



General Council Meeting of 12 June 2010: Annex to Billet

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

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Papers for the General Council Meeting on 12 June 2010

1 Formal communications from the University Court

The following Draft Resolutions have been received:

- 13/2010: Alteration of the Code of Student Discipline
- 14/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Social and Environmental Justice
- 15/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Modern German Studies
- 16/2010: Foundation of a Chair of Critical Care
- 17/2010: Alteration of the Chair of Anaesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine
- 19/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Mammalian Molecular Genetics
- 20/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Molecular Parasitology
- 21/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Theoretical Physics
- 22/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Pluripotent Stem Cell Biology
- 23/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neural Cell Biology
- 24/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Theoretical High-Energy Physics
- 25/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Skeletal Biology
- 26/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Mobile Communications
- 27/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Molecular Neurobiology
- 28/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of History of Science
- 29/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Baroque Art
- 30/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Speech Processing
- 31/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Semantics
- 32/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Digital Media
- 33/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Organisational Behaviour
- 34/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Quantitative Criminology
- 35/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Ecosystem Science
- 36/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of European Union Law
- 37/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Surgical Sciences
- 38/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Molecular Evolution
- 39/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Proteomics
- 40/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Farm Animal Practice
- 41/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computational Legal Theory
- 42/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Foundations of Computer Science
- 43/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of African and Development Studies
- 44/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Comparative Genetics
- 45/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Forensic Psychiatry
- 46/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Robotics
- 47/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Biorobotics
- 48/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Animal Biotechnology
- 49/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Art History and Visual Culture
- 50/2010: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Change Ecology

2 Report of the Academic Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 12 June 2010

Convener of the Academic Standing Committee: Professor Ian Sutherland

The Academic Standing Committee has met twice since its report to the General Council in February 2010.

In January, it met with Professor Stephen Hillier, a Vice-Principal with specific responsibilities for overseas students with the role of developing a University Policy for recruitment and overall responsibility for International students. He gave the Committee a wide-ranging presentation pointing out that Edinburgh University had been 'international' for a long time. As well as being one of the premium universities in the UK with 27,000 students, 7,000 of these students were from overseas. He noted that as early as 1931, although numbers were much smaller, the proportion of international students had been much the same. In the Internationalisation Strategy approved by Court in 2008, overall objectives included ensuring a broad understanding of what Edinburgh stood for and what it had to offer; to broadcast this worldwide in order to attract the best students and researchers; and to create quality partnerships. The intention was to ensure that the knowledge generated was put to best use worldwide. There were seven threads of activity:

- 1) Improve communication, both internally and externally
- 2) Improve the student experience
- 3) Improve preparation for life after Edinburgh
- 4) Build partnerships
- 5) Secure more resources
- 6) Increase international awareness among staff
- 7) Clarify accountability and responsibility for international issues

Professor Hillier pointed out that Edinburgh was an international University with strengths across the academic spectrum. It was a challenge to get all 22 Schools and three Colleges working in a coherent way in the community and to broadcast the message to the rest of the world. The University needed to build on its already impressive profile: it was already at the top and needed to stay there. In 2009 Central Management Group agreed to implement the strategy and established twelve projects. These included governance, the worldwide web, marketing, interaction with Development & Alumni, working with Recruitment and Admissions and the International Office, services and support activities, finance and planning objectives, controlling research and intellectual property and international student support. These areas were clearly linked, but were broken down into manageable areas. A launch workshop was held in January 2009.

The International Office would undertake further market research and also encourage home students to get involved in international experiences. It had evolved into an excellent recruitment agency, but that was only part of its role. It was now necessary to focus on major markets. There had been a focus on mainland China, and this continued in Taiwan and Hong Kong, as well on North America and India. Home students were being encouraged to gain greater international experience through ambassadorial schemes, an exchange promotion strategy, student exchange clinics and a website to encourage communication with other students. The University already had an office in China; this year the Beijing Office had moved into the diplomatic compound which houses the Embassies and the Consulate-General. An equivalent operation will be opened in Mumbai in India later this year. Targets set for international student numbers had been met or exceeded. Resources were allotted to Colleges from Internationalisation Strategy funds to encourage new international, global strategies and new ways of broadcasting academic initiatives across the University. There had been a large increase in postgraduate research, postgraduates taught, undergraduates taught and visiting students over the last four years. Most of these had come from the United States and China. Other non-UK students came in significant numbers from the rest of Europe, including Germany and Ireland. He also mentioned the launch of the Julius Nyerere and Desmond Tutu Scholarships the previous year and the strong connections with China through multiple research collaborations, student exchange programmes and individual visits.

Professor Hillier concluded his talk by saying that General Council Meetings in Washington DC and Hong Kong were also part of the internationalisation strategy.

In March, the Academic Standing Committee met with Dr Morag Donaldson, Senior Lecturer, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, College of Humanities & Social Science, and Dr Martin Reekie, Senior Lecturer, School of Engineering, College of Science and Engineering, to discuss the role of Directors of Studies. The EUSA Vice-President for Academic Affairs had expected to come to the meeting but had to withdraw at a late stage because of another commitment.

Dr Donaldson's experience as a Director of Studies (DoS) had been with students on the BSc Biological Sciences (Psychology) course, mostly based in the College of Science and Engineering. More recently, as Head of Psychology and then as Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the College of Humanities & Social Science, she had worked closely with Directors and had experienced the system from different perspectives. A crucial part of the system was liaison with other service providers within the University. As Dean, she was a member of a task group on academic and pastoral support, under the auspices of the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee. Most members of staff at Grade 8 and above in the College of Humanities & Social Science were expected to act as Directors except in their first year. A Student Support Officer role had also been created to support students and help with more administrative and pastoral work. The College also had Senior Directors and development of the system was still evolving.

The role of the DoS covered various aspects. The core role was directing studies; course choices, difficulties with progress and advising students wishing to change direction. As the latter two often involved pastoral support, this was also part of the role. The DoS therefore required a lot of knowledge and a wide set of skills. In terms of training and guidance within the College, there was a College-level session at the start of each academic year for Directors and Student Support Officers which involved input from Dr Donaldson, the Associate Dean (Academic progress); and student support services such as the Counselling Service, the EUSA Advice Place and the Careers Service. Schools also undertook their own training. It was hoped that the Institute for Academic Development would provide in-service training for Directors. Important guidance documentation existed and was regularly updated; individual Schools also had their own documentation. Assessment of performance and feedback was generally of an informal nature and sometimes came via staff appraisal, through issues that arose or where something that had gone wrong, or through students approaching a Head of School/Subject Area about their concerns.

Dr Martin Reekie approached the subject from his personal experience of being a DoS. He considered that the University had three main goals: to educate young people; to undertake research; and to generate income. For him the education of young people was the most important of all. He believed that the University had a duty of care to its students, both legally and morally, and that the DoS system supported this duty. In his School currently about half of the academic staff was appointed Directors of Studies, each with about 10 to 15 students. There were three 'Senior Directors' who each dealt with about 35 to 50, and he handled about 65 students, often the more complex ones.

Non-pastoral problems included such issues as course choices, dealing with late submissions, writing references and proof of student status. While such issues could be dealt with by anyone who had been suitably trained, such as a Student Support Officer, the contact with the DoS and time spent with students helped to build relationships so that students would be more willing to approach the DoS with their problems. Pastoral problems were more difficult to handle. Students could suffer financial difficulties which had consequences for their performance, and in this case they would be referred to the Advice Place. Depression was becoming more of a problem and it was important to know when to refer a student to Student Counselling. Other problems included family difficulties, chronic illness and relationship break-downs; these could be very time-consuming as there were no obvious solutions. Support services available to students included Counselling, the Advice Place, Wardens, GPs, the Disability Office and other Directors, but all were overloaded. There was no special provision for overseas students who were spread proportionally among Directors. Training provided by the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Assessment was very good from the technical,

non-pastoral angle, but less so from the pastoral point of view. Being a DoS was time-consuming; on the other hand, the job was very satisfying and provided the opportunity to build stronger relationships with students and make a real difference to their lives.

