



General Council Meeting of 21 June 2014: Annex to Billet

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

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Papers for the General Council Meeting on 21 June 2014

1 Formal communications from the University Court

The following Draft Resolutions have been received:

- 5/2014 Alteration of the title of the Second Chair of Pathology
- 6/2014 Alteration of the title of the Chair of Clinical Reproductive Science
- 7/2014 Alteration of the title of the Arup Personal Chair of Structure and Fire
- 8/2014 Alteration of the title of the chair of Statistics
- 9/2014: Degree of Doctor of Arts
- 10/2014: Degree of Doctor of Philosophy with Integrated Study
- 11/2014: Degree of Master of Surgery (Clinical Ophthalmology)
- 12/2014: Degree of Master of Family Medicine
- 13/2014: Degree of Master of Earth Physics
- 14/2014: Degree of Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- 15/2014: Alteration of the title of Chair of Accounting
- 16/2014: Foundation of a Chair of Continuing Education
- 17/2014: Foundation of a Chair of Learning Analytics and Informatics
- 18/2014: Foundation of a Chair of Digital Education
- 19/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neuropsychology
- 20/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computational Quantum Field Theory
- 21/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Genetics of Host Defence
- 22/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of New Testament and Early Christianity
- 23/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Social Science and Public Policy
- 24/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Chinese Philosophy and Religion
- 25/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Architectural Conservation
- 26/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Anthropology of Health and Development
- 27/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Extreme Conditions Engineering
- 28/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Political and Legal Anthropology
- 29/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Commercial Contract Law
- 30/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Territorial Politics
- 31/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Extragalactic Astrophysics
- 32/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Nuclear and Particle Astrophysics
- 33/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neural Circuits and Computation
- 34/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Adaptive Learning Environments
- 35/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Molecular Epidemiology
- 36/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Evolutionary Parasitology
- 37/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Higher Education Learning Contexts
- 38/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Addiction Medicine
- 39/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Reproductive Physiology
- 40/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Mathematics of Software Engineering
- 41/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Sociology of Medical Knowledge
- 42/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Gynaecological Pathology
- 43/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Early Embryo Development

- 44/2014: Boards of Studies
- 45/2014: Code of Student Conduct
- 46/2014: Higher Degree Regulations
- 47/2014: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 48/2014: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 49/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Digital Education
- 50/2014: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Political and Historical Sociology.

2 Report of the Academic Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 21 June 2014

Convener of the Academic Standing Committee: Dr Bruce Ritson

The Academic Standing committee has met on three occasions since our last report.

Meeting on 22 January

Mr Alex Munyard Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Vice President Academic Affairs representing EUSA Sabbatical Officers presented a report on EUSA activities during past year.

Interest focused particularly on the student experience and the recent changes which had taken place to improve it. Achieving a balance between teaching, learning and research was crucial and the one influenced the other in important respects. "Schools Councils" had been introduced which enabled students to participate in the change process in a much more active way. This process had been helped by a grant from the University and support staff had been appointed. Each of the eight schools operated differently and already there were some examples of good practice. These Councils provided a valuable platform for raising local concerns and proposing new approaches. Most decisions were made at school level and this local activity served to improve feedback and assessment procedures. EUSA had prepared an Impact report on current progress which was well received by Court.

Mr Munyard hoped to see taught courses available on line for all students and possibly in future universally available. Such a move would need to be implemented with care and properly evaluated

He explained that Nadia Mehdi, Vice-President Societies and Activities, had extended research into student mental health, problems of harassment and access to counselling provided within the University. They had also considered the merit of a Credit Union to help students financially. He also reported on the work of Kirsty Haigh, Vice-President Services, who emphasised that an Ethical investment policy was a priority. Also she wished to ensure that Estates policy was environmentally friendly. A lot of endeavour was being given to improving engagement with the community outside the University.

It was recognised that there had been major investment in improving the student experience. It was probably too early to quantify benefits and there was an inevitable reluctance to embrace change in some schools. The personal tutor system had been in place for one year. The University needed to advertise its services better and make use of new technology in teaching.

EUSA believed that there was a strong case for not introducing application fees for post graduate courses. Finally he noted with pleasure that in response to student concerns opening hours for the Library had been extended.

Meeting on 6 March 2014

At the Academic Standing Committee on 6 March 2014 the main business was to hear from Dr Sue Rigby, Vice Principal, Learning and Teaching, who had been invited back, to update the Committee on the progress in the past year which had been made to improve the student experience through enhancement of teaching and learning.

She explained that a year ago the intention had been to focus on assessment and feedback and although these were still important themes, her concern had extended to helping students feel part of the community as well as finding new ways of acquiring knowledge.

Assessment and feedback had improved and mechanisms were being introduced that would reward teaching excellence on a similar footing with research. It was early days to see evidence of improvement, but overall student satisfaction had improved although was still far from excellent. Communication needed to improve so that students were fully aware of the changes that were being made. The “On the Same Page as You” campaign had been launched.

Students needed to feel part of a community. Some schools had proved much more successful at building communities than others. The Dick Vet School had been notably successful in creating a collegiate atmosphere with a “house” system and joint staff/student events to bring staff and students together. Peer assisted Learning, the Innovative Learning Week, a multidisciplinary lecture series and the Edinburgh Award had all contributed to a sense of working together to a common purpose.

Students now lived in a knowledge rich environment where almost everything they needed to know was “just a click away”. Therefore in the future, investment in learning would emphasise critical thinking and analytic skills, and the uses of information. The final goal was for students to feel they belonged to the academic community and to have access to high quality teaching and learning, and to be reflective and ambitious participants.

Learning and Teaching 2020: focus groups for students, senior staff and support staff were considering criteria for future degree programmes. The degree had always offered breadth which would give a student a wide portfolio of skills, but in future courses would be student rather than degree centred and students should be encouraged to learn beyond knowledge based courses through international experience, service learning, self-defined projects and entrepreneurship. Every student would be a researcher or practitioner attached to a research group from year one and be on a pathway to a potential PhD.

In discussion members were impressed by the progress made in the past year and the way in which the direction on teaching and learning was evolving. The focus was shifting from teaching to helping students to think and fully engage in the goals of the University. The Scottish “Curriculum for Excellence” would have an impact on future students and the University was looking at the implications of this. We noted the common concerns and ambitions with the themes discussed in our recent meeting with EUSA representatives and we agreed to exchange the minutes of both.

Meeting on 8 May 2014.

The main business of this meeting was to hear from Professor Ian Pirie, Assistant Principal Learning and Development.

He reviewed the progress being made to improve the student experience through enhancement of teaching and learning. In Scotland Universities collaborated closely and the effectiveness of teaching and learning was regularly evaluated. The approach to quality assurance was enhancement-led and he outlined the national QAA Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) process. The “Enhancement Themes” website was contributed to by all Scottish Universities and contained eleven years of research data and resources which were used extensively around the world.

New challenges were faced in programme design because the national framework now expected universities to take responsibility for developing graduate attribute type skills and competencies. There was a challenge in identifying and enhancing abilities in this area. Academics were appointed for their expertise in their field and are not necessarily equipped to help students develop these ‘career-ready’ personal

/professional attributes. An internationally diverse student body provided the opportunity to design the curriculum to capitalise on the cultural mix and experiences of students.

Partnership Working: It was essential to ensure that colleagues from across the university knew and were engaged with working together on enhancement and change projects. New approaches needed to be 'rolled-out' and managed in a consistent way.

Evaluating impact: An average of 80% of students was satisfied or very satisfied with the Personal Tutor system. Some academic colleagues were not so well equipped to be Personal Tutors, so there were still challenges, but the new system was appreciated by students.

Programme and Course Information Management: Information management was not currently good enough. Course Handbooks and guides often were the first piece of information students used to make their course choices. They needed to be more consistent and of high quality. A team of mathematics undergraduate students had developed a highly innovative 'programme builder' on which students could use a web interface to map their course of study. Staff were often unaware of the stress inadvertently caused to students by the "bunching of assessments".

Initiatives concerning assessment and feedback included the LEAF (Leading Enhancement in Learning and Assessment) project, in conjunction with Birmingham, Nottingham and Glasgow Universities, which audited the experience through the eyes of the students. A variety of novel online tools and approaches were being investigated as a means of transforming the assessment process. It was important that students were helped to see their course as an unfolding continuum rather than a disjointed series of annual elements. Staff also needed to see that the personal tutor system was valued and rewarded otherwise wholehearted commitment may prove hard to achieve.

The committee was very impressed by the progress and innovations that were being made. We were impressed by the attention being given to improving feedback, support and communication and the evident recognition accorded to the needs of staff as well as students if these new developments were to be embedded effectively.

3 Report of the Constitutional Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 21 June 2014

Convener of the Constitutional Standing Committee: Mr Gordon Cairns

The Committee has met on two occasions since my last half-yearly report, which meetings have dealt principally with the discussions surrounding the implications of potential changes in Scottish constitutional arrangements for the University.

