



General Council Meeting of 16 June 2012: Annex to Billet

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

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Papers for the General Council Meeting on 16 June 2012

1 Formal communications from the University Court

The following Draft Resolutions have been received:

- 3/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Biopolitics
- 4/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of e-Science
- 5/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Database Systems
- 6/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computation Theory
- 7/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Economics
- 8/2012 Alteration of the title of the Chair of Educational Research
- 9/2012 Alteration of the title of the Chair of Sport and Education
- 10/2012 Foundation of a chair of Sociology
- 11/2012 Foundation of a Chair of Public Health
- 12/2012 Foundation of a Chair of Veterinary and Comparative Pathology
- 13/2012 Foundation of a Chair of Economics
- 14/2012 Foundation of a Personal chair of Clinical Psychology
- 15/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Linguistics
- 16/2012 Degree of Master of Surgery (Urology)
- 17/2012 Degree of Master of Surgery (Trauma and Orthopaedics)
- 18/2012 Master of Veterinary Sciences
- 19/2012 Postgraduate Studies and Research
- 20/2012 Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 21/2012 Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 22/2012 Higher Degree Regulations
- 23/2012 Foundation of a Chair of Child Protection
- 24/2012 Foundation of a Chair of Sociology and Methodology
- 25/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Individual Differences and Psychometrics
- 26/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Linguistic Semantics
- 27/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Birational Geometry
- 28/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Parallel Computer Architecture
- 29/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Experimental Particle Physics
- 30/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Health Policy
- 31/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Children's Social Inclusion
- 32/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Student Learning (Nurse Education)
- 33/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Translational Anatomy
- 34/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Stem Cell Differentiation
- 35/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Medical Oncology
- 36/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of High Pressure Physics
- 37/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neuroscience
- 38/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Medical Physics and Biomechanics
- 39/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Experimental Nephrology
- 40/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Machine Translation
- 41/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Natural Language Processing
- 42/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Evolutionary Biology
- 43/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Early Modern Literature
- 44/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Politics
- 45/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neurology and Translational Neuroscience
- 46/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Stroke and Elderly Care Medicine
- 47/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Zoological and Conservation Medicine
- 48/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Physical Electrochemistry

- 49/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Electrical Generation Systems
- 50/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Advertising and Consumer Culture
- 51/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Cell Biology
- 52/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of French Literature and Film
- 53/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Thermophysical Engineering
- 54/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Veterinary Epidemiology
- 55/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Epidemiology
- 56/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Carbonate GeoSciences
- 57/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Music, Psychology and Improvisation
- 58/2012 Foundation of a Personal Chair of Molecular Bacteriology

2 Report of the Academic Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 16 June 2012

Convener of the Academic Standing Committee: Professor Ian Sutherland

The Committee has met twice since it last reported to the General Council. In March, Ms Rebecca Graukroger, Director of Undergraduate Admissions discussed admissions principles and policy, competition for places, contextual data and the selection procedure, and the challenges of the current fees and funding regime. As set out in the University of Edinburgh Admissions Principles; “The University is committed to admitting the very best students, who demonstrate the potential to benefit from, and contribute to, the academic experience we offer.” The University’s attracted students from Scotland, the rest of the UK, and around the world. Its commitment to equality of opportunity, diversity and widening participation meant that its students learned in a rich environment. Coming to study at Edinburgh was a transformational experience for many students. Student Recruitment & Admissions (SRA) dealt with 40,500 applications in 2008/9; 16,200 offers were made and 4,200 acceptances. Numbers rose in 2009/10, but decreased in 2010/11 to 40,600 applications leading to 8,600 offers and 2,800 acceptances. This drop in offers was a consequence of the need to deal with previous over-recruitment. For, 2011/12, the number of applications dropped to 34,100, despite Edinburgh being one of the most popular universities in the UK. Asked whether offers were made on the assumption that some people would not take them up, Ms Gaukroger confirmed this was the case as applicants would be making up to 5 choices. It was a case of predicting a) how many would choose to take up their offer; and b) those who would fail to make the grade. Numbers were planned and monitored each year, but that it was not an exact science. The overshoots of recent years would not be repeated, due to changes to the University’s admissions processes. Most decisions were now made after the closing date, in order to treat all applications equally and the University was not exposed to any late surge in applications.

On average there were ten applications for each place, but competition varied between courses. The most competitive subjects were Fine Art, International Relations, Nursing, Social Work, Business Studies, Medicine, History and Politics, Psychology, Medical Science and Veterinary Medicine. This information was readily available on the web; four years’ worth of statistics were published at a time. There were University-wide admissions principles and policies, but decisions were devolved to Colleges. Offers were made on a holistic basis with qualifications considered within the context of the student’s educational background; the subjects and grades, whether qualifications were gained in one diet or re-sits had been taken, students’ personal statements and school references, and whether they demonstrated an insight into what their chosen profession entailed. In some subject areas they looked for relevant experience, especially in Medicine and Social Work. Not many applicants were interviewed. Currently interviews were held for Teaching, Music, Veterinary Medicine, Nursing, Oral Health Sciences and Graduate and Mature entry Medicine. Portfolios were required for Art and Design. The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) was applied to Medicine. Asked about the reliability of references, Ms Gaukroger said that one key element was grade predictions, and the difference between predictions and results was monitored, schools were thus less inclined to overstate the case. Students were expected to be fluent in English and to meet English language requirements, but that did not tend to be a problem because of the high quality of the applicants.

Contextual data was used to establish academic potential from low performing schools, to determine whether students were high achievers in their peer group. The vast majority of applicants and entrants were from high performance schools. Providing increased opportunities for students from under-performing schools was not

taking significant numbers of places from others. More effort was needed to encourage students from lower-performing schools to accept their offers from Edinburgh. Entry requirements were set at subject level, because the minimum requirements to successfully complete the course varied from one subject area to another, for instance in Medicine these were higher than Divinity. Depending on competition for places a variable number of applicants would receive offers. 'Differential offers' made in some subject areas took account of contextual data.

Since the changes in funding introduced by the UK Government two new acronyms had appeared; RUK (Rest of the UK) and SEU (Scottish and EU). Prior to 2012 the Government subsidised a fixed number of UK/EU places and overseas students paid their own tuition fees, so there were two admissions pools, UK/EU and Overseas. The UK/EU pool was very competitive, but in the Overseas pool only Medicine was competitive; there were only seventeen places in Medicine for overseas students each year. From 2012 the Government was subsidising a fixed number of Scottish and EU places, while the RUK and overseas students had to pay their own way, so there were now three admissions pools, Scottish and EU, RUK and Overseas. The Scottish and EU pool was competitive in all areas, RUK was competitive in most areas, sometimes more competitive depending on the subject, and Overseas was only competitive in Medicine. It was difficult to maintain the balance.

The challenges included coping with the additional demand from the EU as they were not charged fees in Scotland; applications from the EU were up 20%. To assist RUK students Edinburgh offered the best bursary package, although other universities across the UK were also providing bursaries. There had been a lack of clarity from the Scottish Government regarding interpretation of the new fee regulations, and universities were not getting good information via UCAS at the application stage, which made it difficult to classify students accurately. It was therefore possible for applicants to change fee status during the cycle, which could have an impact on the management of funded places. They were continuing to attract RUK applicants with the RUK bursary package and were engaging with advisers, teachers, and heads of sixth form, from across the UK, to tell them about Edinburgh's admissions policies. 'The Edinburgh Experience' is a new publication for RUK students and also a 'Fees made Simple' campaign online. Asked whether the numbers of applicants from the RUK was steady, Ms Graukroger said that they were, but variations occurred at College and subject level.

To attract widening participation and diversity, the University had a variety of projects to attract students, run in conjunction with Edinburgh City Council, and other Universities and Colleges in the region, to try to encourage students to think Edinburgh might be the place for them. Definitions of Widening Participation were changing, with the Scottish Funding Council placing particular emphasis on the lowest 20% to 40% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), which was linked to postcode. However, without taking account of geographical context, it would be very challenging for the University to increase its intake from this group.

In April, the Committee received a presentation by Mr Matt McPherson, EUSA President and Mr Mike Williamson, EUSA Vice President Academic Affairs

Mr McPherson thanked the committee for inviting them although their year in office was almost at an end. As President, he worked with three Vice Presidents, and as a student representative on Court worked closely with the General Council Assessors. The Edinburgh University Student's Association was a charitable business with an annual turnover of £9m and had a significant responsibility for enhancing the student experience. Its relationship with the University was one of mutual support. Current financial challenges differed from those faced previously, partly due to the change in the way students were financed. EUSA representation of students went beyond the University to cover the Funding Councils and Quality Assurance Agency. They supported students' academic and social wellbeing by providing opportunities for participation and development through student activities. Edinburgh had the largest number of student societies in the UK at around 280. The Association delivered excellent commercial services to students through four different outlets across the University.

Mr McPherson explained that student support was provided through three levels of engagement; Class Representatives, School Representatives and the four Sabbatical Officers. Class representatives worked

through Student-Staff Liaison Committees while the two representatives from each School sat on the EUSA Student Council and provided a link with School-level staff. The four Sabbatical Officers represented the students at governance level and sat on Court, Senate & Senate Committees; Library Committee, IT Committee and project boards. They had easy access to relevant senior staff, and senior staff were invited to Student Council meetings.