3 Report of the Constitutional Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 12 June 2010

Convener of the Constitutional Standing Committee: Mr Ralph V Parkinson

The Committee has met on three occasions since February 2010. As members of the General Council are aware, it is intended to introduce online voting for General Council elections in order to provide members with more choice on how to vote. The software to enable online elections to take place is being developed in liaison with the University's Information Services (IS), Development & Alumni and the Students' Association (EUSA), and progress is now well advanced. The process has been overseen throughout by Dr James Gilmour, the representative of the Electoral Reform Society in Edinburgh, in order to ensure that the General Council's online voting procedures conform with ERS guidelines. The software will be thoroughly tested through a mock election before the system is accepted.

In order to enable online voting to take place, the Ordinance which governs elections will require amendment and, as already notified to members, the University Administration on behalf of the Committee is in contact with the Privy Council with a view to simplifying the existing Ordinance, which would allow changes in procedures without recourse to the Privy Council on every occasion when the changes required may be very minor. Any change would still require the approval of the University Court. A reply from the Privy Council is awaited. Bearing the various timetables in mind, it is likely that online voting will be introduced in February 2012.

The Committee has received approval from the Business Committee for the proposal to rationalize the lengths of periods of office for members of the Business Committee and General Council Assessor members. A Motion will be published in the winter 2011 issue of *Billet in Edit* for approval at the February 2011 Meeting of the General Council. Supporting documentation and the full detail of the proposed changes will be available on the General Council website from November 2010. Copies will also be available at the Half-Yearly Meeting on 12 February 2011, and may be obtained from the General Council Office beforehand on request.

The Business Committee was invited in November 2009 to comment on proposals which the University is making to amend the Commissioners' Ordinance, which governs the employment arrangements for academic staff. The Constitutional Standing Committee has considered the proposal in detail and has advised the Business Committee. The Business Committee has now approved the new Ordinances 209 and 210, which will replace the Commissioners' Ordinance, and will enable the University to have consistent, transparent and flexible employment practices and procedures for all staff which are compliant with good practice and relevant legislation, and which fully protect academic freedom.

4 Report of the Finance and Services Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 12 June 2010

Convener of the Finance and Services Standing Committee: Ms Doreen Davidson

The Finance and Services Standing Committee has met twice since the previous report to the General Council. At the meeting on 14 January 2010, Mr Jon Gorringer provided the Committee with a helpful overview of the University's current financial position, referring to the Reports and Financial Statements for the year to 31 July 2009.

The University turnover had increased by 6% to £592 million and a surplus of just under £4 million had been achieved. This was an encouraging performance particularly in view of the very difficult global economic climate. Some of the issues contributing to this positive position had been strong international student recruitment, particularly to the Business School, improved controls on

recruitment as well as robust financial management and cost control. It was also important to note that as part of the international strategy a new Vice-Principal International had been appointed since income was not the only consideration, i.e. it was important to be able to attract the best people to the University.

Mr Gorringe advised that the University continued to focus expenditure on delivering its strategic plan. He reported that high levels of expenditure had been incurred on long-term maintenance as a result of the Library refurbishment project and that this was being well received given its importance to many people.

Other significant capital expenditure items included the following building projects, i.e.

- The Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine
- The new Veterinary School
- The Easter Bush Research Consortium for the research of the Roslin Institute

A significant cost for the University (and indeed many commercial organisations) related to the University's pension scheme for staff. This issue was being regularly monitored to ensure ongoing sound financial management of these liabilities.

The next meeting was held on 4 March 2010 and this was attended by the University's Human Resources Director, Mrs Sheila Gupta.

At her previous meeting, Mrs Gupta had provided an update on issues such as leadership, development, internationalisation, etc. and confirmed that these remained important issues for the University. At this meeting, however, she provided an overview on a range of additional topics, which were currently key objectives for her.

These include:

- Commissioners' Ordinance (CO)
- Recruitment strategies
- Performance and development reviews
- Managing in the current economic downturn
- Researcher development
- Equality and diversity

The Commissioners' Ordinance had been created by Government in 1992 as a result of the 1988 Educational Reform Act (ERA). Over time, these have become out of tune with current employment legislation. Mrs Gupta explained, therefore, that her task was to work with the Privy Council to address these conflicts and to find a solution which suited all parties concerned.

This strategy was in line with other Russell Group Institutions which had successfully amended their regulations to align them with relevant legislation. Mrs Gupta noted that Edinburgh University was working in conjunction with both Glasgow and St Andrews Universities on this topic. The University of Edinburgh was also working closely with the trade unions to modernise the University's policies, and a Draft Ordinance had been submitted to the Privy Council for their review and comment.

Ms Gupta also discussed recruitment strategies with the Committee as this was another key priority for the University. A positive development was the plan to replace the current online application system with one that would make the application process easier and more efficient for both applicants and recruiting managers, and which would be integrated into the University systems. She was also in discussion with the UK Border Agency to try to revise some of the rules which were proving damaging to the education sector.

Another important initiative being led by Mrs Gupta was the update of the website to provide new web guidance to managers on the University's recruitment policy. The aim was to make this more flexible and she and her team were working with managers to achieve this. They were also introducing the concept of a 'talent register' to highlight available positions within the University.

On the topic of researcher development, Mrs Gupta confirmed that the University was implementing the principles of the UK Concordat, which encouraged good practice and management within the research community, which Research Councils require as a condition for grant awards. She advised that there was a range of programmes underway which would be very beneficial (for example there was one which was aimed at enhancing leadership and management skills and another which was focused on developing effective personal development plans).

In discussing Equality and Diversity policy, Ms Gupta informed the Committee that a new website had been launched and that an e-diversity tool would shortly be available which staff could access as and when they needed it. A large number of universities already had this tool, so it was well tried and tested. In addition, the University now had a Dignity and Respect Policy to provide support and guidance covering both staff and students.

5 Report of the Public Affairs Standing Committee

for the General Council Meeting on 12 June 2010

Convener of the Public Affairs Standing Committee: Dr Mike Mitchell

The Public Affairs Standing Committee has met twice since the report to the General Council meeting on 13 February 2010.

Following the February Half-Yearly meeting, Dr Anthony d'Offay the well known art collector and philanthropist, was the after-Lunch speaker. He gave a most interesting and inspiring talk on his lifetime in modern art with particular reference to the importance of stimulating the educational and cultural aspects of art for the young and the curious. The event has been successfully filmed and it is hoped to mount an edited version on the General Council website.

The Committee has continued to work closely together with Development & Alumni to make preparations for a successful meeting of the University and the General Council in Hong Kong in June 2010. Broadly following the successful programmes previously established in Paris and Washington, a full programme of seminar and social events has been planned in addition to the General Council Half-Yearly Meeting on Saturday 12 June. The seminar is on the very timely topic of the economics of climate change. The attractive programme of social events is in place with some unusual and interesting venues. Full information is available on the General Council website and in the winter 2010 and summer 2010 issues of *Billet* within *Edit*. It is anticipated that this will be a highly successful event with keen participation from General Council members in Hong Kong and mainland China.

The Public Affairs Standing Committee has continued to monitor the work of the Media Group, the sub-group studying the future use of media promotion. The live webcasting of General Council meetings has continued with increasing numbers of viewers. It was further enhanced during the February meeting with live input of emailed questions from those who had connected remotely. It is planned to have more video clips available on the General Council website which will illuminate and enhance the work of the General Council. In view of the increasing importance of these new media channels both for communication and learning, a special session arranged by the Committee was held in May 2010 which focused on this topic with input from across the University.

The sculpture 'The Unknown' by Kenny Hunter has continued to generate interest in the Queen's Medical Research Institute (QMRI). A lecture was given by Kenny Hunter at QMRI on 31 March in conjunction with Ms Pat Fisher of the Talbot Rice Gallery. This was well attended and very well received by both QMRI staff and Business Committee and General Council members.