Our meeting in January was open to all members of the Business Committee at which a most interesting presentation was given by our own Professor Sheila Riddell as Director of the Centre for Research in Education, Inclusion and Diversity, on the implications for higher education in general in Scotland were Scottish constitutional arrangements to change.

Lively debate ensued and we were extremely grateful to Professor Riddell for her invaluable contribution to a most interesting and well attended meeting.

At our meeting in March we were privileged to have Sheriff Principal Edward Bowen address us, paying particular attention to the governance of the universities. This meeting was also open to all members of the Business Committee and an interesting and lively discussion took place thereafter. My personal thanks again to Sheriff Principal Bowen for accepting our 'invitation' to address the meeting.

It is hoped that the Committee will draft a summary paper following discussions at our next meeting with the intention of presenting it to the Business Committee at its meeting on 24 July 2014.

4 Report of the Finance and Services Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 21 June 2014

Convener of the Finance and Services Standing Committee: Ms Kirsty MacGregor

The Finance and Services Standing Committee has met three times since the previous report to the General Council on 15 Feb 2014.

At the meeting on the 28 January 2014 the committee met with Mr Phil McNaull, Director of Finances.

Mr McNaull began his report with an update on the University's financial reporting. The revised format was intended to improve transparency, communicate more simply and effectively and make the University strategy and its value model more explicit. There was a new section on sustainability and social responsibility - a key area of development.

Key statistics included:

- The University had risen to 17th place in the QS world rankings.
- There had been a 15% increase in research funding and it was rising.
- The University was delivering the Operating Surplus target at the top end of the 3-5% turnover set by Court.
- The student experience was a major area of investment.

The university was monitoring developments in the run up to the September Referendum and assessing future scenarios.

At the meeting on the 5 February 2014 the FSSC met with Mr Angus Currie, Director of Estates and Buildings.

The committee was impressed by the range and complexity of the management of the University Estates & Buildings. Mr Currie presented a flow chart which gave an overview of this and explained that the University's estate was scattered across the city including in the central area, the Western General Hospital, Holyrood, Little France, The King's Buildings and Easter Bush with a wide range of historic to modern buildings. Estate development was crucial to compete with other internationally renowned institutions. The current estate strategy was 2010/20.

There had been a 2025 Estate vision Study informed by the Strategic Plan of 2012 – 2016. There was a need to envision what would be required to serve the needs of the community by 2025.

Some key areas of focus were:

- Determination of the optimization of use of space.
- Reduction of the university's carbon footprint.
- Taking account of funding and cash flow in the balancing of maintenance and development priorities

At the meeting on the 6 May 2014 the FSSC met with Ms Sheila Gupta, Director of Human Resources

Ms Gupta tabled copies of the document *People Strategy 2012*. She pointed out that the new HR strategy was now fully aligned in supporting delivery of the University's overarching strategic plan. The emphasis was on excellence at every level with a commitment to global best practice. It provided a focus and direction for the next 3-5 years.

Some key initiatives:

- Leadership development was now available at every level of the university.
- Succession planning was seen as ongoing and vital to the health of the institution.
- Investment in people placed Edinburgh as a compelling work environment in the globally competitive market for talent.

Two topics within the *People Strategy* were highlighted:

- Recognition and Reward of Excellence in Learning and Teaching
- Equality and Diversity initiatives

The University had excellent relations with government and policy-makers and was well placed to continue its growth agenda whatever the outcome of the referendum.

5 Report of the Public Affairs Standing Committee

for the General Council Meeting on 21 June 2014

Convener of the Public Affairs Standing Committee: Mr Simon Fairclough

The Public Affairs Standing Committee has met twice since its last published report, on 20 March and 13 May 2014.

There was a good turnout to the joint Chaplaincy/EUSA/General Council panel discussion event held on 26 February, with around 100 people attending. The discussion was themed around the broad question of 'Can the University afford values'.

At both recent meetings, the Committee considered updates from the Development & Alumni team on the Alumni Engagement Strategy following on from wide-ranging consultation conducted over the past year. As a highly significant, strategic project, a number of areas for improvement have been identified including: ensuring student engagement starts earlier and extends throughout a student's time at Edinburgh; highlighting the benefits available to both students and the University from better engagement; encouraging engagement with the Edinburgh community; and streamlining the promotion of events being held across all the different schools.

With areas for improvement highlighted, a new Communications Strategy is now being prepared, efficiencies are being introduced to the Development & Alumni team's workflow, case histories on engagement are being worked up, and a road show is being organised to allow D&A and the Engagement Strategy consultants to explain the project in detail to University Schools.

Following a successful Half-Yearly Meeting on 15 February, plans are now firmed up for the biennial overseas Half-Yearly Meeting being held in Toronto on 21 June. A busy programme is in place, promoted locally to North American alumni as well as via a dedicated micro-site. The programme begins on 19 June with a panel event themed on issues around Scottish independence and lessons from Canada, continues with a graduation ceremony and reception where some leading Canadians will be awarded honorary degrees, then a gala dinner and finishes with our Half-Yearly Meeting and lunch. There will also be various important interactions between the University and the University of Toronto.

6 Meetings of the Business Committee

The Committee has met twice since its last Report was printed, viz. 13 March and 15 May 2014.

Papers from the General Council Meeting on 15 February 2014

A Presentation of the Annual Report of the University

at the General Council Meeting on 15 February 2014

Principal and Vice-Chancellor: Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea

Principal: Rector, Convener of the General Council Business Committee, Chancellor's Assessor, Sheriff Principal Bowen, Lord Cameron, Members of the General Council, Colleagues. It is a tremendous pleasure to be with you again and to present the report. Can I start by endorsing the excellent report of the Convener of the Business Committee. I would endorse everything he said. I would draw particular attention to the tremendous contributions we are getting from the Princess Royal, the Chancellor elected by the General Council. In this coming week we will have a number of events that she will preside at, and as your Convener said we had an absolutely brilliant week in October where the Chancellor was deeply engaged in the life of the University. I would also endorse his comment on the Festivals. The Edinburgh Festivals are doing brilliantly; the Fringe had 2,781 shows, sold about two million tickets, and about a million of those tickets were for events on our premises. There was a whole range of high quality events, but also a growing relationship with the International Festival, as with the brilliant exhibition at the Talbot Rice. The University is obviously the host and the originator of the Fringe, the world's largest arts festival, the closest to it is the Adelaide Festival which is about two thirds of a million, we are three times bigger. Very strong engagement with the International Festival, particularly in visual art and drama, tremendously strong engagement with the International Book Festival, where we of course give the James Tait Black Prizes, and now in a partnership with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Scottish Opera a brilliant new venue out at Moray House, Paterson's Land, which was described in the round-up of the Fringe as the 'Waitrose of Fringe venues'. I will just digress for a moment, because it was an ambition and I was so pleased to see it happen; one of the performances I went to see was some modern dance called 'Colours'. It was danced by eight of our Moray House students, and at the end they were absolutely delighted. The choreography had come from students of the Royal Conservatoire, the costumes had come from fashion students doing a Masters in fashion for performance at Edinburgh College of Art. The music had been composed by students from our Reid School of Music studying Music Composition, and the music was played by a brilliant little orchestra from the Royal Conservatoire. So essentially five different Masters courses, three of ours, two from the Royal Conservatoire, all reached a wonderful public audience. So we are seeing tremendous, not just economic benefits and the appreciation of the City, but tremendous benefits in development. The BBC had pop-up studios where for the first time and from those studios every single BBC channel covered the Festival, and 300 of the interns there were our students who were being paid to run around with clipboards and give the sort of instructions that people do in BBC studios.

Let me now move on to the Annual Report. It is a beautiful document, and I would really want to commend Dr Ian Conn, the Director of Communications, Marketing and External Affairs, and his colleagues. They have produced a document that I am immensely proud of, that I will be sending to senior politicians in Edinburgh, in London, in Brussels, and so on, a lovely document, do read it. This year the front cover is our beautiful new Vet School at Easter Bush. If you haven't been out to see it, do go out, you will be amazed to see such a beautiful teaching facility on one side of the road and then the new beautiful Roslin Institute facilities on the other side of the road.

My normal custom with this report, which I will follow this morning, is to work from the back. In the original discussions of this document, we put the boring bits at the back, the money and the numbers and we put the attractive bits at the front, the pictures and the stories in the larger type. In terms of an official report, it actually makes a bit more sense for me to work from the back, so I will start with Appendix 4. Appendix 4

shows that in terms of research contracts, grants that we bid for competitively, the University secured in the last financial year grants to the value of £300m. That is extraordinary, for any university. The previous year we had £250m and we were amazed. The year before that we had £210m, and we were one of the biggest beasts in the sector. That is an extraordinary achievement. It is made up of about 1,000 different grants; obviously some of them very big grants, I think the largest was £55m, and some very small grants where there would be grants in the order of £5,000 or £10,000, but each one fought for in competition. Slightly more than half of that comes from the UK Research Councils, so we are competing directly with Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial, and UCL, but £31m comes from the European Union. I am just back from Brussels, just directly back. The European Union has announced Horizon 2020, expenditure planned up to 2020 or just under, of 80 billion Euros. To date we have been securing about 3.9%, just under 4%, of the EU funds. The EU research funds are going up dramatically, particularly in areas like help for the aged, where we mount very strong inter-disciplinary research, and I was delighted meeting with some of the Director Generals of the Commission to see the very high regard in which your university is held. So that £30m you see there is a starter for a much larger sum in the future. Then from the UK charities there is a very healthy £35m, and the Convener told you about the individual gifts that were recorded from donors, those are very important, but we have to think about £35m from the charities in the same vein alongside that.