Mr Williamson explained about some recent innovations, including teaching awards. There had been twelve awards this year, and this had proved a very good way of engaging positively with the University. They had also introduced a conference to showcase good practice amongst teaching staff. EUSA's charitable income supported frontline services for student academic and social well-being, including the Advice Place, which had recently moved to more appropriate accommodation within Potterrow and provided advice on a wide range of problems.

Social activities were reported to Court annually and included helping students to get involved with charity work. They were proud to contribute to internationalisation projects, which brought a range of challenges, including helping international students to become part of the community. The Tandem Language Exchange Programme provided an opportunity for students to learn a new language with the help of other students whose first languages were different from their own.

During their period of office Mr McPherson and Mr Williamson had seen the EUSA democratic structure revised. Three councils, External Affairs, Welfare and Academic reported to the central Campaigns and Accountability Forum. This ensured that there were not too many campaigns running at any one time; put questions to the student body, and had a co-ordinating role. The Trustees included the four Sabbaticals and were an apolitical group looking after reputational, local and financial issues. Other achievements included a new 'Personal Tutor' system to replace the previous Director of Studies system to provide one to one feedback, formal recognition of societies involvement and a £1 million refurbishment programme. They had recruited over 1000 community volunteers and had won a Community Relations Award for being best in the country.

Current challenges included students' experience and expectations in a culture where they had to pay fees, which would change their outlook on housing, transport and services provision. Another challenge was maintaining a consistent quality of academic and pastoral support across a large and devolved institution. Consistency was a continuing challenge, and the revision of assessment and feedback methods in schools across the University would be an ongoing issue, despite the introduction of a new system

Future challenges were engagement with distance learners and provision of an infrastructure to cope with this, and the provision of inclusive and accessible learning and teaching. They also felt the need to develop opportunities for EUSA to be more involved in developments at College and School level and to get involved with promoting good practice. They felt that representation was not as good at the bottom level which made it difficult to prevent problems from escalating. They also wanted to see 'widening participation' become a reality by making people feel welcome and providing services that met their budget and needs.

A future meeting has been arranged with the new Principal of Edinburgh College of Art to learn of his vision for that part of Edinburgh University.

3 Report of the Constitutional Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 16 June 2012

Convener of the Constitutional Standing Committee: Mr Bruce Rae

The Committee has met once since the last half yearly meeting. After a considerable amount of preparation, online voting was used for the first time for the election of Members of the Business Committee, the results being announced at the Half Yearly Meeting on 11 February 2012. It was immediately apparent that the number of those voting had dropped considerably. In addition, of those who requested a postal vote, only a quarter actually voted.

At the Meeting of the Constitutional Committee on 8 March 2012 we considered the reasons behind this outcome. While some other factors may well have had an impact (the lack of female candidates and the fact that there was no concurrent election for Court Assessors) there was no doubt that the online procedure itself including registration through EASE, had proved for some an insurmountable barrier. By the time of our Committee Meeting, changes to the Election Procedure had been proposed and drafted and changes made to the Protocol for Online Elections. These changes were considered and approved.

We should perhaps point out that once effective registration through EASE has been achieved, it is not necessary to go through the process again for future elections, and remind General Council Members of the importance of voting to ensure that The University of Edinburgh has on its Business Committee Members of the highest calibre.

4 Report of the Finance and Services Standing Committee

for the General Council meeting on 16 June 2012

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 in January 2012.

At its meeting on **23 February 2012**, Mr Gorringe provided a comprehensive summary of the highlights within the Reports & Financial Statements for the year to 31 July 2011. This included confirmation that the University had reported the largest surplus in its history, due in part to successful recruitment of overseas students and also due to the excellent control of costs across many areas of the University. Income had continued to grow to £650 million (helped by the significant increase in tuition fees, most of which was in fees paid by overseas students), despite funding cuts from the Government. Some reduction in research grants, from both private and public funding, had been experienced and a lot of effort was going in to turning this around. Income was also being generated by the new Imaging Centre and High Speed Computing as well as the traditional areas such as conferences, and endowment and investment income had marginally increased. Public funding cuts had created difficulties over this period, but Mr Gorringe believed that prospects for the following year were much better.

The reported surplus was £42 million and on a historical cost basis was over £50 million. This meant that Edinburgh was doing very well compared with the rest of the Russell Group and there was a real desire to ensure that its overall performance tracked ahead of other major players such as Manchester and Imperial.

The Balance Sheet showed continued expenditure on the Capital Programme, although less than in the previous year. Tangible Assets had increased with additions to estates and buildings of £72 million and 2010/11 had witnessed the completion of many major building projects including the developments out at Easter Bush Estate and the Centre for Regenerative Medicine at Little France. Future projects included the completion of work on the Main Library, transformation of what had been the William Robertson Building and the Edinburgh Centre on Carbon Innovation. Longer term plans included the re-modelling of the Biological Sciences facilities at the King's Buildings. The University had sold the old School of Veterinary Studies at Summerhall, which was helping to meet the cost of the Easter Bush development.

Endowments had recovered well, and the total funds at £1.5 billion, showed the strength of the University overall. In the Group Cash Flow Statement the Net Cash inflow was very strong at £86 million.

One important item to note was the refurbishment of the University Library. This development had been greatly appreciated by students and was a key factor in ensuring that the student experience was good since student recruitment was fundamental to the success of the University. Another important issue for students is accommodation and Mr Gorringe explained that the University was taking the opportunity to develop additional accommodation (which would also be a good financial investment).

Finally, the committee expressed its congratulations to Mr Gorrington on being named 2011 Finance Director of the Year for the public/not-for-profit sector in Scotland and wished him well in his forthcoming retirement.

A further meeting was held on **29 March 2012** with Mrs Gupta, Director of Human Resources. She gave a detailed and very interesting presentation on the issue of delivering a professional Human Resources (HR) service fit for the 21st century. This included information on key HR strategies as well as policies for creating an inclusive culture and attracting the best people from around the world.

Mrs Gupta had now recruited her new team and the service had been re-branded “University Human Resources Services” (UHRS), rather than “Corporate HR”. There were now new teams working in different specialties; Employee Resourcing, Learning & Development (L&D), Employee Relations, and Reward & Management Information (MI).

For the first time, the University had employed dedicated, expert staff in the area of Employee Resourcing and one of the first pieces of work that was being undertaken was the Relocation Support Project. The aim is to create an in-house relocation service to assist new staff and their families during the transition period through a user friendly, central service which will provide assistance and guidance on a wide range of issues including specialist advice on the UK Border Agency requirements. In addition, as well as advice on the usual important issues such as schools and nurseries, assistance will be available to help partners to find employment.

An e-recruitment development project had been initiated the previous year and should improve the experience of both applicants and recruiters. The provider was the same as that used by other universities to ensure that they understood the business. It would also provide an easy way to gather data and would save money in terms of advertising, as the use of printed advertising was diminishing significantly.

The University had retained its Highly Trusted Status with the UK Borders agency. The University had excellent relations with the UKBA and Government and has welcomed on-going changes to policy. Foreign nationals would also now be able to work for up to a month under the new visitor category called Permitted Paid Engagements and this will include external examiners and visiting lecturers.

Another important initiative is the work which the University’s HR team is undertaking with Edinburgh City Council under the Edinburgh Guarantee project. The aim of this is to provide paid employment and training for young people for fixed periods of time (and, if a suitable vacancy arises, longer term employment). The Learning & Development team is also developing a training programme and this scheme is intended to provide valuable experience for managers and supervisors in due course.

The Learning & Development team is also developing a learning and development governance framework to identify strategies and monitor and review these activities. In addition, a management development package will be developed to signpost managers to appropriate training for their career and development needs as leadership development is a major strategic priority for the University. A variety of approaches will be utilized in this training including specific modules, 360 degree feedback, coaching and mentoring. The newly established Institute for Academic Development will provide support for lecturers as well as students in this area. The HR team is currently working in close collaboration with other providers across the University to deliver a coordinated service.

It was reported that there would be 100 new Chancellor’s Fellowships created. They will be trained as a cohort and at the end of five years it is hoped they will emerge as complete academics of the highest standard i.e. exceptional researchers and academic teachers. These opportunities had proved extremely popular amongst early career academics with three and four star publications to their name.

A key responsibility of the HR team is the application of all relevant aspects of current and future employment legislation. The support of external counsel was important in this area. Some other key initiatives for the HR team included:

- A project to work across all three Colleges to streamline the system of honorary appointments, their titles and role definitions
- The development of a staff disability policy
- The enhancement of the dignity and respect policy
- The development of an internal mediation service for both staff and students
- The development of a new e-Diversity online training package to ensure compliance with the Equality Act

There was also some very important work in Reward & Management Information, including plans to transform the personal tutor system and introduce enhanced policies on reward and recognition.

In order to assist staff who are not members of the main pension arrangements, the University will be setting up a NEST (National Employment Savings Trust) scheme.

Finally Mrs Gupta mentioned two strategic issues:

1. the development of a 'people strategy' across the University which will support the Strategic Plan. Key strategic themes will inform and shape this agenda across the University
2. a proposal to consider a new staff development system for the University which will enhance the quality and monitoring of learning and development activities across the University.

5 Report of the Public Affairs Standing Committee

for the General Council Meeting on 16 June 2012

Convener of the Public Affairs Standing Committee: Mr Neil Hynd

The Public Affairs Standing Committee has met twice since the previous report to the General Council. The Committee arranged a successful visit to the University Library on 26th April where the Chief Librarian Ms Sheila Cannell showed us the alterations and improvements that had been made. The group were very impressed with the changes which had more than doubled the usage by students. We were also able to view a number of rare items kept within the library.