There will be a Festival Reception and Exhibition Viewing at the Talbot Rice Gallery on Thursday 26 August. This has been arranged jointly with the University of Edinburgh Graduates' Association with the most constructive help of Pat Fisher, Curator of the Gallery. For Festival 2010, the Gallery celebrates the art of painting with two notable exhibitions; Julie Roberts (British 1963), one of the most important painters of her generation, whose often disturbing realistic images of human figures, dolls, mannequins and anatomical models have a strong feminist narrative and refer to the frailties of the human condition; and a memorial exhibition celebrating the achievements of the outstanding painter Craigie Aitchison (British 1926 - 2009), which includes his iconic still life, portrait and landscape paintings, suffused with colour. All are encouraged to attend and details will be available in *Billet* within *Edit* and on the website.

The Committee has also been working on the arrangements for future General Council Meetings in 2011. The February meeting will be in Old College as is traditional and the June 2011 Meeting will be held in King's Buildings. This will enable members to see at first hand the extensive modernisation carried out and further developments at King's Buildings.

6 Meetings of the Business Committee

The Committee has met twice since its last Report was printed, viz. 18 April and 27 May 2010.

Papers from the General Council Meeting on 13 February 2010

A Presentation of the Annual Report of the University

at the General Council Meeting on 13 February 2010

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

It is really a great pleasure to again present the Annual Report to you, which is in this particular format is an *Annual Review* ably produced by Dr Ian Conn and his colleagues. It is a very successful document and works really well for a variety of constituencies. Just in overall comment on the University's standing, the world league table that is taken the most seriously for two years had us 23rd, and then we moved up to 20. As a mathematician, a prime number - 19 or 17 - would have been good, but we are stuck with what may be a boring number, but it does allow us to project being in the World Top Twenty and that is very good for staff recruitment, and very good for the students. This has to be taken fairly seriously: 40% of it comes from the opinions of academics around the world about our subjects; and 10% of the score comes from the opinion of international employers about our graduates. We scored 16 in the world for that. Other elements of the score come from the international nature of the student body and the staff body. There is suddenly quite a dynamic rankings business and the two bodies that are responsible for that ranking have disagreed, and this particular ranking will be replaced by two competitive rankings next year, so we wait with interest to see where we are. I would draw your attention in the *Annual Review* to the vision indicated at the back to attract and develop the world's most promising students and most outstanding staff. I draw your attention to our mission to enhance our position in the world's highest quality learning and teaching, graduates fully equipped for employment and to make significant and sustainable and socially responsible contributions. With our reputation, we do seem to be attracting all sorts of attention. Yesterday we hosted a visit from the Leader of the UK Opposition. David Cameron came and visited the King's Buildings site and visited projects to do with carbon capture, generation of energy from wind and the generation of energy from waves. He also took the opportunity to speak to a range of television cameras with the University as a backdrop. The Chancellor of the Exchequer arrived at one o'clock in our Informatics Building, where he visited robots and databases and various things and stood on our roof garden to make interesting comments to the BBC and other television cameras. We do seem to be getting a lot of high quality interest and obviously that is good for us.

I will focus on the report. You don't need to go through it as I take you through it, particularly as I am going to take you through it backwards because that works slightly better for this sort of talk, but I will give you a few points later on that if you are looking you might want to look at. Probably one of the most important things, and perhaps the most important thing in it, is right at the very back in Appendix 4 with our competitive research grant income which rose to £249 million. That really is a massive success for the University. That £249 million was all competed for against fairly fierce competition and that represents more than 1,000 awards, some of which are quite large. Forty of those awards are more than £1 million and some of those awards are quite modest (for individual studentships or individual fellowships), but it means that our colleagues were successful more than 1,000 times. £249 million is very substantial. The other thing that is very important, and I would encourage you to have a look at Appendix 4 and to think about it a little bit, is if you look at where the money is coming from, about a quarter of the sources listed are non-UK, that is, we are talking about overseas government, overseas charity, and overseas industry, and I have lumped together in my mind UK and the European Union, since quite a lot of that money is coming from the European Union. Then an awful lot of that money is coming from the UK Research Councils. Something that is very important when you look at it is that it is not just money that is coming from Scotland, or Britain or Europe, it is a resource that is coming from a range of places in the world and it is coming from charities, from government and from specialised funding bodies. It really is a very good omen for us, and it is also something quite good to echo back to the Scottish Government. You will be aware that less than 30% of our turnover of around £600 million is formula funding from the Scottish Government. If you look at the money for quality research, I can say to the Scottish Government, as I do repeatedly, for each £1 they give us in formula research funding, this University generates another £4 that is spent in Scotland, so it is a very fair deal indeed. They spend around £60 million and as a consequence £249 million is spent in this University on important research purposes. So if I was going to pick out a single objective sign, because obviously research

international rankings are nice but they are subjective, there is something pleasingly objective about more than a thousand decisions to give us money that come together to more than £249 million, so that is very good. I then move to Appendix 3 just to draw your attention to the wide range of benefactors, trusts, individuals, and particularly draw your attention to the Carlyle Circle, that is those that have chosen to be in a club where they have decided to make a definite legacy provision to the University. The Carlyle Circle is extraordinarily jolly; I get to host it a couple of times of year. It has its own meetings, and it is really a very good thing when we take a long-term view of the University.

Appendix 2 gives you the student data; on the undergraduate side, just under 50,000 applications for around 5,000 places, so it is operating at around 10:1. If you look at our student body, it has risen steadily. It is now 27,000 students, 19,000 of whom are undergraduates. One of the issues we have, and we have not really caught up fast enough with just how popular we are, is that most people who apply to us are given an offer accept. So in having 19,000 undergraduates, it is about 1,000 too many. That is to say, we look at the money we are given for home/EU students, we are teaching more students than we are paid for and we are trying to correct that because we want to ensure that we get the absolute quality of experience for our student body. If you look at the other 8,000 students, they are pretty much evenly divided, not quite evenly divided, about 4,000 or slightly more are doing doctorate degrees with us and another 4,000 are doing Masters degrees and one would like to see many more students doing Masters. Those 4,000 students doing doctorates are very, very important for our future. Ten or twenty years from now they will be holding positions of responsibility with their PhDs in universities and research laboratories, in industry and in government all around the world, but they will remain connected to us as having learnt how to be autonomous researchers here. If you look at the countries where our overseas students are coming from, the top remains the United States, about 1,500. That is very good because the United States has the strongest university system in the world. Once you start saying to yourself, Harvard, Yale, MIT, Stanford, Berkeley, you see that, and for the rest of the world it is quite important to see students who could be applying to Harvard or Stanford, instead choosing to come here. The second group is from the Peoples' Republic of China and then, in order of our top ten, Germany, Greece, Canada, Republic of Ireland, France, Poland, Malaysia and then Italy. We are expecting India to get into our top ten.

If you look at Appendix 1, you will see what a wide range of professorial appointments we have. We are appointing to the absolute highest standard: it is an impressive set of individuals and if you look at the Chair titles, it really does demonstrate the great comprehensive nature of this university. All sorts of awards; the one I would particularly highlight Professor Sir Neil Douglas, whose work in the School of Clinical Sciences and Community Health has been rewarded by a knighthood. If you look at the honorary graduates it reflects wonderfully on the University, wonderfully on its international nature, so Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Justice Unity Dow from Botswana and Julia Sebutinde from Sierra Leone. Then, Sir David Murray, Aly Bain and Phil Cunningham, and obviously for us, and particularly standing in his building one is very aware of it, a very emotional ceremony where we awarded an honorary degree to the late Professor Sir Neil McCormick.

If you come to the financial review, you will see that our turnover has moved from £555 million to just over £592 million. To put that in context for you, six or seven years ago we were about the size of three average British universities, now we are about the size of four, so we are a substantial enterprise. Each of our three Colleges on its own compares perfectly reasonably with an ordinary British university. We have a surplus of £4m. Our position in terms of our net assets stays around the same, which under current circumstances is good, at about £1.1 million. Very much, if you like, of 'steady as we go', but that increase of £37 million in turnover is a 6.5% increase. If you think of what has been happening in regard to inflation, that is real growth in the University, quite a lot of real growth that is happening there. In the year there was £54 million of capital expenditure. The key projects were the refurbishment of the Main Library, and if you have not been in it recently, you should go and look at the ground and first floor, which have really come on wonderfully; the initiation of the work in the Vet School and Roslin, about £100 million of work now initiated out at Easter Bush; and the Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine which is going on at apace. The next few years will be trying times. The 29% that we get in formula funding from the Scottish Government will be under fierce pressure, and we have already seen in England recently the Higher Education Funding Council for England reducing its formula allocations. That will take a while to work through as it were to the Scottish system through subsequent budgets and any budget there might be after a UK Election, which would obviously follow up on whatever budgetary discussions we have in Scotland. If we stick to our normal autumn pre-budget round we expect pressure there and also we expect like everybody pressure on pensions.

