener also highlighted her appointment to the UCEA Scottish Committee, with her first meeting scheduled for 1 June 2020.

Resolved: to note the updates and await the circulation of a revised remit.

4. **SECTORAL UPDATE**

The Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR & OD) highlighted areas of focus within meetings of UCEA, the Scottish HR Directors Group and the Wesley Group HR Directors. Members welcomed the sharing of practice across these groups to support the University's response to COVID-19. The Director also advised members that the 2021 national pay negotiations had been paused.

Resolved: to note the updates.

5. **REVIEW OF REMIT AND TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SEVERANCE POLICY**

The Committee noted that the Governance & Nominations Committee had asked that the Remuneration Committee review its Remit & Terms of Reference following the publication of the SFC report into its investigation of payments to the out-going Principal of Aberdeen University.

Members considered the report and an accompanying analysis provided by the University Secretary & COO, and were reassured to note specific provisions within the University's Schedule of Delegation & Decision-Making Powers, Severance Policy, and Remit & Terms of Reference for the Committee which would make it unlikely for the University to find itself in similar circumstances. The Committee noted and provided feedback on a range of changes proposed in the analysis to the University's Severance Policy and the Remit & Terms of Reference of the Committee which would enhance practice and remove ambiguity regarding the intentions of these documents.

Discussions focused on the importance of transparency, consistency across the documentation, and clarity of interpretation by members of the Committee. Members also suggested that the Financial Memorandum with the SFC and Annual Accounts Direction from the SFC be provided to them annually to ensure that all members were sighted on expectations.

Resolved: to endorse the changes proposed subject to the amendments proposed to the Remit & Terms of Reference (Annex 1) and the Severance Policy (Annex 2).

6. **UNIVERSITY STRATEGY TO 2022: PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The Committee received a summary from the Director of Strategic Planning which set out the status of composite KPIs previously approved by the Court. While none of the measures which made up the composite KPIs had been

assigned to the Remuneration Committee for monitoring, the Committee was invited to review the performance measure data within the dashboard and highlight to the Director any areas which they felt should be discussed within the Annual Report to the Court.

Resolved: to provide feedback to the Director of Strategic Planning as appropriate.

7. NARRATIVE FOR COURT

The Committee recommended that the Convener highlight to the Court the sectoral updates, the Committee's discussions relating to the People & Organisational Development and Remuneration Committee remits, and changes proposed to its Remit & Terms of Reference and the University's Severance Policy following consideration of the SFC report into payments to the former Principal of the University of Aberdeen.

Resolved: to note that the Convener would highlight these areas in her report to the Court.

8. RECRUITMENT OF A NEW PRINCIPAL & VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Chair of Court advised members on progress in relation to the appointment of a new Principal & Vice-Chancellor and members noted that in accordance with discussions at the meeting of the Court on 9 December 2019, an additional meeting of the Remuneration Committee would be held in due course to consider the remuneration package for the successful candidate, within parameters to be approved by the Court.

Resolved: to note the update.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 8 December 2020, but that an additional meeting had been requested under item 2(1) above.

Resolved: to note the date and that an additional meeting would be scheduled as discussed in item 2(1) above.

APPENDIX 6 ANNEX 1

REMIT & TERMS OF REFERENCE

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE UNIVERSITY COURT

Remuneration Committee

Remit, Terms of Reference and Membership

1. Purpose of the Remuneration Committee
2. Context
3. Composition of the Remuneration Committee
4. Key Responsibilities
5. Core Values
6. Support for the Remuneration Committee
7. Meetings of the Remuneration Committee
8. Delegated Authority
9. Governance

Appendix – Framework of Information for the Remuneration Committee

1. Purpose of the Remuneration Committee

The role of the Remuneration Committee is to recommend to the University Court the remuneration strategy and policy framework for Professorial and Grade 10 staff, including the Principal and the University Executive Group (UEG). In so doing, the Committee's aim is to be an exemplar of sector-wide good governance and best practice in relation to remuneration, reward matters and any termination arrangements (severance), for senior staff.

The Committee will report to the Court on decisions regarding the salary, emoluments and terms and conditions of service for the members of the UEG.

The approval of severance terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor on receipt of recommendations from the Remuneration Committee are matters reserved to the Court under the Schedule of Delegation. In this case 'substantial' shall be taken to mean anything exceeding the standard annual remuneration payment award for 'exceptional performance' as applied to Grade 10 awards

The Committee will delegate authority to the UEG the application of the Remuneration Policy and Procedure for all other staff at grade 10, but will receive and consider appropriate reports and monitoring data from the UEG in relation to its decisions in discharging this delegated authority.

In so doing, the Committee must:

- take account of SFC's guidance on the governance of senior salaries, including the requirements of [the Financial Memorandum with the SFC](#) and having due regard to Value for Money (VfM).
- take account of the requirements for reporting to the External Auditor and recommendations from the Internal Auditor.
- in regard to decisions around severance, act in a manner consistent with the requirements of the University's Severance Policy
- give due regard to the academic, institutional and financial wellbeing of the University.
- ensure the University's principles of fairness, equality, diversity and inclusion are applied and monitored.
- ensure that the Principal, the members of the UEG and staff at grade 10 are fairly rewarded for their individual contribution to the University's overall performance.
- ensure compliance with the financial parameters within which the Committee and the UEG must operate when making salary/monetary awards, approving 'other paid work', for example consultancy payments or considering severance/termination arrangements.
- satisfy itself that the grade 10 staff who have been made salary/monetary awards have actively engaged in the University's Objective-setting & Review process and demonstrate performance which supports the University's Vision and Strategy .
- fulfil its duties as outlined in the Schedule of Delegation.

2. Context

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requires that the University follows the principles of its Financial Memorandum, the Financial Reporting Council's *UK Corporate Governance Code* (FRC Code), insofar as they apply to the University sector and the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance 2017. The University is also required to follow the guidance to institutions set out by the Committee of University Chairs in its Guide for *Members of Higher Education Bodies in the UK* (CUC Guide).

These guides require the University to establish a Remuneration Committee to determine and review the salaries, terms and conditions (and, where appropriate, severance payments) of the head of the institution and such other members of staff as the governing body deems appropriate. They also make recommendations regarding the composition of the Committee.

The University is required to adhere to the principles of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance (2017), specifically under paragraphs 78-81 on Remuneration Committees.

The CUC Guide states that the reports of the Remuneration Committee to the governing body should provide sufficient detail of the broad criteria and policies against which decisions have been made. However, the FRC Code requires the production of a tabulated report setting out Directors' remuneration (i.e. members of UEG in the University context), covering salary, severance payments, benefits in kind etc. This report on the remuneration of UEG members is presented each year to the Remuneration Committee and to the University Court. In addition, a simplified version setting out the salaries of members of the UEG by salary band is published each year in the University's Annual Report and Accounts. The SFC imposes specific requirements on Remuneration Committees in respect of setting policy statements on severance and overseeing severance arrangements, which are covered in this remit and also in the University's Severance Policy. The [SFC annual accounts direction](#) also gives guidance on the information that should be disclosed in an institution's annual financial statements about the Principal's remuneration and any severance payments to staff earning over £70,000 per annum or where the costs of all elements of a proposed arrangement amount to more than £100,000. The Committee should also be aware of the role of the External Auditor in this respect.

3. Composition of the Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee must have the expertise to review and determine the salaries, emoluments and terms and conditions of service for the most senior members of the University (i.e. the Principal and the UEG) and to monitor the application of the Remuneration Policy to ensure it is being applied fairly, effectively and consistently, in the University's interests. In the interests of equity, the Remuneration Committee should aim as far as possible to have a diverse membership in relation to the Protected Characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

The membership of the Committee will comprise:

- The Chair of Court.
- Three lay members of Court, one appointed as Convener. The Convener of the Audit Committee will not normally be a member.
- One staff member of Court;
- One student member of Court;
- The Committee may seek independent advice as may be required from time to time.