One of the things I would encourage you to do is to look at Appendix 4 and notice the very broad base from which we are getting support and that includes the US based institutions, it includes the United Nations. What the report doesn't tell you, because it would be a bit fiddly, but you should know, is that we operate also on very high success rates. There are universities that are pleased if one in ten of their grant applications are successful. We expect to get about a quarter to be successful. In some domains we are hitting as high as 40%, and every single one of these grants is fought for. One of the other things that is interesting is that the amount of money has gone up quite dramatically over the last few years, but the number of grants has not. So what has been happening? What has been happening is we are increasingly putting in larger and more ambitious applications and continuing to be successful. These are all incredibly good omens for the future. It means that we are now mounting really big grants in areas like world health, in aging, in the environment, in the use of global data.

Appendix 3 is on benefactions, and I should thank many of you in this room for your personal support of the University. Again, the observation I made is we have a broad base of support in the University and that double-page spread on benefactions shows you that very clearly. It also shows you the Carlyle Circle, and that is very important, that is more than 1,200 individuals who have made long term provision to support their university. That has a tremendous ongoing impact for us. If we then move to Appendix 2, you will see student numbers, steady growth. Many of you will be a little surprised perhaps to find that we now have almost 33,000 students in the period reported, and there will be more this year. About two thirds of those are undergraduate, it is a fairly normal mix for a research-intensive university, but we might like a slightly higher proportion postgraduate. What is very distinctive about us is that we are about 40% international. That is the 'old fashioned' notion of international, that is to say 40% of our students come from outside the United Kingdom. That is very surprising. For the whole of the 20th century we were 19% international by that definition, so we have seen a steady change in this century of basically 2% per year. We started this century on around 20%, we are now 40%. It gives us a tremendous strength. Particularly with PhD research students, these are our research partners of the future, they will get their doctorates with us, they will go back to Beijing, Los Angeles, Berlin, or Frankfurt, but they will stay connected, and then as we work on these major research enterprises concerned with the environment, concerned with help the aging, then we have our partner network, so it is a very important thing for the long term.

If you look, as you will all be aware, we got the surprising news that we have been steadily doing well in the different world league tables, QS ranked us as 17th. That is a tremendous achievement, it is quite extraordinary to be ranked in the top 20. There are 20,000 universities in the world, so if you have got a country which has got one tenth of one percent of the world's population you would be jolly pleased if you had a university in the top 200, but to have a university in the top 20 is quite startling. It is very good and if

you look at us and compare us with the other universities that are in the world top 100 you will notice two things very sharply about us. I will come on to our turnover in bit, but our turnover is about £750m, about three quarters of the UK bidding, you will notice that compared to the universities we are competing with, that is very small, that is not a lot of money. In Scotland three quarters of a billion a year seems like a lot of money, but if you are talking to the University of Texas or the University of Wisconsin, Stanford for example its turnover is about six and a half times our turnover, so it is not a lot of money. We are doing incredibly well considering the amount of money we have got, a mere three quarters of a billion, but where we are very, very strong, is how international we are. The average for the top twenty is about 22% international, but we are 40% international. If you ask what is pulling us up given that we have, relative to these other big universities, not that much money, well it is the quality of the international students, and the student body as a whole, and the quality of the international staff and the staff as a whole.

The other thing which is interesting about us if you look at the numbers is that 2,500 come from North America. That is very unusual in the UK, because the United States has easily the best university system in the world. They dominate the world top hundred. But very many US students who could go to Harvard, Yale, Cornell or Stanford, choose to come here, because of our reputation, because of the historical links and here is a very important point, and it is one I have to make in different settings, because of the quality of the four year degree. The four year degree, as we see it in the United States and Canada, has recently been adopted by some leading universities in Asia, such as the National University of Singapore and Delhi, and in Australia. That four year degree represents a 'Gold Standard', it represents a degree that, if you are in the United States, as a very talented young person, and have the choice between the English three year degree and the Scottish four year degree, particularly the Scottish four year degree in an environment like Edinburgh, it is a four year degree that you want. It makes sense. You have got the two years more general work and the two years of highly specialised work, where the fourth year for most students now has a genuine research component. So that puts us in a very strong position, and that very strong position can be seen in the applications. If you look at Appendix 1 our applications for the first time for the undergraduate programme topped 50,000. That is an awful lot of applications. We are in a situation where for all our programmes we have healthy demand. We left clearing a number of years ago and have had no reason to even think about going back into clearing, and that depends on our reputation. It also depends on our bursaries. We are very proud to be able to say that we offer the best bursaries in Britain. We had a real challenge when the Rest of the United Kingdom fees were introduced here in response to the introduction of the mostly £9,000 fee in England. Our strategic objective was not to distort the pattern of students coming to us from England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and I am very happy to say we have achieved that. We did not want masses more coming in, because we would be perceived as 'cheap and cheerful', we did not want a lot of them staying away all of a sudden because we were perceived as over expensive. So in terms of the 'Three Bears', we are definitely 'Mummy Bear', it is the middle bowl of porridge that we wanted. We could not push to one end or the other, and that was quite a hard objective. We worked really hard and we achieved that. I am very proud of the fact that in my time as Principal we have twice now had distortions in the application processes because we have this neighbour that is more than ten times bigger than us and when it changes its fee regime that has an impact on us. So when they introduced the £3,000 fee in England that obviously had an impact, and when they introduced the £9,000 fee that had an impact, and what we tried to do, which we succeeded in doing, was keep our own pattern of relationship with England, Wales and Northern Ireland stable. That is very satisfactory. If you look at our pattern of students now, you can think of it as thirds: the very big third is international students, actually 40%; the quite big third is Scottish; and the small third, which is nearer a quarter is the United Kingdom. We have wanted that sort of stability. Those are the appendices.

If you look at the next section, two pages of appointments. Very many chairs, it looks like lot an awful lot of professors. Can we afford them all? Obviously one has to pause a little bit, but we can. The externals we have appointed are immensely distinguished. The personal chairs offered to our people who have done well. I would particularly draw your attention to Professor Fawcett, who received a Personal Chair of

Student Learning in the area of Nurse Education. This is a new category of chair. Tonks Fawcett as she is known by the nursing students is held in tremendous regard for the quality and determination of her teaching and her influence on the Nursing curriculum. Our Nursing education is ranked as easily the best in the United Kingdom, so we are very pleased that we are partly able to recognise that by giving Professor Fawcett a chair. What you do not see listed on that page is about 250 Early Career Fellows, so that should encourage you, because most of these professors are older. It is a term of commendation or surprise in the University; 'Professor before they were 40'. Well our lot are very good, but they are mostly older than 40. At the same time we have 250 Early Career Fellows of astonishing quality that we have brought in; partly with a very successful partnership with the Scottish Government. We agreed to set up a Global Excellence initiative, and the Scottish Government has been giving us an extra £5m a year, which is matched by our own funds and is invested entirely in really talented early career staff from around the world, because it is very important not just to get the people who are distinguished already. In fact it is even more important to get the people who will become distinguished and get them as part of our system, so we are working hard there indeed.