The Committee have been reviewing the way in which the Business Committee uses social media and the web as a form of communication and to raise its profile to Members of the General Council. After discussion with Sonia Mullineux, Digital Communications Officer for Development & Alumni (D&A), the committee has prepared recommendations to the Business Committee which propose that a new website for the General Council be developed. This will include a dialogue forum to allow discussion between the Business Committee and the members as well as allowing for dialogue between the members themselves, and a secure area in which members of the Business Committee can also receive and send relevant papers.

The Committee has also been reviewing past and forthcoming events, including the very successful February 2012 lunch, which was extremely well-attended, and in particular the arrangements for the June meeting of the General Council in Berlin. A full weekend of events has been planned with the help of staff in D&A and bookings for Berlin were already ahead of those made at the same time two years ago for the previous overseas meeting. Consideration has also been given to a possible venue and programme for the following June Half-Yearly Meeting in 2013 and consideration given to after-Lunch speakers for the February and June 2013 lunches. Once again the committee was also overseeing the preparations for the annual International Festival Event in the Talbot Rice Gallery in August.

6 Meetings of the Business Committee

The Committee has met twice since its last Report was printed, viz. 24 March and 19 May 2011.

Papers from the General Council Meeting on 11 February 2012

A Presentation of the Annual Report of the University

at the General Council Meeting on 11 February 2012

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

Chairman, Convener of the Business Committee of the General Council, members of the General Council, again a tremendous pleasure to be here presenting the Annual Report and can I start by saying how very much over the last year I have appreciated the involvement of the General Council, particularly the three General Council Assessors on the Court who have really done tremendous hard work for the University? Court and its committees are very demanding, but I also want to express my appreciation particularly to the Convener of the Business Committee and the Secretary. We have had a busy year and as Dr Brown indicated the highlight undoubtedly was the installation of the new Chancellor in the refurbished courtyard, and also the events around the demitting of office of the previous Chancellor, and I think that the Prince Philip General Council Scholarship Fund is just a wonderful and entirely appropriate way for you to be (a) expressing your thanks to Prince Philip for all that he has done, but (b) also setting an example for what to the University is extremely important, which is providing more and more support for students.

The Annual Review is outside, it is an extremely good document. I will present it to you in my normal slightly idiosyncratic mode, which is I shall start from the back and work forwards, and if you want to track me doing that you can, but in fact you can do it after the event. Things have happened since this was finished, since this was for the last academic year, so if you will permit I will mention a couple of recent things in passing that relate here, some very good things have happened in the last few months, and then I thought, as a change, again if you will permit, I will do something slightly unusual, in that I have been developing a presentation about what is happening in the University sector at large in the world over the next ten years and its relationship to things that might happen in the University, and so if it is permissible I will present that to you as well. Thank you very much.

Starting with Appendix 4, we notice £183 million in grants from Research Councils and Government Agencies, and £73 million from charities, including industry and other institutions, and the thing I would want you to particularly note there is the breadth of support that the University has. We are talking about more than a 1,000 different grants, we are talking about increasing amounts from the European Union, from overseas charities, from overseas industry, and that for the long-term for a University with a major international presence is very, very encouraging. I particularly want to commend colleagues, we have what is in the modern jargon is a TTO, a Technology Transfer Office; Edinburgh Research and Innovation (ERI) is a fabulous outfit, it does tremendous work for us and if you look at today's Financial Times you will see the announcement of an MTI Orion Fund of £150 million. This is in partnership with Manchester and University College London, and it is by happy coincidence announced today. This is the world's largest unquoted investment fund for University spinouts and the lead TTO of the three major universities is our own. Last year the report tells you the University created thirty five new companies, the year before it created forty, and one of the key issues is, when they grow where they get their resources from, so this £150 million Orion Fund tremendously is helpful, and we would not have got it without the high quality of the colleagues in ERI. I would also want to really commend the colleagues in our two International Offices, in Beijing and in Mumbai which I visited recently. They are a very important part of the growth of international support, obviously; extra international students is very important to us, but extra international partnerships much provide a deeper engagement with the major international charities comes from there.

Leaving Appendix 4 we look at Appendix 3, we look at the benefactors. I do want to acknowledge particularly those in this room who have supported the University, or through the Carlyle Circle signify their intention of major support in the future. That is tremendous, it gives us great confidence. Our £350 million fund-raising campaign is closing soon. That does not mean we are going to stop fund-raising, but it is a

tremendous success and as ever in the UK in a lot of things we are third in this enterprise after Oxford and Cambridge. There is a really strong emphasis on bursaries for student need, scholarships for exceptional excellence and I am really pleased with the way the pattern has been built up. Now, if I can put it this way, for the research, for example Heinken research, it is the private money, the philanthropic money that reaches the parts that other research funds do not reach. Sometimes these crippling diseases affect a statistically small part of the population, so do work as we do for example on 'Fragile X' which requires the enlightened donor to help the University use its tremendous capabilities, and of course this financial support results in facilities for students.

If you look at Appendix 2, you will see that we now have 29,000 students, 12,000 from Scotland, 7,000 from the rest of the United Kingdom, and more than 10,000 that are international. We saw a growth again as in the previous year, with more than a thousand new international students, international students that is defined as not coming from the United Kingdom, rather than not coming from Scotland, international students now represent more than a third of the student population. That is a great achievement. Our particular strength, which is a bit unusual in the world of universities, is North America. We now have 2,300 students from North America and given that the United States particularly has the world's best universities as a system, it is a tremendous vote of confidence in the University of Edinburgh that so many talented students from the United States and Canada, 2,300 from North America with us. If you look at the Chinese speaking world you then you will see that we now taking China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore together with 1,600 students; very serious growth, 400 more students than the year before. We see the number of students from India steadily growing; still a tiny number, only 300 students from India, but that represents a growth of 100 and if you look forward it would be very surprising if a few years from now we did not have as many students from the Indian Sub-Continent as elsewhere. If you look at the demographic, you would actually expect ten years from now for us to have more students from the Indian Sub-Continent than we do from the Chinese-speaking world. What remains invisible is Latin America and the numbers there are very small, but it is an area of tremendous potential for the University. Looked at as a whole 19,000 undergraduates, 6,000 students on postgraduate taught Masters courses, and 4,000 students doing doctorates, a very good balance there, except that I would like to see many more PhD students.

If you look at Appendix 1; there is a dip in applications from the peak of the years before. 41,000 applications is still very, very healthy, and one of the reasons for the dip, I think, is a perception, particularly in England, of the difficulty of getting in to the University of Edinburgh. If you look at our figures for 2012, despite gloomy predictions that were offered with great confidence by people from outside the University, in September we are growing in every single category in applications, with the exception of Northern Ireland, and that is because the student support regime in Northern Ireland is violently biased against any student not studying within Northern Ireland, it is a tremendous disadvantage, so it has seen a 10% drop. Students from Northern Ireland represent 2% of our undergraduate student body, so a 10% drop is a 0.2% drop, so its not too dramatic for us, particularly when you look at our international applications which are up by 33% on a very, very high base, and our European Union applications up 24%. So those are the most recent numbers, and although we are more or less finished for the recruitment cycle for 2012 from the United Kingdom we will still be receiving and processing applications from other territories, so the figures will continue to rise. Tremendous credit to Student Recruitment and Admissions, and to Vice Principal Bownes, and also tremendous credit to the new bursary scheme. We determinedly went for the best bursary scheme in the United Kingdom and that reinvestment, coupled with the investment of £10 million additional to support bursaries for Scottish students is part of the reason, along with our tremendous reputation, for bouyant student demand.

If you look at the appointments, then we have got a very strong pattern of appointments, but particularly note the honoraries. I like honorary professors, because they add distinction, they do a lot of work and we do not pay them. That seems to me an admirable position that all our professors should aspire to reach. A very healthy pattern of our honours and I am delighted that Ann Mackay, Leslie Forrester and Jill Pilkington all got their very well-deserved MBEs, particularly. We got two full pages of honours, but I would draw your attention within that to the various Royal Societies' Scientific and Medical and their engagement with the University and the EUSA Teaching Awards. A very distinguished pattern of honorary graduates; and the one that certainly was the most fun was Asia's most famous film actress, Maggie Cheung, who has got a really strong connection to the University and even Gordon Brown or Alan Greenspan did not get the mob of the

deliriously happy Asian students all taking photographs with their phones. We had a genuine flash mob there for her. Then I have to say it with mixed emotions, sadness and pride, in the last season we were able to give an award to the late Professor Noreen Murray, and it is very good to see her there and obviously colleagues, particularly in Biological Sciences are still immensely sad at her passing and immensely supportive of Professor Ken Murray.

Finances, people wondered, would our finances dip, they did not. They rose to a turn over of £651 million. If in Scotland we were treated as a major company we would be ranked thirteenth or fourteenth for turn-over in the whole of Scotland. £651 million with assets of more than a billion and 11,000 staff. That is major. I think particularly pleasing in the adverse circumstances is the £42 million surplus, that is extremely important. That can be invested in improved estate for the students. I am particularly delighted that we will be investing in one hundred Chancellor's Fellowships to attract the absolute brightest young academics to join the University from around the world in all the disciplines, and that surplus makes it possible to seriously invest in Principal's Scholarships to bring in even more high quality PhD students. So that £42 million will not go to waste, that surplus is extremely important for us. If you look across the estate, if you look at Easter Bush, about £100 million of work that we have finished there now, the new Vet teaching building, that was opened by our new Chancellor with the new Roslin Institute, major capabilities there. We will shortly open the Scottish Centre for Regenerative Medicine, a £60 million development out at Little France. We are delighted with the success of the major, major refurbishments in the Library.