The quorum of the Remuneration Committee will be five.

The following University Officers will be invited to be in attendance of meetings to be held to account for the decisions taken at previous stages within their area of responsibility, and otherwise to provide advice, guidance, and answer questions when requested:

- The Principal.
- The Vice-Principal (Provost).
- The University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer.
- The Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development, (Secretary to the Committee)
- The Policy Officer (Corporate Governance), (Minute Secretary)

The University Officers in attendance will withdraw from the appropriate sections of any meeting at which their personal salary, emoluments and/or terms and conditions of service or those of their peers are being discussed by the Remuneration Committee.

In addition, a separate meeting of the Committee will be convened to consider the salary and other terms & conditions of the Principal, which require to be discussed. The Principal will not attend this meeting.

The following skills/experience are particularly valued by the Committee

- General understanding of, and commitment to, good governance;
- Experience or qualifications relating to Human Resources matters;
- Experience in reward and remuneration strategies and their application;
- Experience of performance management systems;
- Experience of the operation of appraisal systems;
- Experience of employee engagement/stakeholder consultation, ideally with staff and students;
- Understanding of the broader political, media, and governance environment relating to senior pay across the public and private sector;
- Awareness of sector-wide legislation and requirements relating to remuneration;
- Knowledge/experience and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion legislation and approaches;

In addition, the following abilities and attributes would be valued

- Ability to challenge based on material and data presented;
- Ability to interpret the Committee's remit within the wider context of the University Strategy; and

The above skills should be covered by the Committee as a whole, with individual skill-sets contributing towards this.

4. Key Responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the Remuneration Committee are:

- To maintain an overview of good practice in remuneration in the HE sector, other public and private sectors to inform the University's Remuneration Policy.
- To approve the University's remuneration strategy and policy framework that ensures the most talented leaders, both academic and professional, are recruited, retained and motivated to deliver results in line with the University's vision and strategy.
- To review the Remuneration Policy for Grade 10 staff at least every 3 years to ensure its effectiveness in terms of impact and compatibility with the salary arrangements applicable to the rest of the University.
- To approve the design of any incentives and bonuses applicable to grade 10 staff.
- To review and determine the total reward package of the Principal taking account of performance, and to report accordingly to Court. To oversee contracts of employment for senior staff in accordance with the provisions of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance Section 7:81.
- To review and determine the total reward package of members of the UEG taking account of performance and report accordingly to Court.
- To seek the views of representatives of students and staff of the Institution, including representatives of recognised trade unions, in relation to the remuneration of the Principal and the UEG.
- To oversee and report to Court on the outcomes of the delegation of responsibility to the UEG for reviewing and determining any annual salary increases and awards to those grade 10 staff of the University who are not members of the UEG.
- To review any gender pay gap for grade 10 staff and be informed of any necessary actions.
- To make recommendations to the Court on matters relating to severance terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, noting that the approval is a matter reserved to the Court.
- To approve severance or early retirement arrangements for members of the UEG, with the exception of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, taking account of the University's Severance Policy and the *SFC Guidance on Severance Arrangements in respect of Senior Staff* and reporting on any such cases to the next available Court meeting.
- To oversee and report to Court annually on the outcomes of the delegation of responsibility to the UEG for the approval of severance terms for Grade 10 staff outwith the UEG membership. To consider requests by UEG members, to undertake consultancy; other paid work or serve as a non-executive director or similar having due regard to issues which could adversely impact the University.

- To review the Deans' Honoraria periodically as necessary.
- To deal with any such other relevant matters as may be referred to the Remuneration Committee by Court.

5. Core Values

The core values of the University:

- Valuing people
- Working Together
- Integrity
- Making a Difference
- Excellence

must be central to all the processes and decisions made leading up to and at the Remuneration Committee.

- Merit (defined as clear contribution to the Vision and Strategy of the University), including the retention of key employees and the need to address any pay gap issues arising from an analysis of protected characteristics, will be the only basis on which remuneration awards will be distributed.
- Fairness, equality and diversity. No discrimination will be permitted arising from a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Any conflicts of interest throughout the process, leading up to and at the Remuneration Committee must be declared and action taken to rectify the situation.

6. University Strategy to 2022

The Strategy to 2022 supports the core purpose, vision and values of the University. It has committed the University to being a high performance community through a multi layered approach, which includes;

- Advancing our values
- Enabling our people to flourish and
- Enhancing university performance and reputation

Reward which recognises contribution and commitment across these and other areas of the Strategy supports its delivery of these and the Remuneration Committee has a responsibility to ensure that is inherent in the process.

7. Support for the Remuneration Committee

In undertaking these responsibilities the Committee will receive support from the Principal, University Secretary, Director of Finance and the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development.

It will be provided in the form of a report, co-ordinated by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, including information on:

- Background information in respect of the HE sector and the University's position contextualised within the overview, together with the University's strategy.
- Contextualisation of the School or Directorate's performance within the University by the UEG.
- The current and projected financial position of the University; the recommended budget to be allocated for grade 10 awards and the recommended financial value to be assigned according to performance rating (see Reward Policy).
- Relevant benchmarking salary data for the sector provided by UCEA covering both academic and senior professional staff.
- Any relevant retention issues.
- The recommended spread of financial awards across performance ratings.
- Proposed awards for individuals taking account of the above.
- An Equality Impact Assessment analysis of the statistical data relating to the full group of senior staff; those nominated and not; those successful and unsuccessful together with an explanatory narrative, with particular attention being paid to any indication of a gender or other pay gap.

This information will take the form of a report as shown in Appendix 1.

In addition, the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development will produce an Annual Remuneration Report for Court detailing the outcomes of the decisions taken by both the Remuneration Committee and the UEG, including an anonymised statistical report.

Where considered necessary, the Remuneration Committee may commission research and information externally and/or independent scrutiny and challenge, in order to ensure the University is an exemplar of 'best practice' in terms of governance, policy and process.

The University will support training and development for the members of the Remuneration Committee to ensure members are well-informed and up-to-date with remuneration matters.

8. Meetings of the Remuneration Committee

The arrangements for meetings of the Remuneration Committee are as follows.

- Typically, the Committee will meet in November and February of each year. An additional meeting can be arranged if considered necessary by the Committee. As with the Court, notice of no less than 7 days shall normally be given for such additional meetings, although by exception this may be waived in the case of urgent/emergency business with the full agreement of the Committee.
- Minutes, agendas and papers will normally be circulated to the Committee and attendees at least five working days in advance of the meeting.
- A formal minute of the meeting will be produced for approval by the Convener and remitted to Court as a report of each meeting.
- The Committee will be serviced by the Policy Officer (Corporate Governance).
- Papers will include any action required and the status of the paper in respect of Freedom of Information legislation.

9. Delegated Authority

Within the Schedule of Delegation the Court has delegated authority to the Remuneration Committee as follows, subject to appropriate reporting:

- Approval of annual remuneration decisions relating to members of the UEG and severance/early retirement agreements, subject to the terms of the Severance Policy;
- Approval of annual remuneration of the Principal, noting that the approval of severance terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor is a matter reserved to the Court on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee. In this case 'substantial' shall be taken to mean anything exceeding the standard annual remuneration award for 'exceptional performance' as applied to Grade 10 awards;

It is normal practice when appointing the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer, or Vice-Principals, for the Court to delegate authority to the Remuneration Committee to agree the remuneration package for the appointment within a range set in advance by the Court.