If you look at the number of staff we have got, we have almost 13,000 staff, so the University as a whole is quite a bit bigger than Elgin; when taken with the students, it is a community of 45,000 on seven main locations, six in the City of Edinburgh and one in Midlothian, so a big community. If you look at the Awards and Achievements; obviously the top one is Peter Higgs, in the time period of this report Peter was made Companion of Honour, a very high honour indeed. He subsequently got the Nobel Prize. The excitement in the University was quite palpable. It was also very demanding, because I was escorting the Princess Royal while she was opening facilities at Little France on that morning. The Nobel Committee by the way is real, one does not actually know what they are going to decide until they decide, and the moment they decide they get on the phone. So one part of my head was engaged with the Princess Royal and Jo Rowling and opening the wonderful centre and the other half was glimpsing down at my mobile phone, to see if the news had come out. In fact it did not come when we were at Little France, it came when we were at the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation. I carried Peter's briefcase, I went with him to Stockholm for the Nobel ceremony. It was an extraordinary ceremony, but the thing you need to know is that there were twelve lectures from the different Nobel Laureates. Peter's was by universal consent the best, and Peter's achievement in terms of the contribution to science and his personal standing means that he is the sort of Nobel Laureate for whom other Nobel prize winners queue up to get his signature. It was an extraordinary melee with everyone in Stockholm in white tie and tails, and such. Peter was the star turn at the extraordinary banquet for 1,300 with the King and Queen of Sweden, all the present and past prize winners and a few hangers on like myself and some ministers. It was Peter who was conducted by two Scandinavian women who seemed to be about seven foot tall, but were probably only six foot tall to a high podium where he gave a little speech, beautifully delivered, on behalf of all the Nobel Laureates, deeply impressive and deeply moving I have to say. I am very, very pleased that in the same round of honours, Alan Walker was made MBE. Alan, a senior lecturer in Physics, has just played a blinder in supporting Peter and ensuring that in things like science festivals and museum exhibits Peter's achievements are understandable. If you are in London I would encourage you to go to the Science Museum. You should really go of course to SERN and look at the actual hadron collider, but if you cannot be bothered going to Brussels, at least go to Kensington, because there is a fabulous exhibit of very high quality, with copies of the tunnels and such like which are extraordinary. I have been twice to the actual large hadron collider, but the copies they have constructed in Kensington are good. Of course Alan Walker was the main quality assurance to ensure that they got what Peter had done experimentally right; so we are delighted with Alan's award. I was really delighted with the quality of the Chancellor's Awards for distinction and Principal's Medals for those who had given massively to the community. The teaching awards from the Students' Association are very, very important and have a great impact. Fellowships; the Royal Society and British Academy, again a fabulous year for the University, 22 different fellowships are recorded there. I will say more in a moment, but also many students from the Edinburgh College of Art winning prizes.

If you look at the Honorary Graduates, you see tremendous distinction. I should not single anybody out, but I will single out Bill Clinton; he speaks incredibly well. Since we awarded him an honorary degree I have visited the headquarters of the Clinton Global Initiative. He and his wife and daughter spearhead an absolutely wonderful set of initiatives, particularly focussed on poverty in Africa, and we have become a partner in that endeavour in terms of planning and in terms of execution. We are delighted, and I was really quite astonished, talking to Bill Clinton, by the detailed understanding he had of our four Global Academies and the speed with which a warm welcome to join the Clinton Global Initiative came. You will see Pelé there, part of our celebrations of our being the most successful British university in the Olympics, and Eddi Reader, that wonderful Scottish musician, I was delighted we could honour her.

I would also draw your attention to the Benefactor, Steve Shirley. In fact the Chancellor will be opening the lab that Steve has funded. And the point I would remind you of, which I think is very healthy, is we distinguish between those who have done wonderful things academically or that are cognate to the University's goals, and award them honorary degrees, which are awarded by the Senate, from people who have given substantial financial support, who are awarded Benefactor status by the University Court, and I think that is a very good, positive distinction.

In the news in Brief section, again continuing our move from the back, I would highlight the three Athena SWAN awards to the Vets, to Biology, to the University as a whole. We are working very hard to improve the position of female colleagues in Science. I would highlight the launch of the Academy of Government, Launch.ed, doing extraordinary work for student entrepreneurs, and we have a track record of 35 to 40 new companies a year, which is comparable to the best in the world. I would highlight the Our Changing World lecture series. It is an organised course for first year undergraduates that want it, but also very distinguished people giving public lectures, one of whom was the UN Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson. Also I would highlight the fact that we are now in charge of chickens. We are in charge of chickens in both senses with our new centre, of sick chickens and growing chickens to the maximum use for the dinner table. And I now know something which I am sure you probably all know, but how many chickens do you think there are on the planet? There are a lot, exactly, there are an awful lot. There are about eleven times more chickens than there are people, because actually in terms of animal protein the most important one is chicken. Beef and lamb and such are relatively rare, but chickens are not. So we have as it were this major centre of research in a) rearing chickens to be most useful for cooking and b) ensuring that chickens do not infect us with things like bird flu. We are in charge of chickens in both cooking and their disease aspects. Also in the News in Brief is the Princess Royal opening the Muir Maxwell Epilepsy Centre.

We have got a new feature that Ian and his colleagues have introduced; a couple of pages of community orientation. They are absolutely excellent, nice pictures, nice little vignettes, and they show you something that I think really characterises our University, and goes right back to our foundation in the 16th century which is the deep engagement with the community. We now see 2,000 students volunteering to work in the community through the EUSA initiative, but also lots of other activities. It is very interesting to look at faculty and look at students and see that as well as their personal distinctions, to see what it is they do for Edinburgh or for south east Scotland.

We have got a very nice article on the Innovative Learning Week. Our Changing World Lectures and Innovative Learning Week were two innovations. I have to tell you that Senate paused on each one, the first time each was proposed to the Senate the Senate said that it looked a bit radical. We went back with revised proposals and on a second time of asking the Senate approved each. Innovative Learning Week has been brilliant. The students, as it says here, do Uruguayan poetry, soapbox car races, mathematics and magic tricks, the engineers go out and work on an actual physical steam railways, the arts students go to Japanese tea ceremonies. There is an extremely heterogeneous range, but they require a lot of student autonomy, a lot of creativity, and essentially Innovative Learning Week has now turned into a three-way partnership between the staff, who ask themselves the question 'what is there that could be done that is

not in the normal curriculum that might enhance the learning experience?'. The students ask the question 'what might we do, what might we throw our enthusiasm into, where might we travel to?' And then lots of distinguished people, lots of important local organisations, have been enthused. So if you look at the different things in Innovative Learning week, it is a triangle. It is the students working with the staff, working with local partners, it is just brilliant. Something else that is just brilliant is the work on broadband for the Highlands. If you look at the standard provision of high speed broadband in countries like Scotland, that is to say countries that have got mountainous bits and islands, you will find that the regular authorities just give up when it gets to the difficult bits at the edges. They give you some comforting figure, they will say something like 90% of the population has high speed broadband, what they will not tell you is 100% of the population on this or that island, or in this or that valley, or next to this or that mountain, has no broadband worth talking about at all. Our colleagues in Informatics got frustrated with this. Professor Buneman, who interestingly is not an engineer, his international reputation is in terms of databases, but he stays on a little island near Skye and he thought, 'well, let's try and do something.' It was almost like 'guerrilla warfare' in the war. He recruited local people and started doing things by eye. They started attaching little antennae and boosters to things. Occasionally people were a bit nervous, they thought the radio waves might get in their heads and upset them, so the antennae had to be moved again. They did some extraordinary things; rowing about in boats all around Loch Hourn, and they built a really effective network. Now if you are on Skye you would probably actually have better broadband than most of you in this room. I went to the official opening, which was held in our partners Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic College on Skye, and it was almost like a religious revival, the amount of enthusiasm. Skye based grandparents talking about interacting with their grandchildren in New Zealand via Skype, and the Skye-based mid-twenties keeping up professional careers in the finance industry, while again living on Skye. Delegations from the Lake District and from Cornwall would come to Skye to see how you do it if you decided to stop waiting for the Government and BT and do it. Because Professor Buneman is very pedantic, an academic, it has been well documented. There have been papers about it, so if you are trying to do it in Cumbria, or on the tip of Cornwall, there is a master plan for it. Something that I am immensely proud of, and of course we have a very positive relationship with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig on Skye, and in terms of the original experimental thing we succeeded in bringing the highest broadband to 1,00 people living in twelve different highly dispersed communities. And the University has shown how to do it. The Scottish Government is looking at that as a template.

As you move on, you find Professor Sandercock's work on stroke, and like quite a number of our projects, the reason this has world impact, which it does, it has been written up all around the world, is because it was done on a proper scale. This is an eleven year project involving 3,000 stroke victims, looking at whether a particular clot busting agent, rt-PA, would aid recovery, and coming up with a very conclusive result. Which means if you are a medic and you encounter somebody who has just had a stroke, then Edinburgh's research tells you what to do with that clotting agent. It is something that we can be immensely proud of, but part of the impact is because of the scale.

We have got a very nice piece on the Global Justice Academy, building on the success of our other three academies. Professor Christine Bell, Professor of Constitutional Law, is leading that. All sorts of things are happening, but the immediate impact was that the Global Citizenship Commission was looking at revising the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights. That met in Edinburgh. The Carnegie Commission very kindly gave money for the Commission to meet here, and when we were negotiating it I suggested that at least one of its meetings might be in public. They were nervous, and I think the reason they were nervous was that they did not think they could fill the McEwan Hall. I was sure that given the nature of the people in Edinburgh, if they were told the Global Citizenship Commission was meeting in the McEwan Hall they would fill it, and they did. Malala Yousafzia was given an honorary degree at that meeting, which had an impact obviously particularly for the Global Justice Academy, but also for the Global Citizenship Commission, and for the University.

There are some very nice articles about work place experience for postgraduates, 'Making the Most of the Masters', which is an excellent scheme. These have been very difficult times for graduates, but at our university all our graduates are doing extremely well with very good routes. 'Making the Most of the Masters' was a way of looking systematically at different types of internships, for which we won awards.