In terms of finances, this time last year I was engaged in ferocious lobbying of the different political parties in the run-up to the Scottish election. As you know we moved from a minority SNP Government to a majority one. The SNP made promises with regard to university funding in the run up to the election and they kept them. That has given us a financial planning horizon for the financial year we are now in and the next three financial years, so we have a positive horizon, better than the situation in England that gets us to the end of the financial year 2014/15. Very, very important, and one of the reasons when I am negotiating with senior academics in other parts of the world and in other parts of the United Kingdom, I can encourage them, I can tell them what their budgets are going to look like three and four years from now. So we are getting tremendous support from the Scottish Government; I would acknowledge that, both in terms of the amount of resource, but also a planning horizon, because when money is engaged in the major developments lots of them require one to think one, two, three or more years ahead. I am also really pleased that we have got a £50 million loan from the European Investment Bank. They came to us, they were extremely positive about what we are doing, they want to invest, particularly in the developments for new facilities for students, and new facilities for research, that is a very good partnership. We are privileged to have that resource at rates that are incredibly favourable and will allow the University to maintain its capital programme at a time of difficulty.

Research news; tremendous stuff with the Gene-linked Language Learning, the urine test for cancer in the gut, stomach and pancreas, family history from DNA and a better understanding of risk-taking in banking. So I think you can feel that your university is contributing across the piece, allowing people to see if they are really descended from Vikings, how is language developing and how might banks be risk-adverse? I think we are keen on all of those. In terms of other news, delighted that Professor Lesley Yellowlees is the President of the Royal Society of Chemistry-designate and delighted also in terms of the celebrations around chemistry. One of the things we discovered in the archaeology of the Quad was Professor Joseph Black's, the very distinguished eighteenth century chemist, apparatus. The intention to grow online learning, the intention to have ten thousand online learners, ten thousand sounds like a lot, it's not, we have got twenty two schools; if each of them had five hundred online learners that would give them a greater financial security and much more powerful way to get research-led postgraduate courses out there, so that is very important. We are spending £4.5 million on the move to online learning at the moment. We will probably accelerate, it is going very well, and giving us high-quality learners around the world. I particularly point to the new Masters in Global Challenges and to the work of the Global Academies, and then the tremendous success of the MSc in Surgical Sciences, the ESSQ (Edinburgh Surgical Sciences Qualification) led by the Regius Professor of Surgery, who as well as being Regius Professor of Surgery and doing all sorts of wonderful other things is the lead person in this important online learning development that we are doing in partnership with the Royal College of Surgeons, and we should note the wonderful shared celebrations for the anniversary of Lister that

are on-going, and in fact the Regius Professor will be giving a lecture exactly where we are having our lunch-time lecture.

EUSA goes from strength to strength, we have a very good partnership I think. The work on volunteering is what we would really want to commend. I will relate it to something slightly odd, I will relate it to an HSBC advert. The Hong Kong Shanghai Bank runs an advertisement for aeroplanes flying to the west from Shanghai and Singapore and such, it is a fabulous advertisement, because the advertisement's theme is 'We know you need a good bank to invest in the most important thing'. The most important thing in the advert that we see is a family saying goodbye to their daughter at Hong Kong airport. So they have obviously been saving for something very important, and of course, what they have been saving for is so that she can study at the University of Edinburgh. So the next thing we see is her arriving at the University of Edinburgh, we see her participating at a rather more wilder and more exciting looking hogmanay party than I was aware of, but that is very good. We see her and some friends hacking away at a golf course while ladies in Pringle jumpers smile on indulgently and we see a number of other things. But the thing that really struck me about the advert and the thing that made me know that they had done their research was we see her with other international students at a soup kitchen in the Grassmarket. One of the wonderful things about our students is the philanthropic work they do, the volunteering work they do, and something that is quite interesting is that international students are over-represented. So 40% of the students who engage in the different types of volunteering, which obviously involve our partnership with Greyfriars, in the Grassmarket, but all sorts of other things, 40% of the students who engage in that activity are students from outside the United Kingdom who see that part of their experience at the University of Edinburgh is doing work with the homeless or similar things. That is really very inspiring. We have a scheme, we support it and EUSA run it, an absolutely excellent scheme where anybody in the city, and currently one hundred organisations participate, that need a student volunteer for some altruistic purpose let EUSA know, EUSA advertises, and we currently have 800 students engaged individually. This is on top of about the third of our 200 student societies that have a philanthropic purpose, but over 800 students operating as individuals have been solicited through the website. EUSA checks on the bona fides, checks on the philanthropic purpose and has an intention of growing that to 2,000 student volunteers. I think that is fabulous work, it is well-described in the Annual Review.

Edinburgh College of Art; wonderful that we have the merger from last August, wonderful the work on design in Informatics, in Architecture and Landscape Architecture. Surprising things happened. So as part of the merger, Music from the University side has joined the Scottish Screen Academy from the Edinburgh College of Art side. What is the consequence of that? I discovered to my happy pleasure a couple of days ago that the University now has a film orchestra. That is wonderful, we have got a film orchestra that plays music either for real films or for films that might be made, and that is its purpose. Obviously we have lots of orchestras and choirs, and that film orchestra is a direct consequence of the merger. We will see some fabulous degree shows. I would encourage you, if you have not been to an Edinburgh College of Art Fashion Show then you should go, the stuff you will see is wonderful, and if you have not been to the regular degree show you will see wonderful paintings, wonderful jewellery, much of it at very reasonable prices, so I would encourage you to go to the degree shows.

There is a good account of the Pathways to the Professions, we are very proud of that. It operates particularly in Law, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Architecture. It attracts and supports students who otherwise might not have applied. We work with 46 local secondary schools, more than 3,000 school pupils have already benefited. It depends on mentoring from current students or from successful alumni and it also has an eight week summer school; a great success and a great credit to the University that we have it.

We have a nice page in the Annual Review on Jon Gorringe. He has very well-deservedly been voted Public Sector Finance Director of the Year. He has done very well and we need his stewardship for all sorts of things. As I mentioned we have £10 million of additional financial support, and we are in a situation now with the new Rest of the United Kingdom (RUK) Fees regime where we have to provide very good bursaries, as I said the best bursaries. The largest amount of money a student could receive in financial support from us would be £7,000 for the four years, plus £1,000 a year access bursary, plus a once off bursary of £1,000, so the students most in need can be supported to a level of £33,000. And as I said in

parallel we have invested £10 million in endowment to support Scottish students. That builds on the 700 access bursaries that we already have in place, very, very important.

Employability; we are best in the Russell Group, which is very, very good. So we are better than Oxford, Cambridge or Bristol, or such in getting our students in to employment. 94.5% of our student, so almost nineteen in twenty are doing something appropriate six months after they leave us, even in these tough economic times. When you look at the University rankings we are twentieth in the world, and it's nice to be rated twentieth in the world, but that is built up of different components. If you look at the component that relate to views of international employers, that pulls us up, we are rated fifteenth in the world for that. Tremendous credit is due to Sheila Green and the Careers Service. They do very well, they have very strong links to industry, they have e-tools, so that when students are abroad or when they are on placements, they can keep track of what they are doing, keep related to the University. Last year they advertised 5,000 specific graduate vacancies focused for our students. These are difficult times, but our Careers Office managed to increase by 15% the number of graduate vacancies that they advertised and held a tremendous careers fair with 120 companies participating. So all in all it is an extremely positive Annual Review and I will be very happy to answer questions on it in a minute, but I thought, if you would permit I would just take you briefly through some of the things that I think may happen in the next ten years.

So, 'Horizon Scanning', that's why it's called the Strategic Plan, these slides have been refined since then, but members of Court have seen a version of this before. This was produced in the first instance to support the Court's brainstorm in terms of revising our very good four-year plan and I am going to talk very briefly about technology, research massification, course diversification, delivery of teaching, support of learning, students as consumers, entrepreneur education, institution mix, institutional stratification, demand and funding. It fits very well, we have recently had a governance review in Scotland, and I will talk a little bit about institutional autonomy. Technology Trends; you may have heard of Moore's Law. Moore's Law is quite old now, and basically it says the amount of power you get in your computer, whether you measure it by the processor, or the memory, or the band-width, is going to double every eighteen months, so every three years for the same amount of money you can get a computer four times as powerful as the one you have currently got. Interestingly Moore's Law continues to stay true, so whatever computer you have got; who has bought a computer in the last year? Okay, so the good news is that it is much more powerful than the other people's computers in the room, the bad news three years from now it will look stupidly under-powered and over-priced, that's the way of it. The interesting thing about Moore's Law is that physics tells us that this is good for almost another ten years. That is why your mobile phone essentially has a big powerful computer in it, and we will see computers becoming smaller, cheaper, more powerful. What is also interesting that Moore is one of the people who put computers on a chip, so he understood this. Metcalfe is the person who invented packet switching with Boggs, and knows a lot about the actual traffic on the internet. Metcalfe predicted, with a lot of confidence, that by about 2000 the internet would be full up and fall over due to the growth of usage, and of course it is occasionally clunky, but the interesting thing about Metcalfe's Law is it is obviously false. The high amounts of redundancy in the system, and also Moore's Law and the way it affects the servers that route the data has meant that Metcalfe's Law is false, the internet is not about to fall over and if you are dealing with it in a slow way it is probably due to your relationship to BT or the fact that your computer is now under-powered. The internet is still out there and it is fine and it is going to continue.