Approval of requests by the UEG for members of the UEG to undertake consultancy work, other paid work or serve as a non-executive director, or similar, where remuneration exceeds £5,000 or where the Principal judges there to be a significant reputational risk, conflict of interest or significant time commitment has been delegated to the Committee.

The Court has delegated authority to the University Executive Group for the approval of requests by the Grade 10 staff (other than the UEG itself) to undertake consultancy work, other paid work or serve as a non-executive director, or similar, where remuneration exceeds £5,000. Guidance may be sought from the Remuneration Committee in instances where the UEG considers there to be a significant reputational risk, conflict of interest or significant time commitment.

10. Governance

Details of the salaries and other appropriate remuneration information will be published annually relating to the following officers who are members of the UEG:

- The Principal
- The Vice-Principals
- The Director of Finance
- The University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer
- The Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development
- The Director of External Relations.

Appendix**University of Dundee
Information for the Remuneration Committee**

1. Background information in respect of the HE sector and the University's position contextualised within the overview, together with the University's strategy.
2. Contextualisation of the School or Directorate's performance within the University by the UEG.
3. The current and projected financial position of the University; the recommended budget to be allocated for grade 10 awards and the recommended financial value to be assigned according to performance rating (see Reward Policy).
4. Relevant benchmarking salary data for the sector provided by UCEA covering both academic and senior professional staff.
5. Any relevant retention issues.
6. The recommended spread of financial awards across performance ratings (see Reward Policy).
7. Proposed awards for individuals taking account of the above.
8. An Equality Impact Assessment analysis of the statistical data relating to the full group of senior staff; those nominated and not; those successful and unsuccessful together with an explanatory narrative, with particular attention being paid to any indication of a gender or other pay gap.

APPENDIX 6 ANNEX 2

SEVERANCE POLICY

Contents

1. Background
 2. Introduction
 3. Severance Policy
 4. Aims of the Severance Policy
 5. Scope
 6. The Principles of Fairness, Equity, Consistency and Transparency
 7. Voluntary Severance
 8. Mutually agreed severance
 9. Replacement of Posts
 10. Pension
 11. Re-employment or Re-engagement with the University
 12. Approval Process
 13. Governance
 14. Reporting
 15. Confidentiality
 16. Poor Performance
 17. Personal Considerations
 18. Delegated Authority
- Appendix 1 – Application for Approval of Settlement Agreements Form

1. Background

The University is required to comply with the [Scottish Funding Council's Financial Memorandum](#) with Higher Education (2014) which states that the University must have a Severance Policy. This policy is produced in response to that requirement.

2. Introduction

Severance can describe a variety of termination arrangements related to the contract and relationship between an employer and an employee.

For the purposes of this policy, the focus will be on:

- **Voluntary Severance (VS)**
- **Mutually agreed severance**
 - **In the case of dispute**
 - **Instigated by Protected Conversation where there is no dispute.**

3. Severance Policy

The University of Dundee is committed to maintaining, as far as possible, security of employment for its employees.

However, there may be occasions when external or internal factors impact on the type or number of employees required and the University may have recourse to VS.

There may also be cases where both the University and the individual employee are in mutual agreement that it would be beneficial for the employment relationship to be ended.

For the avoidance of doubt, if any payment is outwith the University's standard contractual terms and obligations and may be perceived as a severance payment it must be subject to the terms of this Policy.

4. Aims of the Severance Policy

The Severance Policy aims to ensure that all employees will be treated fairly and the process applied is transparent, objective, rational and fully understood.

The policy provides an operating framework, which will ensure that the University does not use its funds (which include public funds) wastefully by making over-generous severance arrangements.

It aims to set out the University's approach to the use of severance, which is appropriate, consistent with good practice, transparent, fair, defensible and represents value for money when balanced against alternative courses of action.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the University. It should be noted, however, that there may be financial, resource and/or other imperatives at any particular time, which means that VS and/or mutually agreed severance may require to be varied. Nevertheless, the University's aims and principles set out in this policy will apply as far as is practical and appropriate.

6. The Principles of Fairness, Equity, Consistency and Transparency

Fairness of treatment amongst employees is central to the University's core values of Integrity and Valuing People and is an essential requirement when considering severance for individuals.

The principle of equity will be applied to ensure that no employee will be disadvantaged due to any protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex or sexual orientation.

Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that no additional benefits or enhancements (financially or otherwise) are extended to employees who have either meritorious records or employees where the University is eager to terminate the employment relationship.

Such circumstances can result in unintended bias and could result in, for example, direct or indirect age discrimination. Any departure from this framework for severance payments/benefits must be shown to be *objectively justified* by demonstrating that the action taken is a *proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim* for the University.

This policy recognises the entitlement of the employee to exercise their statutory rights.

7. Voluntary Severance (VS)

From time to time, the University may seek expressions of interest in VS in order to reduce employee numbers and/or to reshape the workforce either across the University or in specific areas of the University for the purpose of corporate development, efficiencies and financial sustainability.

The University will utilise VS when it considers it appropriate, for a specified period. It does not operate an open-ended VS scheme for which employees may ask to be considered. On each occasion where there is a need for employee reductions and/or to reshape resources, the University will consult with the campus unions and consider VS as an option. The financial position of the University will determine whether or not VS is viable.

No eligibility restrictions will apply on the basis of length of service.

The right will be reserved to decline applications for VS where they are not in the University's interest or where a severance date cannot be mutually agreed.

The cost saving that must accrue to the University and the recovery period of the cost of VS payments for the Scheme will be determined in advance of VS being launched. A maximum period of 2 years is allowed to recoup the cost of VS but the duration may be shorter.

Whilst the VS payment offered may be considerably lower, the total VS payment should not exceed one year's salary/with a maximum ceiling of £100,000 (see section 13 – Governance). Salary will be calculated only on contractual salary

components, awarded by the University. Due to the circumstances of the severance, the employee will benefit from the first £30,000 being tax-free. This is subject to change in employment legislation and HMRC guidelines.

VS will be executed by means of a legally binding Settlement Agreement,

The University will offer a contribution to the individual's solicitor's fees to ensure the employee obtains independent legal advice. The contribution will be reviewed periodically and announced when launching a VS scheme.

There is no general right of appeal against any refusal to grant a VS application. Where an employee considers that their request has not followed policy or has been dealt with unfairly, they will be entitled to follow the Grievance Procedure.

8. Mutually agreed severance

Situations can arise where both parties (employer and employee) agree that to continue the employment relationship would be unproductive. In such circumstances, a formal Settlement Agreement may be negotiated.

The University's offer should be reasonable, bearing in mind the responsibility the University negotiator has for the University's (including public) funds and should not exceed any maximum settlement amount outlined in the Policy or agreed by the Remuneration Committee.

The Settlement Agreement will specify the negotiated sum of money paid to the employee by the University, normally based on the notice period payment, but will take account of circumstances and risk.

Salary will be calculated only on contractual salary components, awarded by the University and generally, the practice is to agree a global figure. Due to the circumstances of the severance, under current legislation, the employee will benefit from the first £30,000 being tax-free. This is subject to change in employment legislation and HMRC guidelines.

Mutually agreed severance will be executed by means of a legally binding Settlement Agreement.

The University will offer a contribution to the individual's solicitor's fees to ensure the employee obtains independent legal advice. The contribution will be reviewed periodically and the amount detailed in the Settlement Agreement.

9. Replacement of Posts

Typically, no replacement will be made and the post will be deleted from the School's or Directorate's establishment and budget. If a replacement or reconfigured role is required this must be requested at the time of the application for approval of the settlement agreement.