So, it is going to be a demanding time, but the comforting observation is that we are one of the three or four strongest universities in Britain in financial terms; a very strong position both in reputation and in financial terms. To pick out some highlights, the University is getting very good support from Santander, which started by supporting the Business School and then moved on to supporting scholarships. Emilio Botin, Chairman of Santander, came in August and addressed an audience, provided us with twenty additional scholarships and also provided an increase in the other funding they were giving us. They have actually provided us subsequently with further funding, so giving good support, particularly focused on the movement of students and staff between our University and high quality institutions in the Iberian Peninsula.

Something the General Council ought to be very pleased about is, a few years ago, when I gave a bullish account of our international position, somebody in the audience pointed out, correctly, that an area where the University was probably weakest was Latin America, and I thought about it afterwards and concluded that that was absolutely right, we were weak with regard to Latin America, and now with help and funding from Santander we are getting scholarships. I took part recently in a visit organised by Santander to leading Universities in Argentina, Brazil and Chile, establishing partnerships. There are some very strong universities, I wasn't aware how strong some of the universities were, such as the Pontifical University of Chile, or the University of Sao Paulo, and nor was I aware of what a positive feeling there is towards the United Kingdom and Scotland, Scotland particularly. We have successfully supported more medicine and more football to South America than I was aware of, and there was a very nice echo there. I shall in a couple of months be going to meet a lot of Latin American Rectors in Mexico at a Latin American conference organised by Santander, and I shall also shortly be addressing the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities, so there are good connexions there. We were very pleased to get support from the Gates Foundation on childhood pneumonia in Africa, a very important endeavour and the Gates Foundation is really quite visionary in terms of where it puts money. In terms of our own endeavours, this is an important partnership. We are doing very well on the carbon footprint and what is very pleasing is that we have essentially three Schools in the University which have a leadership role. The School of GeoSciences has a leadership role in terms of the actual scientific basis of climate change and environmental issues with great strengths. Of course, the person we had to introduce David Cameron to yesterday morning was Professor Stuart Haszeldine who came up with the original concept of carbon sequestration, which is accepted worldwide as one of the vital plans for controlling carbon. Alongside there is the issue of carbon engineering, and we have recruited what I think is the strongest team in the United Kingdom, which left Imperial College and joined us under the leadership of Professor John Gribben. They are doing very well indeed and that is the actual engineering; how you control the carbon dioxide, how you get it to where you want it under the North Sea and how you keep it there. We are getting a lot of help; Scottish Power has now taken on the funding of Professor Haszeldine's Chair and given us other support. As well as GeoSciences and Engineering, the Business School has a buoyant Masters course on the economics of carbon trading. In partnership with Haymarket Media, it also has a tool kit which is very successful so that companies can assess their carbon footprint. And in terms of doing this the University is very conscientious about that and we ourselves have got the Carbon Trust Standard, one of the first universities in Scotland to be accredited for the work that we do in controlling our own carbon dioxide.

There is a very good account of Dr Jim Wilson's work on genetic factors influencing various diseases. Scotland has tremendous assets for medical research, because Scotland is a country which historically has not seen very much inward immigration and people have been very compliant with the medical authorities in allowing medical records to be kept. Jim Wilson is working in Orkney, which is particularly rich in stability and medical audit, if I can put it that way. It is very important, because it allows us to see that there is not a single gene which causes schizophrenia but there is a genetic pattern that one could look for, and obviously if you have got the medical records of successive families and you also have the medical records of the people that those families marry into, then you are in a position to do quite serious research and Dr Wilson and colleagues are doing very important work there. Professor Michael Zaiser has been doing very important work on avalanches, which turn out not to be caused in the way people think they are caused. Apparently when you hear the characteristic 'whoomph' sound, which is the thing that makes you very scared if you are on a mountain, people thought that the 'whoomph' sound was the ice and snow coming down towards you, but it is not. The 'whoomph' sound, as Professor Zaiser has determined using lots of little sensors, is a layer of fragile snow and ice falling downwards, compacting the ice and giving it a good old shake, and then it is in the pause that you need to get worried, a little bit after the 'whoomph' sound. Scotland unfortunately lacks high quality avalanches, but it turns out that some of our snow is quite good for doing fundamental avalanche

research, but predictions have to be tested in places like Switzerland, and the work is going very well. It is important if one can look and say; 'Just a minute, in a day or two we are going to hear a 'whoomph' sound, we can say to people, 'Don't go skiing there'.

There is quite a lot of very important work going on in the Students' Association, and I am very pleased that Dr Conn and his colleagues have explained that. We are heading toward 200 student societies and a good quarter of them are directly philanthropic or altruistic in some way. They sometimes have odd titles, so there is the 'Dirty Weekenders' and what they do is, they head off on a Friday evening with shovels and buckets and they clean a piece of the countryside or they clean an important old property that has got into a state and they spend two days working in the way that students can, extremely hard with their buckets and brooms and shovels, and they choose a piece of woodland that merits a good clean. One of the things that the students do, and has got really developed, is helping other charities, that is donating their own evolving accountancy and planning and computer skills to small charities which are limited in the amount of professional work they can manage, and that is a big thing that they are doing. For a long time they have worked on children's holiday ventures. The medical students do all sorts of good things, but particularly on patient outreach. This is not amateur medicine but is very much on the social side of supporting people who have got illnesses. For me, one of the things that opened my eyes was when Mary McAleese, the President of Ireland, came here. She went to the convent to talk to our students who work with the homeless, and I discovered that we have about 200 students who two or three times a week will go and make food, or help homeless people do their washing or they will sit at the computer and help homeless people apply for benefits they are entitled to or get on job registers. Deeply impressive and slightly disconcerting that the President of Ireland was more aware of it than I was, and that was obviously through her connexion with the Sisters of Mercy, but it was a very impressive sight. So I think we should be very proud of the students doing this and also be very keen to praise them for the activity. In the old days the students used to be in the Labour Club, or the Liberal Club or the Conservative Club and used to throw bags of flour or nasty things at each other, particularly if they were medical students, during Rectorial elections. Nowadays, students do not do that, nowadays students are working for Amnesty International or People and Planet and I have to say that as well as saving on cleaning in Old College, it is really commendable. This year for the second year, we have the Student Teaching Awards, a wonderful thing where the students themselves decide which teachers they want to reward. Last year there were 2,700 nominations of 625 staff in about 200 courses and 40 departments. This year there are going to be considerably more nominations, but very nice and it was done at a glamorous awards ceremony with a red carpet and clapping and such. Very, very nice, and without any formal university intervention the students have organised a high quality way of recognising the leading teachers and the courses that provide the highest quality teaching provision.