The other thing that is very important which you need to be very proud of is Bayes' Law which is to do with conditional probabilities. The Reverend Thomas Bayes is one of our distinguished alums and when ever you use Google, remember that Google would not work without the Reverend Thomas Bayes. The basic statistical stuff that underpins all these searches was invented in this University 250 years ago by a clergyman who was primarily interested in gambling. It is very important for gambling, if any of you want to make a living as a professional gambler you must master Bayes' Law otherwise you really have not got much chance of doing it. We see the ubiquitous computing, what is called 'cloud computing', software as a service. This is not a new idea, McCarthy had it in the mid-sixties, but now realistically you are able to buy computer services the way you buy your electricity or your water. You are not particularly interested in which power station or which reservoir you just go and get it. We see social computing, and machine learning is my own academic speciality. If you look carefully sometimes your phone or such does things a bit faster than you expected it to, if you think about it, it's because it is learning about you, and we will see

increasingly computers being a little bit too quick off the mark, because if they learned what you did last time and likewise with your phones. Facebook, people say 'Oh Facebook, my gosh' well the thing to be aware of is before there was Facebook there was BeBo, after Facebook there will be something else, which we will call for convenience Facebook Two. Social computing is not stable, it is in its infancy and we do not know where Facebook and Twitter are going, but we know that more powerful and more complicated things are coming and we know that there will be mobile applications. These really affect the student of today, who wanders around with a very powerful computer and is probably interacting socially and educationally with seven or eight people at the same time. So the world has changed, and as a university we want to be on top of those changes. We are well equipped, we have got one of the world's strongest computer departments in Informatics. We dominate European super-computing through HECToR, we have Edina which again puts us very much in front.

Research massification; bad news really for small universities. What are we seeing? We are increasingly seeing very big science, things like the large Hadron Collider, in which we are key protagonists; Peter Higgs is one of ours. And in brackets, I was in India recently and one of our plans is to have a proper Higgs Boson celebration with the University of Calcutta, because of course the University of Calcutta, which is our partner, is where Bose, after whom the Boson, I am not sure if you were aware of that. But if you look at the large Hadron Collider, like the post-genomics work, we are not talking about four or five scientists in a lab. The modern big projects, particularly if they are dealing with world medical challenges, involve hundreds of researchers in multiple locations, and we have to participate in that, as we do. We are increasingly seeing social science done in large teams across the world, seeing arts consortia, increasingly seeing undergraduates doing research. One of the things I like is 'galaxy sorting'. I do not know if you know about galaxy sorting. If you are interested, these big telescopes gather lots and lots of star data, much too much for the number of professional astronomers on the planet to deal with. So what they do is they have a website and they say if you are an amateur astronomer, go and get a file of data and sort a hundred galaxies and when you think you have finished send them back to us. You get trained online to do galaxy sorting, for amateur astronomers, and then you get trained online as an amateur astronomer to check the galaxy sorting that other amateur astronomers had done and you have a wonderful thing around the world. One of the phrases one uses for this is 'the wisdom of crowds' like Wikipedia, which is now clearly more accurate and bigger than the Encyclopaedia Britannica and is built up by essentially the contributions of tens of thousands of people around the world and it works because lots of other people donate time to check those contributions, so that when something silly or inappropriate is put on Wikipedia somebody else who is also a volunteer checks it. We see the Millennium Development Goals represent us, we now see the world saying 'We have got challenges', a challenge is zoonotic diseases like HIV Aids, bird flu, a challenge is water, a challenge is food security, and increasingly the research agenda is expressed in world terms and for us with our Global Academies and our reputation that is okay, but it is important to understand that the big research projects now are not Scottish, British or even European research projects. They are world research projects.

We are seeing around the world course diversification. More part-time, more online, more free public, more professional doctorates, more postgraduate conversion, more interdisciplinary, more hybrid. What hybrid means is a course that is partly delivered face-to-face and partly delivered online or with a part-time bit for the last three months. We are seeing lots of those. And we have got some very good assets, particularly Moray House and our work in information technology to address that. Again also we are seeing changes in course delivery. Technology supports much more small group work, syncopated so students go away, they work in a group and then they work asynchronously, two of them have their dinner, the other two work on the data that they got from the MMR machine in Chemistry and they do not even work at the same time in the same place, because they are just working on a shared database. So we have got some really new ways of working. Life-long recall; our Vet students now having graduated can say to themselves 'I saw a very interesting puppy five years ago with a strange thing in its paw', and electronically go back to the images of that puppy. That is quite important, and we have the technology to support it. Another innovation is dispersed small groups, this whole idea of learning spaces which we are becoming very good at designing at this university. We have designed the physical space as we have done in the Library to support innovative uses of the new technology. There is also random access; the ability on some courses for people to come and address, depending to their skill level, different components in different orders. And then visualisation; one of the great strengths of the new technology is to be able to let people visualise very complicated things, like

very complex molecules visualised in three dimensions. We have got a great strength in the University to respond to these things; the Institute for Academic Development.

Support of learning; we are seeing increasingly self-assessment, learning portfolios, the ability to provide fast feedback, the ability to, as I said, use digital resources and virtual experiments. It is nice to do geological experiments that would take tens of thousands of years in half an hour with a simulator. It is nice to experiment with exploding nuclear power plants without using real ones. It is nice to experiment with radical new ways of doing surgery, without doing it on real patients, but to do it on well-simulated patients. So we are very strong in the Dick Vet, in the Law School, in Moray House in new ways of supporting learning. Student at the Centre; one thing that we are seeing happening as a response to the increasing fee regimes in England is students who are saying more and more 'I want value for money', which is good for us, 'Brown recognition'. Basically there are two sorts of universities, the famous ones whose names you recognise, and the other ones, and it really quite important. It is like for instance, 'Do you want to be Marks & Spencer, or do you want to be, taking an Irish example, O'Shea's General Grocers and Drapers?'. It is clear you want to be in the same box as Marks & Spencer, and not in the same box as the O'Shea Drapers. But our brand is recognised around the world, and that is very, very important. We will see students, as they already are increasingly, saying, 'That's not any good, that course, or that lecture, give me my money back', so you may see Marks & Spencer style refunds, your money back, no questions asked, you may see the airline style, we are sorry the course is over-booked, you are a bit late. You may see the small claims court, versions of that. And again, already some students do take some universities to the small claims court because their supervision was not good enough in their perception and they think they would have got a PhD if they had seen a supervisor more often. Quite a difficult thing, but you can be fairly confident that that is going to increase rather than decrease. It is very, very important for the University that our accommodation, our teaching, our physical facilities are altogether fit for purpose. It is very important that we have high quality of staff. Our key assets are professional recognition, we are recognised by more than one hundred and sixty professional bodies, so the Vets, the Chemists, the Doctors, the Lawyers, the Architects, their professional societies, you name them, they come trumping all over us. It can be a bit demanding sometimes, tremendously important for the students that we provide a professional recognition. We do very, very well with the Quality Assurance Agency, we have recently had a major enhancement-led institutional review, which was very well managed by Assistant Principal, Tina Harrison, and which has given us a wonderful positive commentary, but we have to keep working. It is not a question of keeping things as they are, it is a question of repeatedly enhancing the quality of what we are doing.

Entrepreneurial education; we are very, very good at this. The £150 million announcement that is in today's newspapers would not have happened if we were not perceived as being very good at it. We need to be able to identify intellectual property, protect it, exploit it. Its not just companies, creating companies is great, politicians like it, I like it, thirty five new companies is a nice thing to say, but actually there are patents, there are licences, there are all sorts of other ways of protecting intellectual property that we have to help our students with. We have to provide incubation for start-ups which we do; we have two science parks, we have got a variety of incubators and we have to find ways of leveraging investment, which we just have to a tune of £150 million. We have got really good assets, particularly in regard to informatics and in regard to medicine, we have got teams of very skilled people whose job it is to help us do the entrepreneurial stuff. We host Interface, a wonderful organisation. Based with us, it is an interface between SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises in Scotland) and the entire Scottish University sector. It has been very, very successful in match-making. And as I say, we have got in ERI (Edinburgh Research and Innovation) one of the best TTOs (Technology Transfer Offices) on the planet.