10. Pension

Any pension to which the employee is entitled will not be augmented by the University. It will only be enhanced if the individual elects to direct part of their Settlement Agreement payment to supplementing their pension. This is matter between the individual and their pension scheme.

11. Re-employment or Re-engagement with the University

The Settlement Agreement states that individuals in receipt of a settlement payment will not be considered for re-employment or re-engagement, including on a consultancy basis, for a period of 12 months from the Termination Date otherwise they must immediately reimburse 75% of the settlement payment.

It is acknowledged, however, that there may be circumstances where it is in the University's interest, having made a settlement payment in order to reduce high recurring salary costs, to re-engage the individual on a very part-time basis, and at a considerably lower rate in order to take advantage of an aspect of their specialist knowledge.

Should such exceptional circumstances arise approval will be required from UEG.

12. Approval Process

In considering cases of VS and mutually agreed settlements for approval, the University Executive Group (UEG) must have regard to legal and regulatory compliance, propriety and value for money as well as employee relations.

All cases must be approved in advance by UEG and reported annually to the Remuneration Committee.

Where payments exceed £100k or relate to members of the UEG other than the Principal the Remuneration Committee must approve the payment in advance. All UEG level settlement agreements must be reported to the next available Court meeting with a statement of assurance that the settlement is consistent with all governance, management and HR processes.

With regard to the Principal, the Court shall be required to approve severance terms on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee

All decisions must be recorded (Appendix 1 - Application for Approval of Settlement Agreements Form).

Justification, including financial justification and Value for Money (VfM) in terms of the [Financial Memorandum with the SFC](#), will be provided to UEG as set out below. Where the case relates to a member of the University Executive Group or exceeds £100k this information shall be provided to the Remuneration Committee

Application for Approval of Settlement Agreements Form

The form will contain:

1. An explanation of the circumstances of the case, which must include a statement setting out the alternative proposals or options that were considered.
2. An assessment of the risk assessment undertaken together with details of any risk of potential litigation and likely outcome.
3. Confirmation that the relevant compliance, management and Human Resources procedures have been followed to date.
4. Proposed settlement including a breakdown of the constituent parts of the proposal, if relevant and proposed termination date.
5. An assessment of value for money offered by the proposal.
6. Any non-financial considerations.
7. Clarification in relation to the need or otherwise to replace the post-holder.

Settlements Relating to Members of UEG – including the Principal

1. For members of UEG, excluding the Principal, the Application for Approval of Settlement Agreements Form must be completed by the Principal.
2. For any settlement relating to the Principal, the Application for Approval of Settlement Agreements Form must be completed by the Chair of Court.
3. Any such applications relating to the Principal will be considered by the Remuneration Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Court.
4. Any such applications relating to other UEG members will be considered and approved by the Remuneration Committee and its decision reported to the Court at its next meeting.

13. Governance

The Role of the Remuneration Committee and Court

The Remuneration Committee's role is to ensure the existence of a University Severance Policy, which must be approved by Court.

From time-to-time, the Remuneration Committee will review the Severance Policy to ensure fitness for purpose.

The Remuneration Committee must approve, in advance, any severance payment which:

- Exceeds a threshold sum, as defined by Court (£100,000).
- Deviates from the standard severance terms approved by Court
- Applies to a member of UEG.

Where the severance package exceeds the maximum threshold agreed by Court, consultation with the SFC's Accountable Officer and external auditor requires to have taken place prior to the approval of the proposed severance package.

The Remuneration must recommend to the Court, in advance, any severance payment in relation to the Principal & Vice-Chancellor

In considering these matters, the Remuneration Committee must represent the public interest to ensure value for money and avoid any inappropriate use of public funds. Care should be taken not to approve a severance package which employees, students and the public might reasonably deem excessive.

14. Reporting

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

For the severance arrangements covered by this policy, the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR & OD) will produce an EIA analysis of the following statistical data:

Throughout the lifecycle of a VS scheme:

- the number of potential employees eligible to apply for VS.
- the number of VS applicants.
- those VS applications which have been accepted and declined.

Annually, the Director of HR & OD will also produce:

- the number and categories of employees who have received mutually agreed severance.

Particular attention will be paid to inconsistencies relating to protected characteristics in either groups.

In addition the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development will produce a final analysis and report detailing the outcomes of VS and mutually agreed severance together with any learning points that can be used to review and revise this policy as necessary.

Remuneration Committee Reporting

The Director of HR & OD will produce a report, annually in October/November, for the Remuneration Committee.

For the previous 12 months, the report will provide a synopsis of (if applicable):

- The number of VS cases granted and declined; cost savings
- Details regarding those cases approved by UEG Anonymised circumstances and rationale for extending mutually agreed severance agreements including:
 - The total amount of the severance (including all emoluments and benefits) in each case.
 - Details of the risk assessment undertaken, together with the risk of potential litigation.
 - Benchmarking data used.
 - Confirmation of compliance with governance, management and HR processes.

The Remuneration Committee will make its annual report to Court in December.

The Remuneration Committee should report any UEG level settlement agreement immediately to the next available meeting of Court.

15. Confidentiality

Any undertakings in relation to confidentiality should allow the transactions to be open to proper public scrutiny and in line with the University's Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy.

16. Poor performance

VS or a mutually agreed settlement must not be used as a means of removing poor performers from the workforce. Poor performance should be addressed through use of the Capability Procedure and there should be no perception that poor performance is being rewarded.

17. Personal Considerations

The University's ethic of Valuing People must be explicitly demonstrated when an individual's employment is being terminated.

It is essential that the communication flow between the manager/official dealing with VS or a mutually agreed severance arrangement is excellent at each stage of the process.

The employee's contribution and service should be recognised and honoured within the School or Directorate and more widely in the University where appropriate. It is acknowledged that in cases of mutually agreed severance, the relationship may be tense or difficult which makes this challenging.

In all cases, any announcement should be discussed and the content agreed with the individual.

Prior to the leaving date, it may also be appropriate to discuss the gist or text of a reference that will be given in the event of a request from a prospective employer.

18. Delegated Authority

Court has delegated authority to the Remuneration Committee for recommending a policy to Court on senior employee severance that sets out general principles regarding all severance packages.

**Approved by the University Court,
June 2019**

Other related information can be found at:

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/policiesprocedures/redundancyavoidanceagreement/>

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/policiesprocedures/redundancypolicy/>

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

Name of Employee:

Job Title:

School/Directorate:

Date of Application:

Notes on Approval Process:

The University Executive Group (UEG) must approve all applications for approval of mutually agreed settlement agreements including Voluntary Severance.

- a. **UEG** must approve all Settlement Agreements up to and including one year's salary/with a maximum ceiling of £100,000 (as approved by Court).
 - b. **The Remuneration Committee** must approve, in advance:
 - All applications which are higher than the sum approved by Court (see a. above).
 - Where the settlement sum is higher than the threshold approved by Court, the University must first consult with the SFC's Accountable Officer and the external auditor and report the discussions to the Remuneration Committee.
 - c. In the case of any settlement relating to a member of UEG, excluding the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, this form must be completed by the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, approved by Remuneration Committee and reported to the next available meeting of the Court.
 - d. In the case of any settlement relating to the Principal & Vice-Chancellor, this form must be completed by the Chair of Court and considered by the Remuneration Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Court for approval.
1. Details of the circumstances of the case and a statement setting out the proposals and alternative options considered (attach Voluntary Severance application if relevant):
 2. Assessment of risk undertaken together with the risk of potential litigation and likely outcome (following discussion with HR Officer). Not required in cases of Voluntary Severance:
 3. Confirmation that the relevant compliance, management and Human Resources procedures have been followed to date:
 4. Proposed Settlement including a breakdown of the constituent parts of the proposal, if relevant and proposed Termination Date:
 5. Assessment of value for money offered by the proposal. If Voluntary Severance, detail the period over which the savings will be recouped.
 6. Any non-financial considerations:
 7. Clarification in relation to the need or otherwise to replace the post-holder:

Signature of Dean or Director:

Date:

Signature of Vice-Principal (Provost)
or University Secretary:

Date:

Signature of Principal or
Chair of Court:

Date:

UEG/Chair of Remuneration Committee/Remuneration Committee Decision:

Date:

APPENDIX 7**REPORTS FROM THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS
(Minute 82)****UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE****COMMUNICATION FROM THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS****(Meeting of 27 May 2020)****1. REPORTING TO UNIVERSITY COURT**

The following items were selected by Senate to highlight to Court:

Senate's discussion on

- The University's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic and business recovery plans
- Complaints Handling Procedure and Safeguarding Protocol approval
- Impact of Covid-19 lockdown on research and research staff
- Delay of the Research Excellence Framework 2021
- Operation of the Annual Review of Research

2. STUDENTS' ASSESSORS ON SENATE

After due consultation with the Students' Association in accordance with Ordinance 64 and with the delegated authority of Senate, the Vice-Principal Education recommends to Court that the following are appointed as Students' Assessors on Senate, for a period of three years in the first instance:

Yvonne Evans, School of Social Sciences

Dr Anna Notaro, School of Art & Design

3. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Senatus received a written Report from the Principal.

The Principal explained that the University continued to operate in lockdown due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. He noted that staff were working from home and that the city campus remained closed other than for a small number involved in maintaining facilities or working on Covid-19 related research projects.

The Principal reported that the main examination diet had been progressing well and that there had been good feedback from students on the move to online assessment. He commended students and staff for their response to the challenges of working and studying during the pandemic lockdown period.

Senate noted that additional support and access to equipment needed for home working would be arranged for staff on a case by case basis.

The Principal explained that the University's Business Recovery Plans had been developed in detail to allow for a safe and co-ordinated return to campus on a phased basis. He emphasised that these plans would be implemented in line with prevailing guidelines issued by the relevant authorities.

The Principal reported on work to approve a University budget covering the next three years. He explained that this had been very challenging given the negative impact of the current public health situation on the University's financial sustainability, including in particular uncertainty around student recruitment, and the wider economic outlook.

The Principal reported on the decision to delay the start of Semester 1 2020-21 for three weeks to allow additional time for staff and students to prepare for any necessary changes to the provision of teaching. He acknowledged that it was likely that restrictions on travel and social distancing requirements would continue during 2020. He advised that the University would need to adapt its approach and must plan for blended or online alternatives to large group teaching to help ensure a safe campus environment.

In response to a question, the Principal agreed on the importance of ensuring the University online teaching and assessment arrangements are robust and well-resourced.

The Vice-Principal Education paid tribute to the staff in the Centre for Technology in Learning (CTIL) who had supported the University's rapid transformation to online teaching. Senate noted moves to identify Digital Champions in each School to help develop a high-quality blended learning environment in the next academic year. The Vice-Principal noted the offer of additional staff training on the practicalities and pedagogy of delivering a blended curriculum.

Members of Senate suggested that it would be helpful to circulate a specification and organogram of the Covid-19 Working Groups that had been established and the overarching governance arrangements in place.

In response to a question, the Vice-Principal Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact explained that travel related to research was usually funded through the relevant research project grant and although such travel had been curtailed during lockdown in line with government requirements, there had been no decisions taken on future funding arrangements for research travel. The Vice-Principal International concurred by noting that most academic travel in support of the international agenda was funded by the Schools. Senate noted the need for re-purposing of funds to support online activity as an alternative to international travel in the current situation.

The Senatus decided: to request that a Covid-19 Working Group Organogram is circulated, for information; and

to note the Report.

4. UNIVERSITY COURT

The Senatus received a Report from the meeting of University Court held on 28 April 2020.

Members noted that Court had established an Emergency Committee with a membership defined by category, but flexible in terms of individuals, to speed deliberation and decision-making processes in line with good governance principles during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Senate noted that some aspects of University financial activity might be considered by the Emergency Committee but that many day-to-day matters were the responsibility of the Director of Finance under the University's Schedule of Delegation.

The Senatus decided: to note the Report.

5. UNIVERSITY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Senatus received a Paper from the Vice-Principal Education and the Director of Quality & Academic Standards on the University's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Vice-Principal explained that the Paper focussed on quality assurance and academic standards issues that were considered as part of the University's rapid transition to online teaching and assessment. He outlined how Schools were asked to develop plans for alternative assessment methods in consultation with senior external examiners in line with normal expectations.

Senate noted that online assessment had been well-received by students and that Examination Boards had begun to meet to agree on student progression and award in line with normal practice.

Members noted that the No Detriment Policy had been communicated to students and Exam Boards had been provided with training and advice on how to deal with claims for mitigation in accordance with the Policy.

Senate noted that students were entitled to submit appeals in the normal way for consideration by the School. It was also noted that some academic staff had reported a degree of surprise at recommendations from Mitigating Circumstances Committees in certain individual cases. The Vice-Principal explained that the University's approach enabled Exam Board to operate on a "benefit of the doubt" basis. He advised that concerns over any part of the process should be raised with the School's Associate Dean Quality & Academic Standards, in the first instance and escalated accordingly.

In response to a question the Vice-Principal confirmed that he would seek clarification on the issue of allowing some student research data collection outside of the UK to resume according to local advice and regulations.

The Vice-Principal confirmed that the Report could be circulated to colleagues, for information.

The Senatus decided: to note the Report.

6. **HOMOLOGATION (COVID-19)**

The Senatus received details of actions taken by the Principal under the delegation of Senate powers, for homologation.

The Senatus decided: to homologate actions taken by the Principal under the delegation of Senate powers.

7. **CONVENER'S REPORTS**

The Senatus received Reports from the Conveners of Senate Committees, for information.

International Committee

The Vice-Principal International highlighted the work of the re-launched Global Partnerships office in the University.

Senate noted the ongoing development of International College Dundee (ICD) as an important and successful part of the University's international ambitions. Senate welcomed the appointment of Dr Emma Barnett as the ICD academic Link Co-ordinator.

Learning & Teaching Committee

The Vice-Principal Education highlighted the Committee's discussions on the University's response to Covid-19 in learning, teaching and assessment.

In response to a question the Vice-Principal confirmed that lessons learnt during the current crisis, including any related to module and programme approval processes, would be taken forward by the Quality & Academic Standards office.

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

DORA Implementation

The Vice-Principal Research, Knowledge Exchange & Wider Impact highlighted the Committee's resolve to take forward the institutional commitment to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). He explained that DORA signatories are expected to take action to ensure that all evaluations of research output quality are founded on clear and objective criteria and do not include a reliance on journal impact or reputation factors.

REF 2021 and Covid-19 Pandemic

The Vice-Principal outlined discussions on the delay to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 and noted the University's preference for a delay until March 2021 given the significant impact of the lockdown on research activity in some disciplines.

The Vice-Principal reflected on the research community's response to the Covid-19 emergency and the ongoing impact on research activity. Senate noted that the University had attracted £19.5m of Covid-19 related research funding to date.

He noted the concerns for research staff on fixed term contracts and reported that 20% of such staff had been furloughed under the UK Governments job protection scheme. Senate noted that the University had supported requests to external funding bodies for funded extensions where appropriate.

Members of Senate noted that some English institutions had already reopened research facilities based on their definition of what constitutes essential work. The Vice-Principal agreed that care was needed to ensure a safe return to research as part of the University's business recovery planning.