Then there is IMPACT. In general I do not like these contrived acronyms, and this is obviously a contrived acronym. IMPACT stands for Implantable Microsystems for Personalised Anti-Cancer Therapy, but it does build on two great strengths of the University. It builds on our understanding of cancer, and it also builds on our understanding of tiny computers, very, very tiny computers that can emit signals. What the research consists of is placing very, very small computers, because that is what these implants are, on the top of cancerous tumours. As the cancerous tumour changes, and it may not change, it sends signals so that the radiographer knows exactly where to look. It also sends signals about the rate of change of the tumour, so that the oncologist might say 'in that case we should really do nothing but wait three months' or the oncologist would say 'just look at these signals we have had from the little computer that is physically on top of the tumour, we have really got to get the laser surgery going right away, today'. It is something that holds great promise. It has £5.6m of support, but it is interesting to me because it combines stuff that I know about, micro-computers that send signals, with stuff that the very strong oncology in the University knows about. One interesting aspect of that grant was we were told we had to build a MOOC, a Massive Open Online Course, based on it. I will talk about MOOCs in a moment, but I was interested to see that in a major grant it was actually strengthened by having a public understanding aspect.

As you go through the document, the next thing you find is the Edinburgh College of Art awards. These are quite extraordinary. It starts off by telling you about Will Anderson and Ainslie Henderson, who won a BAFTA for *The Making of Longbird*, a film they made while they were students here. They also won nineteen other awards, so they won a BAFTA and nineteen other awards at film festivals around the world, twenty awards in all, not bad going. Lauren Smith, who is very photogenic, a fourth year undergraduate, won the gold award at the Graduate Fashion Week, and people were writing about her in places like the New York Times. At the same Graduate Fashion Week Liam Ross, Shauni Douglas and Olivia Creber won best menswear, and we had a number of runners up, so that for Fashion was tremendous. Owen Normand was in 2013 the PB Young Artist of the year. It is something I regularly go and visit in London and it is a very, very high quality competition, very demanding, it was wonderful that one of our students won that. So Edinburgh College of Art students getting recognition, and the recognition I am listing here is not just Scottish recognition or European recognition, this is worldwide recognition. These students are set on fabulous careers.

Now the MOOCs, you have got an article about the Massive Open Online Courses; MOOCs, Open Education Resources, using technology invented in MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). For about eight years it did not go anywhere. Then Stanford, about two and a half years ago, built the first MOOC that was successful. Pretty much two years ago, when we noticed it was successful I was on study leave at Stanford, which is a place I am closely connected to. I saw this, thought this was a good thing, so when I came back we launched six MOOCs; An Introduction to Philosophy, our most successful, 100,000 learners; Astrobiology and the search for Extra-terrestrial Life; a MOOC on e-learning; a MOOC on critical thinking and verbal challenges, building on that wonderful first year course; a MOOC on Artificial Intelligence Planning, and then in that round, our least successful MOOC, Equine Nutrition. This is not a course for people making burgers, working for any of the supermarket chains, it is about what you should feed your horse. Equine Nutrition only had 22,500 students, but it had the best completion and the best retention rates of any MOOC in the world to date, including the chief vet in the British military. We think the reason it had such good completion rates is because all the students who took it were sincere, in the sense that they had a horse. This was not some dilettantes with an interest in barley and oats, these were people who were seriously interested in what to feed their horse. Why are we doing this? Well, in the case of Equine Nutrition of course, as in the case of a number of others, there is a partner course, an online Masters, which is a big full credit course, that you can take over two years on Equine Health. So the MOOCs have

helped us with reputation, they have helped us with access to our Masters, and they have helped us with reach. You will see on the facing page there a picture of me with Daniel Bergman. We were a bit surprised by the different types of reach. Daniel is an incredibly bright seventeen year old autistic young man who could not be educated in any conventional environment. He had no possibility of doing that. He studied our Introduction to Philosophy MOOC. He studied our Political Thinking and World Challenges MOOC. He was very successful in both. He was on holiday with his parents in Switzerland and they suddenly thought gosh, we are next door to Scotland, pretty much, so they popped on an aeroplane to come and meet us. I have to say one of the high points of my career was going past the portrait, that you go past, of David Hume on the Playfair stairs and Daniel immediately picking out on his iPad a sceptical enquiry and he got very excited when he saw the picture of David Hume, which of course he recognised from his course. So they have been an enormous success. We are engaged in the second wave of MOOCs, which includes, this is a very genteel audience, so I should maybe be careful here, but we have got a MOOC, which I anticipate will do very well, because of its title. The MOOC is in partnership with the Tate Modern. It is about the work of Andy Warhol and it is called 'Sex, Drugs and Death', but it is a very serious MOOC obviously about modern art and certain movements and painting. So we have got that MOOC, which is a very nice partnership. We have also got a MOOC which has attracted a lot of press attention. It is the only one I feature in. I feature as a spear carrier. As the MOOC starts, you see me and Peter Higgs in front of the wonderful portrait that Victoria Crowe did of Peter in the Royal Society of Edinburgh. I say something stupid to Peter like 'Well Peter, so when did you first predict the Higgs Boson?' and then I vanish from the MOOC and you move onto the high ground of modern particle physics. That is going very well, and I am discussing with Vice Principal Haywood, and over lunch I would welcome suggestions, about what would be an appropriate celebration when we reach our millionth MOOC learner, which quite clearly we will now. Last time I looked we were at over 700,000 learners, so we are heading towards the million. Not sure what the appropriate celebration should be. And given the way technology works, we will be able to identify with accuracy who the millionth is, so how should be greet them?

So, in conclusion it has been a truly wonderful year for the University, as the Convener said, quite extraordinary. The pinnacle of individual achievement has obviously been Peter Higgs, probably the pinnacle of collective achievement has been reaching an audience that is now over 700,000 in more than 200 countries with the MOOCs. I really want to acknowledge the students and colleagues who have contributed to those extraordinary achievements, and as ever I want to thank the General Council for its support. The support we get from the General Council Assessors on Court is absolutely invaluable and we are really very appreciative of that, and the Business Committee and the other General Council committees think very hard and give us very important advice and I appreciate that, and I appreciate the company on days like this and when we process in the open air to St Giles. I do not know if the General Council needs a strap line, as in 'older and tougher' but it is noticeable to me that General Council members are more likely to turn out and go down the Royal Mile in February in the rain than other folk.

In conclusion, thank you very much.

Professor Ian Sutherland: Two points regarding international aspects; one, I do not want to be carping, but at the same time is there a robust assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the offices that the University has set up overseas? The second one is really a cause of concern that has been raised in the papers and I think a concern to several of us; that is the setting up of an American fraternity house associated with this university. The image of these is, to put it mildly, not good and could be very detrimental to the reputation of this university, and I would be grateful to hear the Principal's views on that.

Principal: Two very topical questions. We are just completing a review of our Beijing office, and to remind you, our first office was opened in Beijing, second one in Mumbai, third one in Sao Paulo. We are in the process of opening a fourth office in the Rockefeller Centre in New York. So we are formulating a valuation to see if they are value for money. If I look at the office in Beijing, we have one of the best Confucius Institutes in the world located here, we have two joint research centres with Peking University, one located

here and one located on the Peking University campus. We have a range of high quality partnerships with very high quality Chinese universities. Obviously Peking University itself, especially in the humanities, but Fudan in medicine, plus other Chinese universities, and these are all great assets for the University on top of the around 2,000 students we get from the Peoples' Republic of China. Certainly from where I am sitting it looks like good value for money, but we are making a point of formally evaluating them and I think we are just completing the evaluation of the Peking office. On the second point, nobody has asked the University to recognise a fraternity and if any group were to ask us that we would consult straight away with the Students' Association and with other parties. I do not know whether the Students' Association has been asked to recognise one. We cannot stop our students joining organised groups. My understanding is, certainly in the United States, which is where fraternity houses come from, that they require, usually as part of their constitution, the formal endorsement of the university. I can assure you that nobody has approached us, and if they did we would evaluate the reputational standard of any such group very carefully and we would talk to other universities that already recognise them. But we are in a funny position with these news items in that as far as I am aware nobody has approached the University, and I do not think that they have approached the Students' Association either, so I do not actually know what is going on there. Because from my experience of the United States, which has two universities where there are a lot of fraternities; University of Texas and Austin in Stanford, you do not get to have a university chapter without the university agreeing, and university presidents routinely shut chapters when they do things that do not fit with the university's culture or ethos. Of course our university has an extremely strong dignity and respect policy.

Dr Frank Stewart: Can I thank the Principal for his characteristically clear, broad-ranging and far-sighted report, which is very encouraging, and refer to what he rather modestly described as one of the boring parts of the report, namely Appendix 2. Looking at the list of top twenty non-UK domicile on entry we notice that the vast majority of these students are coming from either developed or what are generally called emerging countries, and I wonder if we could invite the principal to say a little about the involvement of the University in teaching and research, relevant to what are generally referred to as third world or developing countries?