Institutions; if you look around the world, and depending on criteria, there at least 20,000 things called universities around the world, maybe more. There are comprehensive ones, which we are, or sectorial ones, which is not necessarily an insult, LSE and MIT both have a narrow sector. There are international universities like ours, there are universities which are definitely national. There also universities that are definitely regional, the University of the West of Scotland is saying something when it says it is the University of the West of Scotland. There are multi-site institutions, and we are a funny version of a single site institution. We are a single site, but we have seven main sites within a pretty large environment, with one of our big sites being the other side of the ring road, Easter Bush, so we are sort of a single site. There are branch campuses; the University of Nottingham has two branch campuses in Malaysia, and a branch campus

in China. We do not, and I think that that is right. There are universities which are growing, which we are, but there are other universities which are getting smaller. There are universities which are flourishing, which we are, and other universities which are failing. I think the comfortable thing, very comfortable thing, about the University of Edinburgh there is no ambiguity. We know what we are. We know we are a major international comprehensive university that is headquartered in Scotland, but takes its staff, its students and its research agenda from the entire world. So we are very clear. Some other universities get a bit confused, are they national or are they regional, or alternatively are they international or are they national? And some universities get confused about whether they should go for a niche. Should they decide to perhaps get rid of the Arts and just be science and social science, or should they just be Science, or should they just be Medicine. There are parts of the world where if you look at a university's title it says '*blank* University of Engineering', or of 'Aerospace Engineering', we are not like that, we are clearly comprehensive. But we have a very good and clear institutional identity.

Institutional Stratification; this is relatively new. The mission group is in the UK and it was a previous Secretary of State going back about three, who in a speech in Britain said that there were three types of universities in Britain; the 'Russell Group', which obviously is the one we are in which is the big old research intensives which with one exception have big medical schools. There is the '94 Group', which are the small research intensives, like York, Lancaster and Surrey. And there is the 'Million-plus', so called because they have more than one million students, which are mostly post '92 universities that used to be polytechnics. But this is very clear, and nowadays someone who visits us, knows we are a Russell Group university. We get lots of ambassadors coming to visit us, they come in the door and they know; a) that we are a Russell Group university, and b) that we are in the world top twenty. Again, anybody from overseas will know where it is in the different league tables. We are in some very good clubs, 'Universitas 21' and 'Coimbra Universities' that have medieval charters. We are a slight odd-ball in that we do have a charter, but we do not have a Papal Bull. We do not have a Foundation Charter, we have got a very strange thing which I am sure Sheriff Principal Bowen would admire, we have got an Enabling Charter, which basically does not say what we are to do, it is more or less a 'carry on chaps', it is quite short and King James VI said a) 'carry on chaps' and b) 'I will give you some financial support', and that is why his name is over the door. We never got the money, I think we were just being courteous, but we do have a charter. There is a notion of 'are you an elite university or are you an industry-facing one' and my reply to that is always we are both, but there are politicians who try to divide them that way. 'Are you elite or are you accessible' and again in my view we are both and that really we are working very, very hard to get those best able to benefit, who might be in demanding circumstances to come to us. There are the newspaper league tables, there are the industry league tables, and we are in great form, we have got a very strong reputation thanks to Dr Ian Conn, a fabulous Communications & Marketing function, so we do well in this. It goes with this remark about branding, anybody, a minister from a foreign country, visiting this university, will inevitably have a piece of paper in his folder that says that you are visiting a Russell Group university, that is a member of LERU (League of European Research Universities), that is the top twenty research universities in Europe, and is elite but tries to be industry-facing and accessible.

Demand; what is happening to demand. Well worldwide demand is rising. Two fifths of the world is made up of China and India, and both of those are economies that are booming without enough of a university sector, so lots of demand there. Worldwide supply is also rising, so United States, Australia and Europe particularly putting lots more resource in and then we see in some countries putting in massive investment. I am just back from France where I am on the jury for the Investment Avenir (Investment in the Future) which is putting billions of Euros into the French university system. I am on the German Excellence Initiative which again is doing similar things in Germany. So there is a lot of resource going in and we see across the world philanthropic support increasing and for us, we have got a very good development function, we have got a very good reputation, but it is a competitive world. We are doing very well with 1,000 extra international students in the last two years, against fierce competition. The competition is not getting easier, it is getting tougher.

Institutional Autonomy; there is the Humboldt model of universities, and it is wonderful to be going there, because obviously we go back to Paris in terms of our curriculum, Leiden in terms of Medical School. But for the 19th century the Humboldt developments in terms of the introduction of the doctorate, in terms of research, the way the Humboldt developed was very important for the development of this university, so it is

great to go back there. There is the very interesting California Master Plan which is a way of operating a whole pile of universities, colleges and community colleges as a single system. So what is happening to institutional autonomy? It is something I have noticed recently I have been asked to lecture about because we are seen as a successful university that is very autonomous. I have recently given lectures in Aarhus, in London, in Krakow and Brisbane, and Göttingen. So there is a real interest in institutional autonomy. One of the things that is very striking, in China, Germany and France, which all have massive programmes for investing in their universities are all quite self-consciously making them more autonomous. I went to Göttingen in Germany, and the question in Göttingen was how can we be more like the University of Edinburgh, because we want to be more successful, they were trying to reduce the controls that the German government and the local government had over the universities. We see institutional autonomy decreasing in Wales, and obviously in relation to government there are issues of funding, there are issues of freedom and of course we have the very interesting Governance Report which has just been published in Scotland which suggests for example there might be a single statute for all Scottish universities, it has views about what the makeup of the governing body should be, has views about what the makeup of the Senate should be and I have to say that as President of the Senate there is not a single person in the Senate who would like us to turf half the Senate members off. Senate, like General Council, is doing very well, has very good discussions and uses electronic means for participation. So we have an interesting report which I am sure the General Council will be commenting on and University Court I am sure will be commenting on it next Monday and Senate, following a unanimous apparent lack of support for the provisions suggested for university senates, will be consulting electronically to see if that is more widely held, but I am sure that Senate will have a point of view. My view is for a university to be successful it needs to be autonomous. It also needs internal autonomy, a lot of delegated authority. I and the other senior team members are not best positioned to know how exactly the University should determine its agenda for Regenerative Medicine, or Food Security or Zoonotic Diseases, or Renewable Energy, that has to be determined by the colleagues. Likewise, with more than 600 options in our wonderful undergraduate programme, the detail has to be developed by the academic colleagues who are trusted to come up with the proposals for the shape of the curriculum, but we do have two key assets. One is, that everybody understands how important we are for Scotland, thirty five companies one year, forty companies another year, employing 11,000 people, is clearly a useful thing for Scotland to have. And the other thing is that it takes me about seven minutes on leaving this building to get into a Minister's office and discuss things with them, and that obviously is an asset that we have.

Just to mention, I have mentioned before, we have had some very positive events recently. The spending Review outcome, we must give tremendous credit to the Scottish Government, it is tremendously good for us. We have wonderful employability data and new company data which I have told you. We have had tremendous success in developing the estate, not just the Old Quad, which is in financial terms a tiny project, the Old Quad is something like about one percent in economic terms of the developments we have seen in the same period at Easter Bush, but we are developing a quality infrastructure. We have had two very successful mergers, three actually, depending on the timescale, but if we are looking at recent history, two very successful mergers, ECA (Edinburgh College of Art) and Eugenics Unit, but also the previously Roslin Institute.

The University has got lots of positive omens, you should be pleased. Our international student numbers and online numbers, the massive success of the three Global Academies, student demand, and the quality of the staff that want to come here. Why did we get a £142 million surplus last year? There were various reasons, but one key reason was that colleagues across the piece controlled costs and raised income and did it very, very successfully. In all the different ways of ranking us in the world we are rising and this is my last slide, I am sorry, I have talked a little bit too long. My seven priority responses, which I will be encouraging incorporation in to the Strategic Plan, encouraging Court, encouraging the Senate and my senior team on, are to continue to build our reputation, the University's reputation, which particularly important in the current environment is paramount; diversify our income, that gives us security, online students as well as international students, as well as part-time students; further internationalisation, further building of our research capability; looking forward, we do not want an overseas campus, but we do want to partner with the very best universities in every part of the world and we are very successfully in doing that. We do want speed. I went to a very interesting event that Gordon Brown hosted, while he was in power, which involved big businesses and little businesses and the question was, 'what is the key to being successful?' and some of the little businesses said the key was being small and very agile, and the argument was eventually won by the

Chief Executive of Tesco who said that the best thing is to be very, very big and very, very fast, and for me that is the aspiration of this University. We are very, very big, if you compare us to the Scottish sector, about five times the size of the average British university, about fifty percent bigger than the nearest in size to us in Scotland. The key with being very, very big is to be very agile, but we have got a tremendous asset, that is my colleagues who have been very successful over the last couple of years. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Mr James Murray: I am deeply concerned about the recent recommendations on the Governance of Scottish Universities made to the Scottish Parliament by a committee chaired by the Principal of Robert Gordon University. In my view they are both ill thought out and potentially damaging to the independence of Universities and interference of this type may lead to an erosion of academic. I must assume that Prof Ferdinand von Prondzyski is unaware of the role of the General Councils of the four Ancient universities in their governance.

Could I ask the Convener to raise this matter with the business committee with a view to it considering making representations on this matter to the Scottish Parliament?

Convener of the Business Committee: Yes, Mr Chairman, before the Principal comments, the Business Committee of the General Council did put in a submission to the review and you can find it on the Scottish Government website. We focused on the role of the General Council and its Business Committee, and recommended that all Scottish universities, not just the four Ancient, ones set up General Councils. We were the only General Council to submit, although Aberdeen General Council was mentioned in its university's submission. We have got the report, some recommendations are reasonable, but others of course we would not endorse. It is unclear how the Government is going to take this forward, but we will certainly keep in touch and will make further representations in due course.