Members of Senate suggested that the impact of the pandemic lockdown on research staff might vary according to gender and other protected characteristics. The Vice-Principal agreed that equality and diversity issues must form an important part of the institutional response and indicated that he would be willing to go back to Schools for further discussions on these issues.

Annual Review of Research

The Vice-Principal outlined the results of the Annual Review of Research completed in 2020. He explained that all Schools had participated in the Review and it provided a comprehensive report on the evaluation of outputs of each member of research staff under review.

Senate noted that the vast majority of staff (92%) were deemed to have met or exceeded expectations of international excellence (equivalent to a REF 3* rating). Members noted that Schools were working on individual support plans for those staff who had not yet met the expectations on research output quality.

The Vice-Principal explained that given the need to focus on preparations for REF the Committee had discussed the possibility of running the Review as a light touch exercise this year. He reported that the ARR was designed to be proportionate and evidenced based and had enjoyed a high level of buy-in from the research community in the University.

The Vice-Principal noted that feedback from Schools via the Associate Deans had been positive. He explained that the utility of the exercise in providing clear evidence on performance had been recognised.

Members of Senate suggested that focus groups, with research staff other than the Associate Deans, might be used to gather additional feedback on the operational effectiveness of the Annual Review of Research.

Research Degree Supervisors and Students

Members of Senate asked for formal acknowledgment of the hard work of research degree supervisors and research students to progress their research projects under difficult circumstances. The Vice-Principal agreed and noted the work of Doctoral Academy staff in finding creative ways to support research students in building resilience.

The Senatus decided: to note the Reports.

8. STUDENT GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT GROUP

The Senatus received a Report from the Student Governance Oversight Group meeting held on 14 May 2020, for approval.

The Director of Academic & Corporate Governance introduced the Report and explained the need for Senate to formally approve the revised Complaints Handling Procedure and the Student Safeguarding Protocol as recommended by the Group.

Senate noted that the form of the CHP was largely mandated by the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman and approval would ensure that the University continued to fulfil its statutory obligations for complaint handling.

Senate noted that the Safeguarding Protocol had been developed to reflect the importance of student personal safety to the University community. Members noted that it took a risk-based approach to ensure that all decisions on safe-guarding were well-informed and proportionate to the specific circumstances in each case.

Members of Senate reflected on the operation of the Complaints Handling Procedure in practice. It was noted that in some cases there was a tendency for rapid escalation in the official investigative response to student concerns, when alternative actions might have proven more effective, e.g. referral to the University's Early Dispute Resolution service.

Members also reflected on the need for the University to offer guidance and support to those who become the subject of complaints. Members agreed that clear communication on outcomes on investigations were essential, especially when these involve referral or reporting to external agencies.

Members agreed on the need for staff training in this area and acknowledged the challenges involved in ensuring staff training is completed in a consistent way in all parts of the University.

The Director agreed on the importance of training and explained that all Complaint Investigators in the University had completed significant training before being asked to take on a Stage 2 investigation.

The Senatus decided: for its part, to approve (i) the revised Complaints Handling Procedure and (ii) the Safeguarding Protocol; and
to otherwise note the Report.

9. **STAFF COUNCIL (PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONS)**

The Senatus received a Report from the meeting of Staff Council of 27 April 2020, for information.

The Senatus decided: to note the Report.

10. **PROFESSORS EMERITUS**

Subject to the concurrence of Court, to confer the title of Professor Emeritus upon

Professor John Brown
Professor Paul Crocker
Professor Hassan Molana
Professor Graham Ogden
Professor Jeanette Paul

11. **HIGHER DEGREES**

(1) The Examining Committees have recommended the award of higher degrees to the candidates named in the Report (available in Box). A copy of each report is available for inspection.

(2) The Examining Committees have recommended that the PhD degree students' theses contained in the Report are revised and resubmitted (within timescale indicated).

12. **QUALITY & ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Senatus received a Report from the Quality & Academic Standards Committee meeting held on 31 March 2020.

The Senatus decided: to approve the Report.

13. **INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE**

The Senatus received a Report from the International Committee meeting held on 12 May 2020.

The Senatus decided: to approve the Report.

14. RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

The Senatus received a Report from the Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee meeting held on 7 May 2020.

The Senatus decided: to approve the Report.

15. LEARNING & TEACHING COMMITTEE

The Senatus received a Report from the Learning & Teaching Committee meeting held on 12 May 2020.

The Vice-Principal provided the following update on the production of Recipe Cards in support of online teaching:

The first Recipes will be released by Friday 5 June in My Dundee first with Eesysoft and Web Guides to follow. The following are at the top of the priority pile (based on conversations with Schools):

- Delivering a live teaching session online (Collaborate)
- Recording and delivering teaching through video (YuJa, Powerpoint, Collaborate)
- Replacing the whiteboard in a blended learning environment (online whiteboard tools, digital pens and custom setups)
- Communicating with your students (Announcements, Discussion Boards, Email and MS Teams integration)
- Attendance and engagement monitoring.

Module design workshops have already started in beta form and these will continue to be expanded. CTL are sending an email out via internal comms on Tuesday 2 June with further plans for school support.

The Senatus decided: to approve the Report.

16. SUMMARY REPORTS OF SCHOOL BOARDS

The Senatus received Summary Reports from School Boards.

The Senatus decided: to approve the Reports.

APPENDIX 8

RESEARCH GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT (Minute 85)

Academic Year 2018/19

Introduction

1. The primary objective of the Research Governance & Policy Sub-Committee is to ensure that the governance and policy context for the undertaking of research within the University is optimal. More specifically, the Sub-Committee is responsible for:
 - 1.1 reviewing governance processes and associated research and related policy extant at both University and the local level, and identifying need for improvement and development including the involvement of external stakeholders;
 - 1.2 establishing systems which accommodate the needs of good institutional governance, that are externally accountable, and which take into account the diversity of the institution's research activities;
 - 1.3 ensuring that institutional research governance processes are transparent and are well communicated throughout the University;
 - 1.4 promoting "buy-in" by facilitating dialogue and dissemination of good and consistent practice across the schools;
 - 1.5 attempting to minimize the burden of governance and policy demands on research staff commensurate with achieving high levels of internal and external confidence in the University's processes.
2. The Sub-Committee was chaired by Professor Alan Fairlamb, School of Life Sciences, in the 2018/19 academic year. [Membership of the Sub-Committee](#) includes staff from across the Schools and the primary areas of research governance activity within the institution, including the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee, Tayside Medical Science Centre (TASC) Research Governance Committee, the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and the Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals Committee. The Sub-Committee normally meets three times during each academic year and reports to the University Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) with the minutes of its meetings included with RKEC papers.
3. This report summarises the activities of the Sub-Committee, and associated research integrity initiatives, during academic year 2018/19.

Summary of Sub-Committee Business

4. The Sub-Committee considered a range of issues in the reporting period including: the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment; the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee Research Integrity report; the consultation on revisions to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity; the reporting of clinical trials; potential errors or misconduct in research highlighted through PubPeer; potential refinements to the University's research misconduct policy; record keeping for biological agents; open access to the results of publicly-funded research; policies governing the use of human tissue; and business transformation in relation to a proposed new online ethics review system. A number of these areas are expanded on below along with actions and activities that support the University's commitment to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and a summary of the annual reports from the areas of research governance across the University that report to the Sub-Committee.

San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment

5. The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) comprises a set of recommendations designed to improve how the output of research is evaluated by funders, academic institutions and other parties. By adding their names to the Declaration, signatories indicate their support for the adoption of the recommendations. These include avoiding the use of journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, in assessing an individual scientist's contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions. In other words, the content of a publication is more important than publication metrics or the identity of the journal in which it was published. Funders, such as the Wellcome Trust, are increasingly adopting these principles when assessing research outputs for funding decisions and asking funded-organisations to commit to the principles.