Principal: That is a very good question. The University, historically, had a really strong relationship with Africa, and that started in the mid nineteenth century. We were actually the initiator of the Association for Commonwealth Universities which for many African universities is the main route into connection with universities around the world. When the Thatcher Conservative government changed the policy on student scholarships there was suddenly, for all British universities, a dramatic reduction in the number of students coming from Africa. We are now working really hard to rebuild our connections. There is a big effort in the Centre for African Studies. It is particularly in line with the Global Academies. So for example the Global Health Academy works with universities like the University of KwaZulu-Natal, so our Global Environment Academy has particular links with areas of Latin America, as well as some areas in Africa. And the Global Development Academy has links with Sub-Saharan Africa and some other parts of Asia that are under more demand, so it is an issue to us of great importance. We feel a moral obligation to address world challenges, and some of the world challenges are in their sharpest form there. Also in the long term one tries to do the work as symmetrically as possible. So if you look for example; we now get funding from the Gates Foundation. The Gates Foundation insists that the work is symmetric, that is to say for instance, working on TB in Africa, we have to work with partner universities in Africa, and this is absolutely correct, we want to work with partner universities in Africa. So it is an important part of the agenda, you are quite right to point it out, and you are quite right to observe that there are parts of the world where we really need to think. I would be particularly pleased to get more scholarship money that would be targeted at some of the Latin American countries, and some of the African countries, where there are insufficient resources. It is a very good question and a key part of the University's agenda.

Rev Dr Alison Fuller: Thank you for your address. I noted when you talked about students coming in from North America particularly, that one of the factors leading them come to Scotland was the length of the

course, four years rather than three. I mentioned my own date of graduation because it seems to me that that was not such an attractive thing in those days, ancient history. I wondered whether any comparison had been noticed in formula, any study done, comparing the attitude of British/UK students to the length of degree in Scotland rather than England, compared with the ones from abroad who come for the attractiveness of the longer study time?

Principal: A very good question. Certainly there has often been a supposition that the four year degree would be less attractive than the English three year degree, but what we are seeing is, the University has now got more than 50,000 applications for our four year degree, which puts us in application numbers in a massively stronger position than Oxford or Cambridge, with their three year degree. So it does seem highly popular. We have always offered a route into Year 2. The assumption was that students who came in with A Levels or Advanced Highers might want to go straight into Year 2 and save themselves that year. If you look at the data, what you see is that, increasingly over time, students who could skip the first year do not. So what we are seeing is that students are voting with their feet. Even if they could go straight into Year 2, they do not, in larger and larger proportions. They enter Year 1, because they want the benefits of the traditional broad-base. And we see very distinguished universities around the world, like the National University of Singapore, or Delhi, moving to our model. So I would feel quite comfortable there, with that position. In fact an extreme form of the experiment would be for example the University of Buckingham, which was until recently, Britain's only private university, and pioneered the two year degree, basically no vacation, two years and four semesters. The University of Buckingham has got about six or seven percent of the number of applications that we get. You do not see lots of students rushing in to get a two year degree. My strong sense is that students want a high quality degree and a high quality experience, and increasingly they are seeing that the four year degree gives you more opportunity for that. All the indicators out there are that way round. I am very respectful to you, but I am not that respectful to the heads of my competitor institutions in the Russell Group, I tease them for their impoverished short degree. They used to rebut me more robustly than they do nowadays.

Mr Matthew McPherson: Thank you very much Principal for a terrific talk. I think the answer you gave to the previous question about the importance of the Edinburgh experience and the student experience is one that has been of great influence over the last couple of years particularly. I want to really draw peoples' attention to the different experience of different types of students who are in the University, and obviously the biggest and most notable shift in that has been the growth in international students, which has been touched upon at the beginning of your talk. You mention it has gone from 19% at the end of the 20th century to 40% international students now. You of course highlighted that there are great opportunities to this growth, but there are obviously also challenges as well and I was wondering, firstly on sustainability, for how much longer does the University expect or forecast its growth in the international student community. Secondly, what is the University doing to ensure that there are appropriate student services, including housing and infrastructure, to assist and support students while they are here? And thirdly, what consideration has the University given to how this may affect us internationally in regards to our reputation over the next 50 or 100 years to come. The University that is represented by members here today is very different to the University that will be represented by members in 50 years' time and I was wondering what consideration the Principal would give to that? Thank you.

Principal: Three very good questions. I would anticipate that the growth will continue in a steady way and I would think it highly appropriate if the University ended up being genuinely 50% international. I think you are entirely right, this raises issues about services and it raises issues about accommodation. At the moment we are building accommodation for about 1,200 at Holyrood, a wonderful new development there; if you like cranes and big holes you want to walk down to Moray House and you will go past lots of cranes and big holes. Deaconess House, which had a previous life in the NHS, is now going to be turned into beautiful accommodation for another 350, and we are engaged with a number of partnerships. So for example the Festival Theatre has built at its back a rehearsal space, but after that, if you are wondering what the next two big blocks that are being finished there, that is student accommodation. They will run it,

they will get an income stream from it. We will give them advice to ensure that it is fit for purpose. For actual accommodation it is important and we have got a lot on the go.

The University Secretary, Sarah Smith, will be going to the planning round pointing out that as the numbers of students increase and as they come from different parts of the world that means we need more counselling services, we need more careers services, there is a lot of generic support that students need and that has got to be increased in proportion. We see for example different parts of the University, including EUSA, employing officers with a specialised remit internationally. In terms of our reputation, my firm view is this is one of the key reasons why our reputation is rising. If you look for example, the Chinese colleague who discovered the SARS virus did his doctoral work with us. Students that we attract from around the world are of an astonishingly high quality. We can be really, really confident in their future success. They will remain connected to us. They will do research with us and they will publish with us. The Royal Society of London did a very interesting study on the impact of publications and it found that a publication on average would have at least 50% more world impact if the authors were from more than one country. Of course if you train a student here they go back to their home country and you continue to work with them and they bring into their write-up in their home country what they have learned, so I think in terms of reputation it is unbeatable and if you wanted me to identify a single long-term reason for our rise in these different world rankings I would say that it is because we are manifestly becoming a global university. The other thing it does is it makes it increasingly easy for us to ensure that our home students spend time abroad, because part of the Edinburgh offer has to be to spend that semester or that year in Beijing, or in Los Angeles, or in Berlin or Moscow. I think we can still go some distance, I would like us to go some distance in the proportion, I think there is inevitable pressure on services of the type you mention, and we will have to invest in those, absolutely clear and absolutely straightforward, because the income is there to invest. In reputational terms it will just help us.

Mr Ritchie Walker: Thank you Principal. You have actually alluded to my question in your report, but I wonder if I could tease out a little the University's position on the item carried in the recent Graduate Association Journal on women and science in the University. It refers to the absence of maternity cover for female academics, both lecturers and research group leaders, and I wonder if the University has been able to review the situation and is perhaps taking steps to improve it. Thank you.

Principal: It is a very good question and it is one that concerns us. We need to be clear on the issue. From this point of view there are two sorts of female staff. There are staff who are on mainstream University contracts. They have maternity cover, so it is not female staff in general, it is female staff who are based with us, but essentially have another main employer. So these are female staff who are primarily paid from a Research Council grant or from some other agencies who do not have maternity cover. We have an issue there, which we must resolve. The first step is obviously to say to the agency if you pay for three years for this senior female colleague to work in genomics, and she becomes pregnant, then you should provide her with maternity cover. We know from experience that some of them say 'No, here is a sum of money, this is the research we want done, you sort it'. It may be that we will just have to identify funds. This would not be a small issue, we have 2,000 staff, both male and female, who are paid on research contracts, so we are going to have to bite the bullet. It is under active review. It is a key issue, but where the University is, as it were, the long-term employer, that is fine, we behave properly. The issue is where we are employing people in

directly and solely on the resources provided by another agency.

Mr David Houston: Thank you to anyone who voted for me, because I have just been elected to the Business Committee of the General Council. Principal, thanks very much for a very interesting address. One subject you did not touch on, which surprised me, was the opportunity and threat of the Referendum and Scottish independence. I notice for example in the financial summary that student fees went up something like £24m between 2012 and 2013, and of course there is the question, amongst many others, that UK

students not in Scotland might actually get free university education in Scotland. Have you any response? I see there was some discussion actually in the Finance & Services Standing Committee, so clearly your strategic people are looking at this.

Principal: No, I have no response. The University Court has an extremely clear policy on the referendum debate, which is that the University has no official policy. Like Dr Conn, I am an official University spokesperson, so obviously I have no point of view on this. Clearly it is important to do contingency planning. The sums that you are mentioning, the context of turnover in the order of £750m, once you are looking at sums that represent in that case, about 4% of income; that is a very serious amount of money. That would pay an awful lot of salary bills, so clearly we are doing contingency planning. Clearly we are addressing politicians directly. There was a dinner with the Cabinet Secretary. It was slightly confusing, I was at dinner with the Cabinet Secretary for Education, the Scottish one, Mike Russell, with the Russell Group in London. So the Russell Group had dinner with Mike Russell, and in various settings I have had the opportunity to speak. I have to say that the Scottish Government is extremely accessible, so there are a tremendous number of opportunities to express opinions and anxieties, but in terms of a public expression of views the University is quite clear. I think that is correct. We are a population of 45,000, if the University were to take any line inevitably we would generate an internal fight. The other thing is we have become a great centre for research on constitutional change with the lion's share of resources coming from the Economic and Social Research Council projects, based in our university. If we were in some sense *parti pris* to the outcome then we would not be seen as an independent place that could research the processes around it. So I think it is quite important that the University does not have a public view.