Work on Diaspora Studies is also well mentioned, and it is very important that we have a leadership role here through the work of Professor Devine and other colleagues, and the visionary gift of Alan and Anne McFarlane of £1 million towards that work. The last point I would highlight is the work of the University in the Universities Allied for Essential Medicines, and that is universities getting together and controlling the intellectual property-related costs of medicines that are very important for the Third World and essentially saying to the pharmaceutical companies, 'If you are going to take this intellectual property from us, then you can sell it in California for what ever you like, but this is the maximum you can sell it for in the poorer parts of Africa and in India'. We have got a fourth year medical student, Armani Mansuri, working with Professor David Webb doing very important work which actually has direct impact on the affordability of key medicines in areas like sub-Saharan Africa. I will finish with two big areas that are mentioned in the Report. Our international strategy going global, going very well, and really ably led by the new Vice-Principal in that area, Professor Stephen Hillier. Very happily that was announced by Mike Russell MSP before he became the Cabinet Secretary responsible for us, but he was really very keen on our international strategy and came to Pollock Halls to announce it. All sorts of important partnerships, the very long-standing one with Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, is the one that is highlighted there, but there is a lot of good work. I think that the concept that Professor Hillier has come up with of the University taking leadership in global health academies is very good indeed, and a little later this year we will see the formal opening of our India Office. And then lastly I should remind you about the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), a very important marker for status, and it is the thing that generates our formula funding of quality research. After the 2001 Exercise, and the 2008 Exercise, which was reported in December 2008 and is in the document, it is really quite key for us to be unequivocally ranked as top in hospital based clinical medicine in the United Kingdom. That is not an easy competition. We were fighting Cambridge, Imperial and UCL and obviously St

Thomas' and Guy's and we won, which is very satisfying indeed. We are also now unambiguously top in Veterinary Studies, top in Linguistics and of course Informatics, where we were unambiguously top in 2002 and we are now even more unambiguously top in computer science, an even stronger position in 2008. In volume terms, the amount of work that was rated as having high international importance increased by 23% from 2001 to 2008. There are some very important partnerships, with Heriot Watt in mathematics which went very well, and with St Andrews in Chemistry. The key partnership, which was a great success, was that with Edinburgh College of Art where in 2001 our Architecture submission did not do well at all, and their Architecture did not do well at all. Our joint submission, collectively through our combined strengths, resulted in us coming third in the United Kingdom, again against very strong competition. Cambridge, Oxford, UCL and Manchester all have very strong Architecture, but combined with Edinburgh College of Art, we did very well there, and our combined School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture is doing very well.

In concluding, I would like to thank our members of the General Council for their support. Particular thanks to the three General Council Assessors on the Court, they work extremely hard. I was deeply impressed, in my role as the Chairman of JISC, I was at an all day meeting with the Leadership Foundation of Higher Education which met near Covent Garden, with lots of chairs of governing bodies from different universities, but very pleased to see Mrs Margaret Tait and Professor Ann Smyth being very conspicuous participants for the University of Edinburgh. We get an awful lot of important work there and obviously lots of valuable input from the Business Committee. I would want to echo what Alan said about Ann Matheson, she was an absolute star in the contribution she has made to the wider community, and I am delighted that Victoria Crowe produced such a magnificent portrait, and finally I am really looking forward to Hong Kong. Like Alan, I am sure it will be a tremendous success. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Mr Malcolm Errington: Principal, it was pleasing that you noted the awards given by the students for high quality teaching. Does the University have any formal mechanism for recognising high quality teaching among your staff. For example, would this be a factor in promotion, or would that be entirely a function of high quality research output?

Principal: Teaching is one of the three things if you look at the templates for promotion for, say, from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer or to a Personal Chair. It covers three areas; it covers teaching, it covers research; and it covers other contributions, which might be internal administration or it might be the administration of learned societies. Teaching is taken very seriously in that regard, and we have a new category of Personal Chair, and you will have noticed for example that Stuart Sayer, who is a leader in how economics is being taught, has got a personal chair in Economics Education in the current round. So we have mechanisms with appropriate paperwork to reward teaching, including, which is little bit unusual in our sort of university, we will award a personal chair on the basis of an outstanding contribution to teaching.

The Rev. Dr Alison Fuller: I would like to thank the Principal for his report. I look forward to reading it due course, but just as a point of clarification perhaps, I know it was a throw-away remark about the activities of students then and now as it were, but in the mid-60s there was an organisation known as the University of Edinburgh Settlement which facilitated undergraduates, and postgraduates too, to do work in the community, something like what is described on pages 14 and 15 [of the *Annual Review*], only it is much more developed now, but I would not like people to think that the University was entirely for all the time for people who threw bags of flour at each other, although that happened occasionally. Thank you.

Principal: Thank you for that point, and certainly the history of different University Settlements which date back to the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century would be a good example of students in different universities doing altruistic work. But when one looks at the numbers it is really quite striking, that if you do something simple like divide societies into those that have a political purpose, those that have a cultural purpose and those that have altruistic purpose, what you will see now is very large numbers of students and large numbers of societies which are essentially altruistic. I was a student in the 60s, and we did good cause stuff and there were rag weeks, but not on the scale that the contemporary Edinburgh student body does it now.

University Secretary: If I might add to that, the University Settlement is an independent charitable body. It carries the name 'University Settlement', but it is not part of the University. Nevertheless the University has provided funding to the Settlement for the last ten years to enable it to support student volunteering activities in a range of ways, and we are currently in discussion with the Settlement on the possibility of renewing that funding for another five years.

Mr Gordon McLachlan: I have a granddaughter completing her studies at school. She has applied to five universities, four have responded, some quite enthusiastically, only one has not responded so far, Edinburgh. Can you explain?

Principal: I am extremely sympathetic to your granddaughter's position. The difficulty is that, as well as being one of the largest universities in Britain, we are also one of the most popular. Our colleagues are dealing at the moment, as we have just past the closing date for UCAS, for the application system, which is at the end of January, with something like 50,000 applications, most of which are of very high quality. The colleagues who do this work cannot easily say, 'Here are 25,000 who definitely cannot come and we will focus on the other 25,000'. Very few people apply to the University of Edinburgh on the basis of a set of qualifications: they are nearly all advised by school teachers. The school teacher would say to them, 'It's a waste of time putting Edinburgh on because there is no way that your Highers or 'A' levels will match up', so those 50,000 applications are nearly all rational, which means they have to be treated with a lot of care and consideration at our end. A University which has much fewer applications can respond much more quickly. We have got to strike a balance between being fair and dealing properly with these 50,000. The thing we can guarantee completely is that the University of Edinburgh will respond to all candidates before they are obliged to make choices and before they are obliged to accept offers. Essentially the way the cycle goes is that there is a period of about four months in which it is legitimate to make applications; that period closed at the end of January. The universities then have two months to make decisions themselves, then the offers go out and in turn the applicants have time to consider, so everybody will hear before they are forced to choose. I am sorry I can't be more helpful than that, but I know from visiting the relevant office that what is in their computers is really a mountain of applications.

Professor Ian Sutherland: Principal, you emphasised the globalisation strategy of the University, and as I attended the second phase launch that Steve Hiller held recently, I am well aware of the amount of effort that the University is putting into it from the administrative point of view. This obviously involves a lot of extra work for selectors, for Directors of Studies and for the actual teachers, who have large cohorts of overseas students in their classes. Is this extra work given adequate support and also adequate recognition of those who have this extra load?

Principal: That is a very good question indeed. Certainly we are steadily putting more and more support in. Particularly in the current economic circumstances, the University has limited resources, but clearly as more activity happens that has an international dimension, clearly one employs more staff who work on that. Certainly leadership in international activity is something that is rewarded and would be a normal basis on which to make a case, so for example, we have a number of quite important jointly offered postgraduate courses with other leading universities around the world, so somebody who takes the initiative to set up a partnership with the University of Florida or the University of Melbourne in an area like palliative medicine or forensic science creates an important new course, that will certainly be taken very seriously, and depending on the quality and scale would be the basis for reward. But there is a bit of a chicken and egg aspect; as the University becomes more international we do over time have to change the profile of where we put our attention.

Lord Cameron: We have a question from outside the room.

Dr Michael Mitchell: This is an historic moment, Lord Cameron: this is the first question you have accepted over the internet. The question is from Mr Philip Gosling, International Relations 2009, and it relates to admission policy. 'Does Edinburgh University use positive discrimination to increase the number of students from state schools, particularly those from deprived areas or poorly performing schools at the expense of more highly qualified ones from public schools?'

Principal: If you look at our website, the basis on which applications are judged is given there clearly. As I explained earlier, we are in the position where we have very, very large numbers of students who certainly in terms of their school qualifications are perfectly equipped to study at the University. One of the factors that is taken into account is the context in which the applying student got their qualifications. Another that is taken into account is their personal statement, their motivation. Another point that is taken into account is the commentary of their school, so judgements are made. A blanket term like positive discrimination does not make sense, but certainly the context in which school qualifications are achieved is looked at.