6. The former College of Life Sciences (now School of Life Sciences) had previously signed and implemented the Declaration but the University as an institution had not. In January 2019, the Sub-Committee agreed that the University should indicate its support for the principles in the Declaration by becoming a signatory and recommended this course of action to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC). RKEC agreed the University should endorse the Declaration in February 2019 and this was subsequently endorsed by Senate. The Vice-Principal for Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact signed the Declaration on behalf of the University in June 2019. Consistent with the University's position as a signatory, REF Groups involved in the selection of outputs were instructed not to use journal impact factors or any hierarchy of journals in their assessment of outputs in the University's [REF 2021 Code of Practice](#). Further work on implementing the principles of the Declaration will start in academic year 2019/20.

Concordat to Support Research Integrity

7. The actions and activities reported below aim to facilitate the development of a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers (consistent with commitment 3 of the Concordat).
8. **Researcher Training:** The University provides online research integrity training, *Responsible and Ethical Practice in Research and Publication*, for both staff and students. All postgraduate research students registered from 1 August 2016 onwards are required to complete the training prior to their upgrade review. The training underwent further review in the 2018/19 academic session with a significant revision of the section on data protection to incorporate new legislation and other minor updates started, including re-recording of a few small areas in response to the changing external environment. The updates will be released in the 2019/20 session to enable them to be aligned to the requirements of the revised version of the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) (published late 2019). The training is supplemented by annual face-to-face workshops for staff and postgraduate research students provided by an external consultant and School-level activities led by Research Integrity Leads and Advisors (see below).
9. Nine other higher education institutions were using the resource under license from the University of Dundee in the 2018/19 academic year and will also receive the updates once completed.
10. **Research Integrity Leads and Advisors:** At University-level, the member of staff with responsibility for overseeing research integrity is the Convener of the Research Governance & Policy Sub-Committee. At School level, the system of Research Integrity Leads and Advisors introduced in the 2017/18 academic session became further embedded with a second interactive full-day training session taking place in March 2019. This provided an opportunity for new and existing Leads/Advisors to receive an update on research integrity and publication ethics; engage in case study group activity to inform training at a local level; explore different ways to use and adapt case studies; and discuss the research integrity landscape from the perspectives of different disciplines. Research Integrity Leads and Advisors come together as a University-wide Research Integrity Group about three times a year to discuss their experiences and share best practice.
11. Research Integrity Leads and Advisors are not intended to be a substitute for Line Managers, supervisors and colleagues in the promotion of good research practice but rather to provide an independent point of contact and source of advice for staff and students who would rather speak, at least in the first instance, to someone outside their immediate research environment. The aim is to create a supportive environment for staff and students to obtain impartial advice on the responsible conduct of research and any issues concerning them, including the reporting of potential research misconduct. Should a member of staff or student perceive that the Research Integrity Lead/Advisors from their own School have a conflict of interest in the matter they wish to discuss, they may instead approach a Research Integrity Lead or Advisor from another School.
12. **Research Ethics Procedures:** Following an ongoing review of the non-clinical research ethics procedures introduced in August 2016, a significant enhancement to the application and guidance materials was completed and made available to staff and students online between January and April 2019. In addition to revisions to existing checklists, forms and guidance, the following new materials were introduced: guidance for researchers on which activities do and do not require ethical approval (to supplement the existing checklist); additional guidance on data management (incorporating the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation); procedure for best practice in ethical review and approval of research projects involving the use of human tissue from healthy volunteers; reviewer checklists for both low risk and medium/high risk projects; procedures for post-approval requests for amendments or extensions; procedures for appeals against decisions made by a School Research

Ethics Committee (SREC) or the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC); and participant information sheet and consent form templates/guidance¹.

13. **Research Governance and Policy Handbook:** The [Research Governance and Policy Handbook](#) is designed to assist staff and students in identifying and locating the correct policy and governance procedures to ensure the responsible conduct of proposed research within the University. The handbook includes: a policy roadmap that details the policies that should be read and understood before undertaking a research project; research ethics procedures; information on the Concordat to Support Research Integrity; information on and contacts for Research Integrity Leads and research integrity training; and policies governing research misconduct and whistleblowing. The previously separate UREC website was integrated into the handbook in the reporting period. A 'Governance and Policy' panel was also included as one of six key areas on the University's research landing page during the reporting period to increase the visibility of this area both internally and externally; this links directly to the Research Governance and Policy Handbook.
14. **Scottish Research Integrity Network (SRIN):** During the reporting period the University of Dundee and the University of Edinburgh began collaboration on an initiative to set up a Scottish Research Integrity Network to share knowledge and best practice, including drafting a remit for the network and liaising with colleagues in other Scottish institutions to gauge interest. The initiative attracted significant interest from other institutions, culminating in the first meeting of the network being scheduled for November 2019 (further information on this will be provided in the report for academic year 2019/20).
15. The University provided a response to the consultation on the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity in April 2019.

Reporting of Clinical Trials Results

16. The report for academic year 2017/18 detailed actions taken to rectify the backlog in reporting of clinical trials results. Led by the Director of R&D (NHS Tayside), a Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine & Therapeutics in the School of Medicine and a member of the Sub-Committee, this included the appointment of a Trials Registry Officer. These actions were reflected in a key paper on compliance with the requirement to report results on the EU Clinical Trials Register in the British Medical Journal² which listed the University of Dundee as the university with the highest proportion of trials reported (82%), whilst reporting that non-commercial trials sponsors such as universities have particularly low reporting rates overall. This relatively high compliance rate was also reported in the subsequent [House of Commons Science and Technology Committee report on clinical trials transparency](#). The Director of R&D (NHS Tayside) was invited to give presentations on increasing clinical trials transparency and compliance at the Universities UK Research Integrity Forum in April 2019 and the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) conference in May 2019 and featured in the Health Research Authority's 'Make It Public' campaign to help increase public access to research findings.
17. The Sub-Committee agreed that, following this encouraging progress, the target would be to reach 100% compliance (whilst noting that this was complicated by legacy issues for trials involving investigators who had left the University 10 – 15 years ago). In this respect, a new [Standard Operating Procedure for Registering and Reporting Research in a Publicly Accessible Database](#) was developed and implemented in the reporting period. This describes the processes that must be followed to ensure compliance. The University's clinical trials reporting can be tracked via the [EU Trials Tracker](#) website.

PubPeer

18. [PubPeer](#) is an online platform for post-publication peer review by the research community. Through PubPeer, scientists can comment on the quality and integrity of published papers. Comments are frequently used to highlight potential research misconduct, particularly suspected image manipulation. However, the PubPeer database did not allow articles with comments to be searched by institution name, thereby making it difficult for institutions to monitor and respond to comments in a timely manner. During the reporting period the Convener liaised with PubPeer on this issue and was granted a trial of a new system under development that incorporates an alert system to inform institutions of any new postings relating to that institution. Following a successful trial in conjunction with members of the School of Life Sciences Research Integrity Group (SLS RIG) the University was one of the first institutions to take out an annual institutional subscription to the new service. Given that alerts usually relate to potential image manipulation, the response to alerts is managed through the SLS RIG, contacting Research Integrity

¹ The full set of [application and guidance materials](#) are available from the [Research Governance and Policy Handbook](#).

² Goldacre, B., *et al.* "Compliance with requirement to report results on the EU Clinical Trials Register: cohort study and web resource", BMJ 2018;362:k3218 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k3218>.