Principal: Yes, it is an interesting issue, both the General Council and the University Court submitted excellent representations to the committee that is looking at this. A fundamental question, the Cabinet Secretary, Michael Russell, who is obviously the responsible minister has said that he is very willing to consult. I guess one issue for the General Council and the University Court will be the status of the proposal for there to be a single statute covering all nineteen institutions. Of course the nineteen institutions are very variable and range from the Ancient Universities which are obviously informed by the 1858 Act to universities that came into being much more recently, but also to three small specialist institutions, so its quite complex and one has got the Open University in Scotland which has its headquarters in England. So it is an interesting question. In terms of the proposals, with regard to the General Council, it is not mentioned in the document, at all. There is a suggestion that University Courts might have two alumni representatives, so I would have thought that the General Council would be interested with regard its own powers, and from my point of view, I value the General Council. I am here as a consequence of the 1858 Act that says that I have to present to you annually an account and I have to take regard of your comments, which is what I am doing and of course recently the General Council exercised another of its very important powers, which was the election of the Chancellor. So there is an interesting question there. There is an interesting question for our large and successful Senate too, which is the recommendation that Senates should not have more than 120 members, and they should include those who are academic office-bearers like heads of school. This would mean that the vast majority of the Professoriate would no longer be on the Senate, which is not a proposal that has found favour amongst the Professoriate. But I will do my very best to negotiate, obviously I will be guided, I will be guided most particularly by the Court's response next Monday; that will be very important. Following electronic soundings I would be guided in my role as President of the Senate by Senate's response. The report does say some very good things about the universities in general, it is very complimentary about the Scottish universities, so the issue is the extent of negotiation that is conceived of on the main legal points.

Ian Sutherland, Convener of the Academic Standing Committee: Might I ask two questions of the Principal: First of all, Principal, you mentioned 2,300 students from North America, how many of these are simply for one semester and how many stay rather longer in Edinburgh? The second question is rather different. One of the worries I think that anybody involved in research in this, and indeed any other Scottish

university, will have is that if the research funding councils', the UK Research Funding Councils', funding was not available, this would have a disastrous effect on the research profile of this and indeed other universities. Would he comment on this please?

Principal: Two very good figures. I do not have the exact figure for 'Junior Year Abroad' students. My guess is it would be around less than a quarter of the 2,300 I was mentioning. I will certainly make sure that the accurate figure is conveyed. Those are wonderful students. They come to us from some of the best universities in the world, they have a very productive time while they are here, adding to the liveliness of the undergraduate programme, and quite a lot of them subsequently apply for Masters degrees, so they are a very, very important part, but you are quite right, there are certainly some hundreds and I do not have the right figure for you. I would estimate that it is somewhere between 300 and 500, but we will get you the correct figure.

The point on the Research Councils is absolutely correct. I have for a number of years already been lobbying Scottish ministers, and I have been lobbying the new Scottish Science Minister, the Cabinet Secretary and the civil servants about the role of the Research Councils. Essentially Scotland in resource terms puts in 9% to the Research Council and because of its quality, and particularly this University, we get about 16% of the spend back. That is very, very important. It seems to me that there is no inherent reason why constitutional change of any type should mean that we no longer participate in the UK Research Councils. When I arrived in Scotland in 2002 there was a debate in the Scottish Parliament about whether or not Scotland would wish to participate in the newly formed Arts & Humanities Research Council, and there were some members of the Scottish Parliament who were dead against it, as they felt that such a body headquartered in the south of England would not be appropriately respectful for Scottish History and Scottish Literature. I lobbied successfully that Scotland participate and we have. Again the benefit of this to this University is major funding. But the simple equation that the questioner fully understands is that the financial capability of the Research Councils is about eleven times the financial capability of Scotland, assuming that Scotland went in pro rata. Even if Scotland went in dramatically increased, it is hard to imagine that we could get even 15% of the UK Research Councils' spend. It is not just the competitive grants, it is the major facilities. We house the two big UK super computers, one for £54 million and the other for about £118 million. We are in the process of housing the UK's wave tank. It is unlikely that a country the size of Scotland could have the research resources to invest in a super computer or a wave tank on that scale. So I repeatedly make the point, but it seems to me self-evident, that if Scotland under new arrangements could have a share in an aircraft carrier there is not any reason why it should not have a share in a Research Council. I also point out that increasingly this University is getting resources from the European Research Council, from the European Institute of Technology, so it is perfectly possible in that regard to get resourced as a UK-based institution as part of the EU, but it is EU resources that we are getting and essentially UK tax money that goes to Brussels and comes back to the University of Edinburgh as part of a major research fund. So I think solutions are workable, but it is I think for this University probably the single most important challenge that constitutional change would bring if there was clumsiness about the current relationship with the Research Councils, which is very, very positive.

Mr Ritchie Walker: Something the Principal touched on and I wonder if he might expand briefly, it has been in the press recently some consideration of what might happen in just a few years time should students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland be seen as nationals from another EU country. Would this just be a minor hiccup if these students were for example, under present legislation, to come here at the same fee payment as Scottish students, and that would be no fees at all. Is there a plan B that the University might have in mind for that contingency? Thank you.

Principal: That is a very interesting question Mr Walker. I think it is essentially for the Scottish Government and future Scottish Governments to have a plan B.

Question received by email

Professor Charles Swainson: Some academic questions have come in on email, Mr Lewis Waters, who was awarded a doctoral degree in 1970 in Urban and Regional Planning was asking if that degree and doctoral degree could be re-established now that the Edinburgh College of Art is part of the University, and he says

that he has been approached by several students in the US who have Masters in Planning and would like to come back to Edinburgh for such a PhD, it whets their appetite for a meal not now available.

Principal: That is a very interesting question which we will convey to Professor Chris Breward, the new Principal of Edinburgh College of Art. Certainly the new School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture within the college is booming, and it is the case that people are very aware the Geddes legacy, so that is a very good question. I am obviously not aware of the marketing information, but certainly the University would have the academic capability to launch such a course and it would be very much a question of advice and guidance from colleagues in the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

Professor Charles Swainson: And another one, some anxiety about the MBA and the Business School from Michael Ast and Zev Kesler, who are asking in relation to league tables about the 2009 MBA Financial Times ranking of the Edinburgh Business School dropping from forty four further down, and although coming up again in 2012, hoping that actions had been undertaken to resolve the drop in rankings and make sure that the MBA programme here at Edinburgh goes back in to the top fifty.

Principal: As the questioner correctly notes, the most recent data has the rankings going up with the University of Edinburgh Business School being the top-ranked in Scotland. I very much hope it will continue to rise and I know that colleagues in the Business School are devoted to that aim.

Professor Charles Swainson: Another academic one is from a current member of staff, Stephen Neff, who says is 'Could the University give consideration to abandoning re-sits, or routine re-sit examinations without requirements or justification such as Medical excuses. Although it is a traditional practice he says that this is no longer common in other prominent universities around the world who do not expend resources in this matter and believes that the traditional re-sit system is a serious drain on staff time and productivity', and would like to know if the University is considering that.

Principal: The University is indeed, and I have been for a number of years putting pressure on the relevant Vice Principal, who is currently Professor Hounsell. I share entirely the prejudices of the questioner and I think if we could reconfigure the curriculum so as to avoid the current pattern of re-sits and instead provide other routes whereby students who are on borderlines could be considered, either for example at the beginning of academic sessions, that would be much better and I would take it as a goal, but very happy to report to Vice Principal Hounsell that a distinguished member of our General Council shares my prejudices.

Professor Charles Swainson: Another question from Mr Michael Cross asking what proportion of the annual revenues of the University must be generated from its own funds, i.e. investments, in order to ensure it has sufficient freedom to invest in the future. He is concerned about the level and momentum of funding in a number of high cost areas, and do we need to generate sufficient investment income to maintain our freedom of action.

Principal: I agree entirely with the presumptions that a university of this type needs serious endowment capabilities in order to generate income, so that it can set its own agenda. I will ask the Director of Finance if he can put a lower bound on that number, standing here I do not feel able to. It is I think a very sensible question, and we certainly over the past years have been trying very hard to build up the University endowment. I think for the long term the questioner is exactly right, this is something essential to the University to keep strengthening the endowment.

Professor Charles Swainson: And finally, two small financial ones that perhaps we could take together. One was from Mr Paddy Slator, who says 'Why does the University continue to charge a £40 fee to graduate?', and Mr Robert Milner would like to ask, which I think you have dealt with in previous meetings, 'Why do we continue to charge full fees to students from England, when we do not charge them from students from Scotland and other countries from the EU and how could the University be party to such a policy?'

Principal: With regard to the £40 we are actively reviewing that and I wonder if the University Secretary might give us a rough timescale when we might know where we are on that.

University Secretary: Yes, we are making the calculations right now, but I think there is wide ranging support for doing away with that. We just need to figure out the financial implications that underpin that, but that is definitely under review, probably within the next few months.

Principal: With regard to the other question, the undergraduate fee regimes are determined by the Scottish Government as part and parcel of the settlement that they give us to support the various undergraduate programmes. Obviously there are those, and clearly the questioner was one of them, who believe that the Scottish Government is wrong in this regard, but it is entirely a matter for the Scottish Government. On the plus side I would want to point out to everybody that unlike the situation in England where financial resources have been very much focused on science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine, in the Scotland the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council still provide appropriate support, on different cross-bands obviously, you get less resource to the teaching of philosophy than you do for veterinary medicine, but we do get support in Scotland across the piece. But the issue of how we address students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or for that matter, students from Belgium or Russian, is governed by rules determined for us, given to us, by the Scottish Government as part of our condition of grant.