Dr Michael Mitchell: This question is from Mr Derrick Wrenn, BSc 1974, 'Notwithstanding the current very favourable financial situation, does the University have contingency plans for a substantial reduction in funding in the medium term, for example should the UK economy continue to deteriorate?'

Principal: Yes, senior officers of the University have been engaged in scenario planning, as we are obliged to do. We have to take a long view and we have to look both at the different income sources of the University and the different patterns of expenditure. As I was explaining, the formula funding that we get from the Scottish Government currently represents 29% of our income, and we would see that as over the next three years the area that is most at risk, and we have certainly done scenario planning in terms of the cuts that one could imagine if the UK economy does not improve: that is a very important thing to do. We have also looked very carefully at our patterns of expenditure, about 62% to 63% of our expenditure is on staff salaries, and so far the officers, particularly with the help of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of Court, have managed to stay reasonably well ahead and so you see that for the year I have just reported on, there was a modest surplus, and clearly we have to ensure that the University is sustainable. The only other observation I can make is, if you look at the published accounts, we are one of the four or five strongest universities in Britain, so there are about 145 which are weaker.

Mr Alan Smart: I must compliment you on this magazine: it is very, very well presented. The other thing is, my first job in computing in 1960, fifty years ago, was for a company, I cannot mention the name of course, because it would be advertising. One of the jobs I had to do was for the Personnel Department to list the universities in order of competence, so that when they went out recruiting staff they had a good order. In 1960 Edinburgh was fourth on that list, fifty years ago, and I was very pleased to see last year in the *Financial Times* list, which we used, Edinburgh University is still fourth in the UK, so we are holding our own for fifty years. So the question I have is that the University lets out the George Square Theatre for productions. Does it have any control over what is put on there, as during the Festival there was that dreadful play, the Jerry Springer Show, showing there. It was absolutely disgusting, and I just wondered if the University has any control over what goes on there when it is let out.

Principal: For a lot of the venues in the Fringe, what the University does is that it just lets the venue to a promoter. The Fringe of course famously does not apply editorial control to some 3,000 productions that are put on. Overall, I would have to say that the Fringe is very good news for the University. Approaching two million tickets were sold for Fringe events last summer, of which about one million were with us. There are about 600 staff in the University who get full year contracts because of the Fringe and the other festivals. We are talking about catering, security, cleaning staff. If they worked in other universities, they would be on nine-month contracts - working with us they are busier in August than they are in Freshers Week. It is a very important source of revenue for the Students' Association. One of the reasons we have such a strong and successful Students' Association is because they have an independent income stream from the University, probably the most important of which is selling beer to the people who buy the two million tickets; they buy a lot of beer and that is good for the Students' Association, but rather more importantly, the students get an awful lot of paid and unpaid employment. They are running venues, they are running advertising, they are in charge of the facilities in these different theatres, so I do appreciate that some shows annoy some people, but I think looked as at as a whole the Fringe is an enormous plus and a highlight for us last summer was the Beijing Film Academy's production of *A Midsummer Night Dream* in the McEwan Hall, quite an extraordinary success. A couple of years before, the National Theatre of Scotland did a wonderful production of the 'Black Watch' in our Drill Hall, which was fabulous for the National Theatre of Scotland, but actually also fabulous for the University to have a venue that was involved in that way. So there are an awful lot of pluses to the activity and while we do not have editorial control, it would not be the University's ambition to get it. What we are punctilious about doing is in terms of public order, co-operating extremely well with the police, and we have the last two summers. We have a very good partnership with Lothian and Borders

Constabulary and we have actually paid for some additional officers. We paid for four more officers in the George Square area, who are there in direct support of our colleagues who are engaged in security. Obviously, we have got many more staff out, when you think of the numbers of people who are there. So we are very punctilious about health and safety and about public order, and actually the police use our control room in the base of the Appleton Tower, so we are very, very punctilious on that side.

Ms Jane Kille: As a graduate of the early 70s, I have good memories of radical students, and a contemporary Gordon Brown, although there is no connexion between those two things. It seems as if peace and harmony has broken out amongst students in contemporary universities, particularly in Edinburgh. Is this the case, or do they use now electronic means to voice their opinions, Twitter, Facebook and all these kinds of things? It seems very harmonious, but I wondered if you would like to comment.

Principal: Thank you, I will comment on this in two ways, I will comment in terms of sources of student tension within the University, and then I will put that in a UK setting. This University is fortunate in that most of the debates that occur between groups of students who have conflicting views are conducted in quite peaceful and respectful ways, and that is generally the case. It is certainly the case that students associated with the main political parties conduct themselves in a very orderly way. Yesterday, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was due to visit, I was asked, really in a very respectful way by the students associated with the environment, did I mind if their 'ten ten' sign was stood next to the door through which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would come, and I said no, that was fine as long as no-one was shouting anything inappropriate at him, and that worked very well. We were then asked, 'Was it all right if some students presented a negative petition about RBS to the Chancellor of the Exchequer?' I asked Alastair did he mind, and he was perfectly happy. We asked a few students to come into the building with their petition, and they talked to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a very orderly way. They made their point and it was fine, so that is mostly true. There are some regions of the world where if you like their mirror in the University is a source of tension. One obvious one is the Middle East where students are protagonistic; and also sometimes China. Typically, what happens is not people shouting at each other, but I sometimes get put under pressure to stop somebody else speaking. People say that it is outrageous that the University will let so and so speak and my response is inevitably, which in recent years has worked, is to say, 'Well, if the ambassador of your country wishes to come to the University and express an opposing view they are very welcome, and we will provide them with a venue of the appropriate size'. Occasionally we get some tension on the political side: the political tension, where we have had it, it has either been a reflection of China-Tibet, or it has been a reflection of Palestine-Israel. Where one has fierce attention, which is uncomfortable, is on religious matters. There are some religious groups which are based in the University which are quite intolerant of other groups, and the University has developed with the leadership of Professor Lorraine Waterhouse, an absolutely excellent dignity and respect policy, which again makes it quite clear that we want to provide an environment where, whether it is an intellectual belief, political belief or a religious belief, where it is possible for those to be expressed to people who wish to hear them, without hindrance or discomfort generating from people. I would say though, that the University of Edinburgh is particularly harmonious. For me a high point was when we reopened the refurbished male and female Muslim prayer rooms out at King's Buildings, we had representatives, not just from the Catholic students and from the Quakers, but we had from the Jewish students. I thought that was a very positive reflection that they would come along and be present in a supportive way when the Muslim prayer rooms were being opened. When I lived in London, my office, as Master of Birkbeck, had a sight line into the office of the Director of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and Tim Lancaster, before he resigned, I saw his office twice occupied and certainly in the London environment, but it also true in cities like Manchester and Leicester, there are cities, where because of the ethnic mix, and the scale of it, a political tension amongst the student body, say in relation to Palestine, Israel, or in relation to an issue in other parts of the world, will very quickly be magnified and can very quickly result in incidents of occupation or groups of students being intolerant to each other, and the possibility of having to ask the civil authorities to get involved. I have to give credit here to both the University Secretary and to the Chaplain, and Professor Waterhouse who is not here, as senior officers. We work very hard if we see a point of tension to defuse, because there are other British universities where quite unfortunate things happen and groups of students do feel that they have been turned upon by other groups of students. It is a matter of continual watchfulness and trying to intervene very quickly and say, 'Just a minute, is there some way that you can express what it is that you want to express without upsetting some other people'. So a very good question, it is probably an invisible part of the job of the Secretary and myself, it for us quite an important part of our work to maintain harmony on the campus. At the time of the G8 in

Gleneagles, and clearly because of the protesters who came to the city, that magnified whatever tensions we had in the University, and we had to work very, very hard during the G8 to ensure that the University itself stayed calm.