Leads in other Schools or external authors as necessary. This enables the University to be proactive in maintaining the integrity of the scientific record (through pursuing publication of corrections or retractions where necessary) and initiating investigations of research misconduct where there is evidence of intent rather than honest mistakes.

Research Misconduct

19. One formal investigation of potential research misconduct by a member of staff was completed in academic year 2018/19. Following an appeal, a member of staff was found to have committed research misconduct. The member of staff was subsequently admonished; required to undergo a period of mentoring and supervision of their research activities; and to undertake research integrity training.
20. Another formal investigation of potential research misconduct by a member of staff was initiated at the end of the 2018/19 academic year; the findings will be included in the report for 2019/20.
21. The current [Code of Policy and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Research](#) provides a transparent, fair and robust operational framework for investigating allegations of research misconduct. Following recent investigations, the Sub-Committee considered a number of potential refinements to the Code and lessons learned in relation to research misconduct. These included: the need for early preservation of data in research misconduct investigations (for example, through processes for implementing temporary litigation holds on e-mail accounts); potential revision of the timetable to allow more time for complex investigations; potential reduction in the size of the Investigating Committee to increase efficiency; and potential changes to the format for appeals following a finding of research misconduct. In addition to considering these potential refinements, a future review of the Code will be informed by the revised version (expected 2021) of the UKRIO Misconduct Investigation Procedure (originally published in 2008) and the updated definition of research misconduct in the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity, along with other available policies, procedures, external expectations and advice with respect to research misconduct.

Reporting to the Sub-Committee

22. The Sub-Committee's remit does not require it to capture detailed information on activities at the local level but rather to satisfy itself, by reviewing higher level evidence, that sufficient rigour exists in the policies and processes operated by the institution. The Sub-Committee therefore receives and considers annual reports from the various areas of research governance operating across the University to ensure that the appropriate policies and processes are in place. Reports (both written and oral) for calendar year 2018 were received from the University Health, Safety and Welfare Committee; Tayside Medical Science Centre (TASC) Research Governance Committee; University Research Ethics Committee; and the Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals Committee:
 - 22.1 **Health, Safety and Welfare Committee:** As part of its remit, the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee covers health and safety issues arising from all research activities undertaken by the University and reports to the People and Organisational Development Committee. The main Health and Safety Policy and Arrangements and the Estates & Campus Services' Out of Hours policy had been reviewed and updated in the reporting period. Two new policies had been created, a Working and Assistance Animals Policy and an Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones) Safety Management Policy. The Head of Safety Services noted that it is difficult to keep the 62 policies the Committee is responsible for up-to-date, as the process and consultation involved can be time consuming. They were looking at whether it would be possible to consolidate some individual policies into single policies to reduce the overall number. The Sub-Committee accepted the report.
 - 22.2 **Tayside Medical Science Centre (TASC) Research Governance Committee:** The TASC Research Governance Committee provides oversight of the systems and processes that exist in clinical research to ensure that the required standards are met. The Committee is responsible for providing assurance to the NHS Tayside Clinical Care & Governance Committee that clinical research is undertaken in a manner that shows evidence of accountability, responsibility, compliance with standards and management of risk.
 - 22.3 There were six policies under the remit of TASC during the reporting period, underpinned by several Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), with scheduled review dates set for those not reviewed and updated in the last 12 months. A risk register is updated three times per year, prior to each Research Governance Committee meeting, by a sub-group of the Committee. The Committee had reviewed two of its policies in the reporting period: Clinical Research Quality Management System; and Good Clinical Practice Training Policy for Personnel Involved in Clinical Research. A new policy (Clinical Research Computer System Validation) had also been developed. Another new TASC policy (Clinical Research

Projects Involving Human Tissue) came into effect in January 2019, shortly after the end of the reporting period for the Committee, bringing the total to seven.

- 22.4 An outcome of Good Clinical Practice audit findings was that all breaches are now reported directly to the TASC Research Governance Office rather than just those breaches categorised as serious by the Trial Manager. The TASC Research Governance team would assess each report to determine seriousness, providing an early detection opportunity for prevention of recurrent minor breaches which, by way of their cumulative nature, could become serious over time. No serious breaches affecting patient safety or data integrity were identified during any audits. TASC was commended for its internal reciprocal auditing plan for 2019, between the TASC and Institute for Medical Science and Technology (IMSaT) Quality Assurance Managers, noting that instead of bringing in costly external auditors, internal experienced auditors would undertake this work through the sharing of best practice. The Sub-Committee accepted the report.
- 22.5 The oversight of registration and reporting of clinical trials had been taken forward by the Director of R&D (NHS Tayside) and their team (see paragraph 16 for further details).
- 22.6 **University Research Ethics Committee (UREC):**
- 22.7 The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) is responsible for upholding the ethical standards of practice in non-clinical research involving human participants in the University in order to protect participants and researchers from harm, preserve participants' rights, and to provide reassurance to the public and funders regarding the ethical conduct of research at the University. It provides oversight, monitoring and guidance to the six School Research Ethics Committees (SRECs), three of which are joint committees covering two Schools, and acts as the first point of contact for the review and approval of proposals to access and use security-sensitive material.
- 22.8 The revision of procedures, forms and guidance that had started in the previous reporting period was completed and the UREC website updated in early 2019 (see paragraph 12). The remit for UREC had also been updated in early 2019 (to incorporate ethical review of cases referred to UREC where the SREC could not reach a decision, for instance due to complexity or conflicts of interest). Following a minor review of the University's Code of Practice for Non-Clinical Research Ethics on Human Participation a working group had been established to undertake a more comprehensive review. Whilst there was still work to do with respect to security-sensitive research and the monitoring of standards for ethical review, and it would be desirable to appoint a Deputy Convener for UREC, the Convener of the Sub-Committee noted that there had been a transformation of UREC over the past few years. The Sub-Committee accepted the report.
- 22.9 **Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals Committee:** The Welfare and Ethical Use of Animals Committee (WEAC) acts on behalf of the University Court in ensuring that the University meets its obligations under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (amended 2012 to comply with Directive 2010/63/EU) to discharge the functions of an Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body as required under that Act, and to determine policy on all matters relating to animals on University premises. Two new independent members were recruited to the Committee from January 2019. For the approval of applications for Home Office project licences and major amendments to existing licences a quorum comprising the Convener (the Director of Biological Services), the University Veterinary Surgeon, at least one Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer, at least two scientists and at least one independent member is required. The Committee reports to Court after each of its quarterly meetings. The Director of Biological Services and the University Veterinary Surgeon also meet with the University Secretary on a quarterly basis.
- 22.10 The WEAC's Terms of Reference and the Code of Practice for the Use of Animals in Teaching and Research are reviewed at least once a year by the Director of Biological Services and amendments are discussed and formally approved by the Committee prior to submission to Court for approval.
- 22.11 There is a cycle for review of Home Office project licences as they last five years. The WEAC had spent a considerable amount of time in 2018 reviewing project licenses in the reporting period but it was anticipated that there would be fewer review applications the following year. There were processes in place for dealing with non-compliance and the Home Office Inspector commented favourably on the composition and activities of the Committee at their most recent annual "risk profiling" meeting with the Establishment Licence-Holder. With regular external audits from the Home Office, the Convener noted that the Sub-Committee has confidence that the area of research governance is working efficiently. The Sub-Committee accepted the report.

Changes to the Reporting Cycle

23. The Sub-Committee has agreed to change the annual reporting cycle for the areas of research governance from calendar years to academic years. This will align the reporting period with that used by other committees and Court and make reports more timely. The next report to Court will therefore be transitional to account for the overlap that will occur in the transition from reporting by calendar year to academic year.

Professor Alan Fairlamb
Convener
14 June 2020