Dr Alan Brown: Could I ask the Principal to come back to the thorny question of the Referendum? In Appendix 4 we see that £177m of our money comes from UK Research Council grants. Both sides of the divide claim that we will or will not have access to Research Council grants. I do not want the Principal to be political, but could he give us any sense or guidance on whether or not an independent Scotland would have access to UK Research Council funding?

Principal: Obviously, Dr Brown has correctly picked out that figure of £177m from the UK Research Councils. It is a very important source of funds, and if you look at say High Performance Computing, since 2002 we have been the site for the three successive high performance computers. We are now the site for the wave tank, which are all funded as UK facilities. There is no reason of principle as to why, if Scotland were an independent country we should not have access. If you look at Scandinavia, it operates as a research union. So if the Norwegians have better science than some other Scandinavians they will get the Scandinavian money. If you look at the island of Ireland, again it nowadays operates a union. So we understand how this could be made to work. We would make a strong case that research in England would be damaged if it was disconnected with research in Scotland because there are things, like high performance computing or experimental physics, where we have leadership that helps lift the whole of the UK. If you look at the tendencies in the European Union, the 79billion Euros that is coming on stream, that will be delivered through Horizon 2020, then all the big projects will involve multiple countries. We are for example working on a bid for Healthy Aging which will involve five other EU states including Britain, as it stands. So there is no reason in principle. The Scottish Government certainly understands the importance and it is not the case that anyone in the Westminster Government has said that the Research Council apparatus would be dismantled. Of course the Research Council apparatus is part of a larger apparatus that includes the REF (Research Evaluation Framework), which is done at a UK level, and it would be extremely unhelpful if Scotland was not part of it in the future, because it is a very important reference point. So there is no reason in principle. What would actually happen would depend I suppose in simplest terms on how amicable and rational any split was. If a split were to happen and if it was amicable and rational then I do not see any reason why the current Research Council infrastructure, which works incredibly well, should not continue. Having just come back from Brussels, if you compare it to any of the other continental European nations, it would strike me as not sensible or rational to dismantle it. Also, on the other hand, if politicians were determined to dismantle it they could.

Neil Hynd: After the previous questions, this is a much lighter comment, Principal. I was very interested to hear about Innovative Learning Week and next perhaps, instead of dispatching your engineering students to the Isle of Skye, you might put them on the train to North Berwick. At Drem I had it tested yesterday, my broadband speed is just about twice the old dial up speed and we could do with some improvement, only twenty miles from this room.

Principal: I certainly will raise the possibility in Informatics of missionary activity in the Borders.

Mike Williamson: David Willett announced recently that he would be raising the cap on student numbers. Will this have any effect on the University's admissions process?

Principal: That is a very good question. Inevitably it will, inevitably there will be more competition for students in England, some universities will see this as their way forward to dramatically build their numbers of home undergraduates, so we will have to watch. I think that the particular pressure on us will be to be really expeditious, because the universities that want to take advantage of the removal of the cap will also put in place processes of very rapid evaluation of applications. So the minimum it will require us to do is greatly speed up our own admissions processes.

Paul Kinnear: Can I ask a question about student experience. I notice 10% of your students are part-timers. My experience at another university is that an awful lot of students nowadays, especially part-timers, do the absolute minimum amount of time in the university. They are missing out on things like extra practicals. Anything that is not assessed they do not attend. Is this a problem in Edinburgh?

Principal: That is a very good question. I am not aware of it as a problem. For us the great majority of part-time students are online. We are a bit unusual, if I can put it this way, the conventional undergraduate programme attracts very few part-time students. You are quite right, there is an issue and it is certainly the case that when you look at the data, and last time I looked at it was a long time ago, so I might be out of date, but certainly when I looked at the data, about twenty years ago, it was the case that part-time students on undergraduate programmes were as you suggest highly instrumental. That is they would do the minimum required to pass the examinations, and clearly that does not give you the whole experience. I am not aware of any warning signals in the University, but in practical terms our offer of part-time in the conventional undergraduate programme is very small.

B Presentation of the Report of the Business Committee

at the General Council Meeting on 9 February 2013

Convener of the Business Committee: Professor Charles Swainson

Convener: Rector, Chancellor's Assessor, Vice Chancellor, members of the General Council and guests. I am pleased to present to you the report of the Business Committee for the last six months since our last Half-Yearly Meeting in June 2013. I am delighted to welcome here today formally your new General Council Assessor, Doreen Davidson. Doreen served with distinction on the Business Committee for four years from 2008 and was the Convener of the Finance & Services Standing Committee. She brought to bear her considerable experience of strategic human resources management in a large international organisation and her expertise was welcomed by colleagues.

I welcome also your new Business Committee Members, elected to serve until July 2016. These are John Clifford, Matt McPherson, Anne Paterson, who has previously been a member of the committee, Scott Peter and Ian Stevens. I hope that they will enjoy their time on your committee and contribute powerfully to our business on your behalf.

Last year Development & Alumni held their first alumni weekend to coincide with the June Half-Yearly Meeting. Attendance at the Half-Yearly meeting held at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies out at Easter Bush was very encouraging; with many attending from distant parts of the country. We were educated and entertained by Professor David Argyle; and after lunch with a most interesting account of veterinary medicine developments worldwide, from Dr George Gunn from Novartis. The other weekend events included a Reception hosted by the University, a Ceilidh and a Barbeque, again hosted by the University, and these were very well-attended and reportedly good fun.

Your committee recently received the Annual Report of the University of Edinburgh Development Trust to July 2012. This was very encouraging. It showed that the income to the trust was stable at around £11m with very good support from legacies, and a particular contribution from our fellow alumni in the United States of £750,000. Highlights also included a major gift from the Shirley Foundation for the Patrick Wild Centre for Research into Autism, Fragile X Syndrome and Intellectual Disabilities, and major support for the Centres of the Study of Islam and of Sino-Japanese Relations, and these three examples just show the enormous breadth of excellence in research at this university. Corporate donations had fallen slightly, but were out-weighed by substantial private donations, and it is fascinating to see that 95% of the funds raised came from 5% of the donors. Members of the General Council can assist fundraising by providing introductions to potential donors through your extensive personal networks, and I would encourage you to think about that, as well as the donations you give in a personal capacity.

New information and induction packs for Business Committee Members and General Council Assessors were assembled and published by your Constitutional Standing Committee, led by Mr Gordon Cairns. Gordon and his committee are also examining the implications of constitutional change for the University, and will come to some conclusion about that later this year.

Your Academic Standing Committee, led by Dr Bruce Ritson, spent considerable time looking into the efforts being made by the University to improve the student experience. The University has made very considerable investments and your Business Committee recognises that this is not a quick fix. It will take a number of years to settle down before these changes will be reflected in the NUS Student Survey results in future years. We are not hoping for a dramatic change, we are looking instead for steady improvement year after year. Your committee also enquired into the integration and support of international students, which is a growing and important component of university life, and we will continue both of these themes this year, as they are of fundamental importance to the well-being of the University.

Your Public Affairs Standing Committee has worked with Development & Alumni and the Secretary to develop the new General Council website. This is up and running now. I do hope you like the more modern, fresh look and feel and that you will use some of the features, such as the blogging facility. It is an excellent opportunity to get anything you like off your chest.

The next Half-Yearly Meeting, as you know, will be in Toronto. It has been discussed extensively and plans are now far advanced. As some of you may know, the Grand Prix Formula One schedule meant that we could not go to Montreal as planned originally, but I do hope that as many as possible of you make the trip and we are assured of a very warm welcome, and likely very good weather, by our alumni in Toronto and colleagues in the university there. We look forward also to working with colleagues in Development & Alumni on the new Alumni Engagement Strategy, I am sure that will be widely consulted on within the General Council.

Your Finance & Services Standing Committee met recently with Mr Phil McNaull, Director of Finance, who presented the Annual Report and Accounts for 2012-13, summarised in the Annual Review you have today for this meeting and shared his thoughts on the current and future financial prospects of the University. These are generally favourable, as I am sure you realise, and you will hear from the Principal shortly. Committees also receive an update on the Estates strategy, and again the recent building programme has been highly impressive, with a number of current and imminent projects which will benefit both the University and the city.