University Secretary: I wonder if I might supplement that on an almost anecdotal basis, but as the question was asked I was reminded that at exactly this time last year we had an occupation of the George Square Lecture Theatre, and that was the first student occupation we had had for many, many years. There was a group of students who felt very strongly about the action of the Israeli forces in Gaza, they had a particularly strong set of views on that matter, and like many groups of students around the country they occupied a University building in protest. We engaged with those students on a very constructive basis. They made it clear from the outset that they did not want to disrupt teaching, they did not want to do damage, they simply wanted to make their views known. We made it clear to them that they should not be there, they should not occupy University buildings, but then we worked with them and within a few days they left; they left the building in an immaculate condition, they did not disrupt teaching or research or any other university activity and we were able to discuss with them ways in which their concerns for Gaza could be expressed in a positive way in terms of action in support of students in Gaza. We also explained to them that the things the University was willing to do we would have done without a building being occupied if only they had come and spoken to us. But it does illustrate I think that just occasionally students do feel so strongly about something they feel they want to take action, but they do so in a very civilised way and I think it does reflect the very good relationships we have with the student body at this university.

Lord Cameron: I wonder if I might take up one point that you raised, an interesting one about the university's movement towards Latin America, and go to another continent of the world, and just ask you how far is the University engaged in Africa because I note that you have a particular interest in that area?

Principal: We have a Centre for African Studies which is undergoing a bit of a renaissance and which has support, and Africa is really a priority in terms of the work Vice-Principal Hillier is leading in terms of the Global Health Academy, and we are developing partnerships with a range of African universities in that regard, very important part of the agenda. And of course, historically this university, from the mid-19th century was contributing medical expertise, ministers of religion and engineers to Africa, an important part of our history and one that we are very aware of and working on.

Lord Cameron: Perhaps if I might use my membership of the University as a graduate, I might ask another, but completely unrelated question, which is in regard to its collections. How far are you satisfied that the University allows its valuable collections to be made open to the public? This is becoming a matter I think in museums and galleries elsewhere, and we have of course within the University in the Talbot Rice Gallery and in the Library itself, two very valuable institutions for opening to the public.

Principal: The University has wonderful collections and we are steadily working at making them more accessible. Talbot Rice Gallery, led by Pat Fisher, is doing extremely well. By the way, if you have time, I would encourage you to go over to the Talbot Rice some time today. We have two fabulous exhibitions there in partnership with Edinburgh College of Art related to illustration for instruction, some wonderful things there. We have the InSpace facility next to Informatics, which is used for modern displays. We have a very nice piece of exhibition space now in the door of the Main Library, to the left which has got a current display of treasures of the University Collection, and it is important. It is an area where one of the key questions is funding. We were very, very lucky that the two big acquisitions we have had in music recently were accompanied by curative and supportive money. From the Shackleton family we got an absolutely stunning collection of a 1,000 clarinets, e made out of all sorts of materials, and all sorts of different shapes. They were accompanied by enough resources to look after them properly, and, in fact, to produce an absolutely beautiful catalogue in which all 1,000 clarinets are listed. Likewise, when we got the Mirrey Collection of twenty-six antique and really wonderful keyboard instruments collected by the late Dr Mirrey which cover a few hundred years, Dr Mirrey and his wife incredibly generously provided the resources to look after those twenty-six keyboards and to make them accessible, so it is a key question and something that we are working on. The tension point obviously is that people who are curating are not teaching or researching and we have to find ways of funding that activity, but I think we are doing quite well, and I am very hopeful that our partnership with Edinburgh College of Art, where that sort of activity is a routine part of their mission, will allow us to do even more.

Dr Niall Martin: This is a supplement to the last question. I have been long concerned that the University has the valuable resource of the Jameson Mineralogical Collection, which is very important historically because it was available to students who came in the early 19th Century, and it probably partners or is parallel to one in Germany that I know of, the Alfred Werner Collection in Freiberg in Saxony, which comes from about the same time, which is beautifully laid out in a museum, a stunning thing, you pay to go in, but it is so much better treated.

Principal: I am very happy to engage with the School of Geological Sciences to enquire about our collection and report back to the General Council at a future point.

Dr Helen Cargill Thompson: I would like to go back to the admissions problem. When I first went to University at the beginning of the 1950s, there was no UCAS, and you applied individually to individual universities, which kept the applications down. I am wondering whether the time has come that UCAS should be limited to two or three rather than five options, and secondly I would like to know are you told the ranking position of the applicant, in other words is it their first choice or their fifth choice?

Principal: The number of choices on the UCAS form is always debated, and it recently changed from six to five choices. The stakeholders obviously are the universities. It is a difficult matter, so let me explain. If you are a famous and successful university you would rather there weren't too many choices. If you are a university that doesn't get very many applicants you would really like there to be ten or twelve choices on the form on the off chance that you might squeeze in at number eleven or number twelve, so there is a tension in the sector about how many choices there should be. The other stakeholders obviously are the schools themselves, and the pupils, and certainly there is a strong feeling that they want choice and they want to be able to have enough space to go for a range of institutions, which might have different requirements. The way this is resolved is that UCAS is collectively owned by the sector, so each routinely consults and I am not aware that any of the universities or any of groupings of schools are currently agitating for change. The current move from six to five seems to have worked. We are not aware that there is any pressure in the system, but it is something that is thought about a great deal. Essentially, if I can put it this way, weaker institutions and weaker applicants will want more choices, that is going to be in their interest, whereas very strong applicants and strong institutions, from their point of view it would make their life easier if there were fewer.

Mr Peter Freshwater: Can I go back to heritage and collections for a moment? I wondered to what extent the University is building up a collection of its own heritage, its own history. A 400-year old university is expected around the world to have heritage, to display its heritage and to make it available on internets and so on. But I am not aware of any movement within the University to collect things like robes, for instance, the robes down the years, what happens to them, do we have specimens of the toga, do we have specimens of blue blazers, do we have specimens of historic sporting strips, this kind of thing? It is something that we need to bear in mind, our own history, and to find the resources from somewhere to collect it, make it available and generally be part of the University's own history.

Principal: Peter, I am very sympathetic to the question. I am not quite sure how we would go about it or how we would resource it and we do occasionally get gifts of things like old blazers, University memorabilia, and I was very struck at the University of Heidelberg, where they have a very nicely preserved karzer, the prison for disorderly students, they have kept the cells in which they used to imprison the students. Something that was extremely interesting and slightly entertaining was the extremely rude carvings on the wall. We lack such a facility. Seriously, it is a good point and there are some questions. I must say I like the old photographs, student teas in the 18th century, you see the costumes that they wore. I am just not sure myself, and you might have advice on what the locus for that activity might be in the University. It might be something that Dr Conn and his colleagues would want to put in the Information Centre. If you go into UCL, of course, you see the taxidermists work on their founder and he is sitting there in his sedan chair, but perhaps we could have a similar depiction of the University of Edinburgh students through the ages. We do, as far as I know, have a complete set of portraits of past Principals and I have a wonderful portrait of Rollock, the first Principal, which is in my office. Maybe that should be on more public display.

Lord Cameron: I suppose actually, on points made about portraits, you have a history of the University hanging up on the walls of the approach to the Playfair Library Hall and in the Raeburn Room. Of course it interesting about memorabilia, because I think if you go to the Sports Centre you will find a collection there of the older garments, when I say older, perhaps more ancient garments that used to be worn by members of the sports clubs that were extant at the time.

Principal: I can make one comment, Lord Cameron, when you go up to lunch, assuming you are staying for lunch, do look at the top of the stair, because you will see I have had installed a very fine portrait, I think the finest, of James VI. We don't own it, we have some very grumpy ones of him which aren't particularly attractive, but I went to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and persuaded them to lend us their finest James VI, which is now at the top of the Playfair staircase.

The Rev. Dr Alison Fuller: I didn't think this came within the ambit of the Principal's Report, but considering that we have got to the vests and things like that perhaps it does. I would like to know by what sources the lists of the deaths of members of Council are compiled and what efforts are made to check the accuracy, because there is one that quite to me has leapt out last night as being quite inaccurate, but it may have been difficult for people to obtain the information, so I just wonder how these things are done.

University Secretary: The answer is, I cannot answer that but I wonder whether Mary can help.

Mrs Mary Scott: It is based on a database that is kept by Development & Alumni. I am not quite sure what their sources are. People do let them know and there is always a leaflet in *Edit* asking people to let Development & Alumni have further information about anybody who has moved, or is deceased, etc. It is checked as well as it can be, but you will appreciate that there are a lot names on the list and we appreciate being told if any of them are incorrect.

Mr Malcolm Errington: Just interestingly, looking at Appendix 4 and a list of sponsors of other British Universities, does this reflect, given the sponsors, a desire to have Edinburgh as a partner in the particular research field under question?

Principal: Yes, that is exactly right. When you see another university listed there as a contributor, what inevitably will have happened, there will have been a joint application from this university and them for funds, and the funder will have felt from their point of view it was simpler to just give one university the money. Our most frequent partner is Glasgow: if we applied jointly with Glasgow to a trust, and 60% of the resources was sought for Glasgow and 40% for us, what the trust would do is give the allocation to Glasgow in its entirety, with a caveat that 40% had to be transmitted to the University of Edinburgh. For the really big grants it would nowadays be very unusual for there not to be partners. The big Framework Seven from the European Union for example would routinely be with partners. If we get funding from the Gates Foundation, there will be partners.

Mr Alan Smart: Like our friend over there, my granddaughter applied to Edinburgh University along with four or five others, all of which she has heard from, even some as long ago as November and the teachers tell her that statistically there is the same number applying there as there is to Edinburgh. But the point I am raising is that she and her fellow students from her school, which is in Glasgow, they all reported the people who were interviewing them were English, sort of looking down on Glasgow and Glasgow people, they sensed this. Now maybe they are being sensitive, but perhaps you can get it over to your staff that even Glasgow isn't such a bad place. I know there is an understanding that Glasgow isn't quite the standard of Edinburgh but it shouldn't come over at interview. It is not only her being sensitive, her other classmates in all sorts of subjects felt this bias against Glasgow, talking down, as if Glasgow is an inferior place.

Principal: I am really sure that that is an illusion. The Glasgow/Edinburgh thing is very old-fashioned which an awful lot of our staff, not being Scottish, would not even be aware of as a notion. I would be amazed if that was being thought or projected by anybody. Historically, we have had some difficulty with some of the Glasgow schools, which have refused to let University of Edinburgh mission staff come, because they have had a very strong bias towards their best pupils staying in the city of Glasgow, and there has certainly been some schools which were not keen, but actually as far as recruitment and admissions goes, one of things we have done is identify Scottish schools, some of which are in Glasgow, which do not often send applicants to

us, and we have deliberately gone to encourage them so the position is quite the reverse of the perceived position.

Lord Cameron: I should perhaps make this addendum to what the Principal has said. I attended a reception for those who had been awarded first year bursaries at the end of last year. And the impressive thing that I found in going round just talking was how many of those who were in receipt of bursaries came actually from the Glasgow and West of Scotland area, quite remarkably so, and had chosen to come here, so it didn't seem to me at least that there was that particular form of bias which had dissuaded them from coming. No doubt the bursary was an added advantage for them. It was interesting that they all had very good reasons, positive reasons for choosing to come here and no dissuasion at all.

Now I think we have had a very long and very interesting time for questions. Perhaps, before we sign off as it were, I should ask if there are no further questions from abroad. That being so, can I on your behalf first of all thank Dr Michael Mitchell for sitting at the console and as I say producing a effect that was quite unexpected in a new line of questioning. It has involved a lot of work on his part and I would like to thank you on our behalf for what you have done.

Lord Cameron: My final task in this agenda item is to thank the Principal for an enormously interesting and if I may say so, a session which has shown the skills which make him the foremost leader of university life in the United Kingdom, and one which has brought Edinburgh to where it is, the position it is in today. Thank you very much indeed.

B Presentation of the Report of the Business Committee

at the General Council Meeting on 13 February 2010

Convener of the Business Committee: Dr Alan Brown

Chairman, Principal, Members of the General Council: First. I would like to add to what the Chairman has said about the unavoidable absence of the Rector. Mr Iain Macwhirter has been doing an excellent job representing the student community and his illness has concerned us all. On behalf of the General Council I wish him a speedy recovery. Likewise, concerning the Secretary to the General Council, Dr Simon Cunningham, he has made his mark in the few months he has been in post. Again, on behalf of the General Council, I wish him a steady return to full health.

Our sincere thanks go to Mrs Mary Scott, Assistant to the Secretary of the General Council, who in Simon's absence, has so ably and professionally stepped into the breach to ensure that all the work of the General Council Office continues, including the flawless arrangements for this Half-Yearly meeting. Also grateful thanks to Dr Frances Dow, Vice-Convener of the Business Committee, for her help and support during these past busy weeks.

You have been informed that this meeting is being webcast following the success of last June's half-yearly transmission, which was seen by many alumni around the world from the United States to Japan and also throughout the United Kingdom. Today, the process includes the opportunity for members to email questions 'live' and these will be answered, hopefully, by the platform party. Once again we are most grateful to Dr Mike Mitchell, Chairman of the Media Group, and his highly skilled University team who have set up the system. The work of the Business Committee and its Standing Committees continues satisfactorily, and. I am very grateful to the Conveners of the four Standing Committees, Ms Doreen Davidson, Mr Ralph Parkinson, Dr Mike Mitchell and Professor Ian Sutherland for their hard work. Their reports on the work of their Standing Committees are available here today in the *Annex to Billet* and can be consulted on the General Council website.

The Constitutional Standing Committee is taking forward proposals for online voting for General Council elections: members will recall that this was agreed in principle at the Half-Yearly Meeting last June. The Business Committee will shortly receive a detailed update on this important matter.

The Public Affairs Standing Committee and our University colleagues are finalising arrangements for this June's Half-Yearly Meeting in Hong Kong. Many details concerning specific events may be seen on our

website, and information regarding recommended hotels and booking tickets will be posted later this month. I encourage as many of you as possible to take the opportunity of travelling to this fascinating part of the world as the weekend undoubtedly will be as successful and enjoyable as our Washington DC visit in 2008.

I am very grateful for the excellent work the Academic and Finance and Services Standing Committees are doing in engaging with senior academic and professional staff across the University. This has enabled the Business Committee to keep well informed about strategic developments. Also the reports at our meetings from the Court Assessors, Mrs Margaret Tait, Professor Ann Smyth and Mr Douglas Connell, are extremely valuable in drawing to our attention key issues of interest.

I hope you will have read the articles in the recent edition of *Edit* about the launch of General Council Scholarships which are administered by Development & Alumni. These will provide support for students who would otherwise be unable to afford to come to this University. The goal is to build an endowment substantial enough to support these scholarships in perpetuity. A typical award provides £1,000 of support each year for qualifying students. One beneficiary is quoted as saying: 'A thousand pounds a year might not sound a great deal, but it takes the pressure off.' The Business Committee fully supports this initiative and many members have contributed to it. Further details about these Scholarships can be seen on the General Council website.

As members know, Dr Ann Matheson retired as Secretary to the General Council at the end of July 2009 after eight outstandingly successful years. She has been awarded an honorary degree by the University which will be given to her at a special Graduation Ceremony in Hong Kong. At the Convener's Christmas party last December, the Principal unveiled the portrait of Ann by Victoria Crowe which had been commissioned jointly by the General Council and the University. Our financial contribution was most generously given by current and past members of the Business Committee, senior University staff and from the United States/University of Edinburgh Development Trust - all of whom had worked with Ann. The total amount we received exceeded the required figure, so the excess sum has been placed in the General Council Scholarships account. Many photographs were taken at this memorable event and they can be seen on our website. Ann's portrait is now hanging in Old College, outside the Lee Room which is close to the Raeburn Room, and those coming to lunch today may wish to see it.

The Business Committee has been joined by five new members who bring a wealth of varied experience. Mr Michael Conway and Mr Neil Hynd have been members in the recent past, and Ms Jane Kille, Mr Shields Henderson and Professor Ian Sutherland join us for the first time. They have settled in well and I hope they continue to enjoy being involved in our activities.

Finally, Mr Chairman, may I remind members of Council watching this webcast that the Guest of Honour and after-Lunch speaker today is Dr Anthony d'Offay, the distinguished art collector and philanthropist. His talk, which is also being filmed, should be most interesting.

That concludes my report. Thank you.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

There were no questions.