General Council members had a private viewing of a particularly good Festival Exhibition this year in the Talbot Rice Gallery, by the Korean artist Nan June Paik; a cutting edge exhibition that contributed as ever to the cultural life of the University and the City. In early October the University had a most successful week, perhaps the most successful week in recent memory. Our Chancellor visited for three days opening some magnificent new facilities and hosting a dinner at the Palace of Holyrood House for the Chancellor's Award winners, and presiding at a celebration of excellence, where three honorary degrees and a fellowship were awarded to outstanding people. The University builds communities of support in this way and identifies people who can be inspirational to all of us, and it is a great honour and pleasure to be fully involved on your behalf in these programmes.

To cap off an outstanding year for the University the Nobel Prize for Physics was awarded, as you will all know, to Professor Peter Higgs. But this is the third Nobel Prize in Physics that has been awarded to this University, a rare achievement.

Lastly, I would just like to draw your attention to an event on Wednesday 26 February, and do hope that you will come along to a Seminar entitled 'Can the University Afford to have Values?' This is a joint effort with the General Council, the Chaplaincy and the Students' Association, and we will warmly welcome as many of you as possible to that event. That concludes the report of the Business Committee.

C. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

GENERAL COUNCIL ONLINE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Saturday 15 February 2014

Privatisation of the Student Loan Book

Dear General Council,

I'd like to ask what, as the representative of Edinburgh graduates, you have done to try to prevent the privatisation of the student loan book and to ensure the protection of the terms of repayment of student loans.

Best wishes,

Adam Ramsay,
Philosophy and Politics, 2008

and

I'd like to ask, given the large number of General Council members who will be affected, what the General Council has done to try to prevent the privatisation of the student loan book.

Mike Williamson
MA (Hons) Spanish and Portuguese
2011
Edinburgh

Spoken Answer from the Principal: On issues like this, privatisation, the way we work is very much in partnership with the representative organisations. So for us, in relation to this particular issue, the key partner organisation is Universities UK which speaks for all British universities. The other partner organisations are Universities Scotland and obviously the Russell Group has quite a lot of status, which are the leading twenty four research universities. So reservations have been expressed, but, as you will understand, the University of Edinburgh either on its own, or in partnership with other universities, does not have much control over the working of the Westminster Government.

Ethical Investments

I had one question I would like to submit. Given the trend in recent years and months throughout the not-for-profit sectors toward ethical investments, could the university provide justification for their continued investment in the fossil fuel industry, for example the £3,812,340 invested in Royal Dutch Shell, as attested by the most recently available investment figures.

Many thanks,
Lewis White

"If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day."

E. B. White
BSc Psychology, 2013

Spoken Answer from the Principal: Thank you very much for that question. The University has an ethical investment strategy which we take very seriously. We were the first university in Europe to sign up for the United Nations' supported Principles for Responsible Investment. We are now engaged in a broad-ranging consultation, which will close on 7 March, so I would encourage anybody, including any alumni to participate in this, and obviously the final responsibility for decisions on investment remains with the University Court. The Investment Committee, which is composed of people who have very distinguished personal records in the investment industry, would have a view how things can be optimised from a financial point of view from participation in the 'Principles of Responsible Investment', and we will also have a point of view about what we should do from an ethical point of view, and there will be some tension there. But we will do it systematically, we are committed to it and we do have a public consultation which I would encourage Mr White to participate in.

Industrial Action of Academic and Teaching Staff

I am a 2013 graduate of the MSc in Social Research in the School of Social and Political Science, and a current first-year PhD student in sociology at the university. I respectfully request that the General Council address the following question:

As university administrators are aware, the university has recently been faced with ongoing industrial action from academic and teaching staff relating to the disparity between increased tuition fees and executive administrator salaries and ongoing real-terms decreases in academic staff members' and teaching assistants' pay. This is a matter of great concern to the university's current students, as well as to alumni, who rely upon the university's good standing and honourable reputation for the maintenance of the value of their earned degrees. What action does the university plan to take to restore fair compensation for academic staff and to bring teaching assistant pay into compliance with minimum legal wage regulations? My thanks to the Council for your response on this very important matter. With respect and best wishes,

Lisa Kalayji
MSc Social Research 2013/PhD Student

Spoken Answer from the Principal: I will give you a short answer and I will give you a long answer. The shorter answer is we believe what we are doing is fair, there certainly is not a disparity; for example executive administrator salaries and teaching staff salaries are in line. We do not want one rising above the other, and we are certainly within comfortable compliance of the minimum legal wage regulations, so there are three things in the question which I think are incorrect. It is very important to us that the compensation of employees is fair, we have implemented a pay award which is part of a strong overall compensation package; extra conditions of service to fund pension benefits, provisions for incremental (increases), an awful lot of staff are on incremental grades, where they receive a pay rise in addition to the national pay award, as well as contribution-related pay increases. Increased costs of living have had an impact, but the University pay and benefits package continues to compare favourably with other organisations, and I have to say that if you look at the number of highly qualified people who want to join us in any of the categories that we advertise that is the case. As far as the minimum legal wage regulations go, everybody, including teaching assistants are paid salaries significantly higher than those required by these regulations.

Admissions Issues

Does the University of Edinburgh discriminate in favour of applicants from State schools? For example, if two applicants are under consideration for the last available place on a degree course, and both have identical exam qualifications, and both are male and white and the same age – but one comes from a State school and the other from a Public school – who gets the place?

Ian Sandison
BSc (Pure Science) 1957

Spoken Answer from the Principal: There is no discrimination in terms of the fee basis of the school that people apply from. So if we had two candidates who were peas in a pod from an independent school and a state school then the people doing the admissions would have great difficulty, they would have to look for a differentiator, but the fee status of the school would not be available as a differentiator. There are other possible differentiators; maybe a teacher has written about tremendous promise, a student may be coming from a background that is a bit impoverished in some ways, and of course I would remind you that students from impoverished backgrounds often go to independent schools on things like foundations scholarships. I would also remind the questioner that there are plenty of state schools whose record of getting into high quality universities is better than some of the independent schools actually. The simple answer would be that one could not differentiate on the financial basis on which the school has been run, it is very much focussed on the personal circumstances, aspirations, talents and skills of the applicant.

Academic Standards

It is exciting to receive the information of the meeting! Unfortunately I will be travelling when the meeting is taking place, so I am afraid I cannot join you even by internet. Wish you have good time.

I have a primitive question about the quality of our PhD (Cell and Molecular Biology). I am personally from IMPS, SBS. I heard from people that, if a student passes the first year report but fail his/her viva, the school will get negative points. I am not sure whether this is truth or just a rumour. If this is true, is it possible that low quality students will also get their PhD even if they are not qualified just because the school does not want to obtain negative points?

Shih Chieh Liang
PhD obtained in 2013 from IMPS, SBS (Institute of molecular Plant Sciences, School of Biological Sciences)
Location: Taiwan

Spoken Answer from the Principal: It is the case that the Research Councils monitor success rates, and it is the case that the process is completely disconnected from the examination process. The standard UK PhD process of which we have a version is very robust. It involves externals and internal colleagues who are not directly associated with the candidate. We have a lot of confidence that you only get a doctorate on merits, we are very sure of that.

Entrance Requirements

Recently Cambridge University announced that it is raising its entrance requirements for a number of science subjects, including medicine. In light of there being around ten applicants for each place at Edinburgh, is there any likelihood of our university raising its entry tariffs (currently below those of St Andrews) in the near future?

W. Keddie Law
M.A. Hons (Geography) 1968.

Spoken Answer from the Principal: In relation to entry standards; we have a lot of applicants, we have more applicants than Oxford plus Cambridge doubled, so we have lots. We do not think it is a good idea to impose rationing as it were by raising the bar. Our view is (we have) the right entry standard, and the thing to understand is the entry standard that a university has is the minimum you have to have. We think to have the entry standard dramatically above what is necessary is an odd thing to do. We think that basically

what we should do is have an entry standard that is appropriate, and it is very, very rare for us to offer at the entry standard, because of the volume of applicants, we do not usually do that, but we think that if we wanted to we should be able to do that and if there is context around a candidate that they wish to present, then having an appropriate entry standard is right.

Open Access to e-journals

It is my dream to have a chance to join you in my beloved university and city. But anyway, I have a suggestion that as alumni we really still need an open access to the e-journals. Is it possible to discuss this with all attendants?

Abdul Alzahrani
PhD

Spoken Answer from the Principal: It is a very good question and it relates to a sort of direction of travel. At the moment publishers restrict access to current journals to current staff and students. Many of them would charge considerably more, and we would get a tremendous burden from these costs if we were wider, so we have to look at it on a case by case basis. But very importantly, JSTOR, the digital library of academic journals and books, can be accessed through the MyEd alumni portal and more recently electronic journals from SAGE and Project News are being added, and we keep on looking at ways of doing this. We are an active supporter of Open Access, we are increasingly publishing our own papers through Open Access, so we are doing our best. It is the case that for some electronic journals the contract we have with the publisher would be onerous if we went beyond (what we do at present), but there is no question about the direction of travel, and so for the future I think the questioner can look to get increasingly better open access to e-journals.