B Presentation of the Report of the Business Committee

at the General Council Meeting on 11 February 2012

Convener of the Business Committee: Dr Alan Brown

Chairman, Principal, Members of the General Council; it is my very pleasant duty to welcome our Chairman, the Chancellor's Assessor, Sheriff Principal Edward Bowen, to his first official meeting of the General Council. He very kindly agreed to chair this meeting in the unavoidable absence of our out-going Rector. As a distinguished and experienced lawyer, throwing him in to this deep end as it were will not be a problem for him. On behalf of the General Council I wish him a long and enjoyable tenure. I also welcome members around the globe who cannot be here but are following proceedings on our live webcast. I remind them that after the Principal's presentation there will be questions and we welcome their contributions to the discussion through our email link. Since our highly successful meeting in June in the King's Buildings it has been a busy time for the Business Committee and its Standing Committees. We have just completed our first General Council Election with mainly online voting and the results have just been announced. In the light of this experience the election process will be reviewed in detail so that any appropriate changes may be made. Agenda Item 4 this morning is the Motion concerning the Constitutional Arrangements for the Working of the General Council and its Business Committee and the Regulations for our Elections. These documents have been revised following approval of the new Ordinance 210 by the Privy Council. They simplify the statutory basis for electing the Chancellor and Court Assessors and facilitate the introduction of such changes as online elections. All the hurdles have been completed and the Motion will enable final approval hopefully by this meeting. The work was largely carried out by the Constitutional Standing Committee under the skilled guidance of past and current conveners, Mr Ralph Parkinson and Mr Bruce Rae. I thank them all for undertaking these complex tasks.

The highlight of last year was the installation in September of her Royal Highness the Princess Royal as Chancellor. This took place in the beautifully refurbished Old Quadrangle which some of you may have seen this morning for the first time. The weather was perfect which resulted in a unique and glorious celebration. On behalf of the General Council I had the honour of giving the vote of thanks for Princess Ann's installation address. I mentioned that her immediate predecessor gave fifty seven years of distinguished service, but if she decided not to equal his record we would understand. The ceremony was superbly filmed and may be seen on the University's website in the News Archive.

Turning to the General Council Prince Philip Scholarship Fund, it has had a magnificent boost. The United States University of Edinburgh Development Trust has given an endowed Access Scholarship. We are most grateful to Dr Fenton-May and his committee for this truly generous donation. Therefore the Business Committee funding initiative for deserving students is going from strength to strength and I commend it to Council Members, particularly as it is very much in line with the University's efforts to enable access and

widen participation. The Business Committee continues to discuss major issues, for example student fees and the University's future Strategic Plan. We are greatly indebted to senior University staff who are always willing to present papers at this committee and the Standing Committees. The minutes of the Business Committee may be read on our website.

Our Rector for the last three years, Mr Iain MacWhirter, is stepping down shortly. On behalf of the General Council I thank him for his effective contributions to our meetings and excellent work representing the student body. We wish him well for the future. His successor is the writer, activist and charity worker, Mr Peter McCall, who takes up post on the 1 March. We look forward to working with him.

Finally, our next meeting is during the out-of-Edinburgh weekend in Berlin on the 16 June at the Humboldt University. This joint General Council-University Biennial enterprise has become established as an important and memorable occasion. Preliminary details are in the latest issue of *Billet* within *Edit* and on Tuesday next booking information will be on our website. Berlin is a stunning city, as you know I am sure, which will provide the perfect setting for yet another enjoyable series of General Council and University events. I encourage you all to join us there. Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Mr James Murray: I voted recently in the first online elections for Business Committee Members. This innovation is intended to attract more voters from our electorate of around 140,000, especially younger graduates, and encourage their participation in the affairs of the General Council. Could the Convener give us figures for the numbers voting in the last election before online voting and from the numbers counted on Thursday the paper votes and the online votes?

Convener: Yes, in the General Council election for 2011 there 1,118 valid votes submitted, this year there were 388 votes received. Of these 278 were online votes and 110 were postal votes. It is interesting to note that 465 General Council members requested and received postal votes, but only around 25 percent, as you have seen, 25% of them voted. Clearly this is disappointing and not the outcome we expected. I think it is unwise at this moment to speculate on the possible reasons for this, but the Business Committee and the Effectiveness Review Group, which we have set up, will of course be making detailed analysis of the election results and look for ways to increase engagement with General Council members and increase participation in future elections.

Mr Ralph Parkinson: I have submitted a question online, but it was about this. I would like to relay my own experience in trying to register for online voting, which was not an easy process. It took me about three days before I actually got in. I tried a couple of times, I had two telephone calls and eventually it worked. I am reasonably computer-literate, if anybody else had that experience it would put them off for life I would have thought. Is there any way of making it a little bit easier?

Secretary: Thank you for that comment Mr Parkinson. We can only sympathise with the difficulties you had. The registration system and the MyEd system are part of the University's IT support system, and it is acknowledged now that this registration process is a little over-complicated. Part of the problem is that when the system is used by staff and students they only have to go through this process once, the first time that they use it, and obviously for the alumni they are not such regular users. However, I am very pleased to be able to say that the Information Services Division have recognised this as an issue, not just for our General Council elections, and they are actively undertaking to make it a simpler procedure.

Chairman: I hope that provides some degree of comfort that the next time these problems will not arise. I have to say from my own IT experience in a different field I would be interested. Are there any other questions or comments?

Rev Dr Alison Fuller: I had not seen the layout of the Quad here until today, and it looks great. But I have a question, and you made reference to the Quad in your address Convener. What happens to taxis depositing those who cannot walk too much of a distance or who find the small amount of mountaineering at the entrance a bit difficult. Our taxi driver just now looked at the gate and dropped us on the other side of the

road. As I approached the gate it did seem as though it could be pushed open and then presumably the surface around the Quad is suitable for cars and taxis to drive on and pick people up?

Principal: I will explore that. I know that colleagues in Estates and Buildings have installed ramps at the front, so that it is possible for visitors or colleagues or students who are in wheelchairs to have a route in. These get you to the lift. The ramp would allow someone in a wheelchair to get in. I certainly can ask colleagues in Estates to look at this issue again. At the moment the intention is to only open the gates for fire engines and other emergency services.

Mr Malcom Errington: Just a query, it was flagged initially I think that the June meeting was to be held in Brussels and now it has changed to Berlin. Any comment or advice as to the reason for this change?

Secretary: There was no one single reason for this change. There were a number of various factors, including the unexpected closure of the Ambassador's Residence in Brussels next year for refurbishment, which we really could not have anticipated. All in all it was decided that Brussels was not suitable for this year and so we swiftly relocated to Berlin which is an ideal venue.

Ms Anne Paterson: I was going to say that if the Quadrangle is suitable for emergency vehicles then it must be suitable to take taxis for people with disabilities and I cannot believe that the University has not built this in when they were rebuilding the Quadrangle with disabilities in mind with so many people nowadays needing to get to buildings and such a huge amount of money spent on it. Thank you.

Principal: I am very happy to ask Estates and Buildings colleagues to see what arrangements could be devised so that when necessary the gate could be opened. On the other hand I do understand that in the past we have had real difficulty with all sorts of delivery vans, before the Quad was built either charging in or blocking that passageway. There is a general feeling that apart from vehicles where there is a real urgency or necessity it is essential to control that and I think that is why colleagues have left the gate half-shut.

Miss Elspeth Murray: This is the first General Council Meeting I have been at and I am not exactly sure what the powers are of the body. But I noticed in the papers from the last meeting there was feedback from the Finance & Services Standing Committee which included a report on Estates & Buildings, which covers a lot of different things. I realise that the University has got a huge estate and that part of that is the forthcoming closure or hand over of what is currently the Bongo Club on Holyrood Road. I think the plan is for the Office of Life Long Learning to combine a number of options in that building and as a graduate and somebody who has used those functions at the Bongo Club and enjoyed what they do there and see them as a lively part of the independent art scene in Edinburgh which is fundamental to how this city operates. It is not just a Festival thing it is something that is vital to the life of the city throughout the year. I was wondering what role there is for the University to play a more active part in consulting around the changes in uses of its buildings and whether the General Council has a way to feed back about that change of use. I am aware that in recent days the University has responded to all kinds of press coverage and comments from the Rector and other spokespeople about that change of use and have given some explanation as to why that has happened and has said they are happy to aid the Bongo Club in finding alternative premises and they seem sympathetic. Anyway, I am here to ask what role this body has in thoughtful planning of uses of University property. Thank you.

Professor Charles Swainson: Can I just add to that, as it has come in through the emails, there are four other people dealing with the Bongo Club, so it seems sensible to deal with them all together: Sarah Muirhead, Sophie Cook and Gillian Jack have all emailed in about the same thing.

Chairman: There seem to be two issues here, one is the questions of the use of the Bongo Club and the second one, the broader question, the role of this body in the issues that might arise in the University estate generally.

University Secretary: I am happy to comment on both of those. I think in the broader terms the General Council certainly has the right and the responsibility in some ways to comment on just these sorts of things, and the University takes those comments extremely seriously. Those comments can come through the

General Council Assessors to Court and in other ways. I serve as Registrar to this body as well and I am University Secretary so I am happy to listen to those comments. On the Bongo Club it is clear that you did see the University's statement and the University approached the Bongo Club back in November noting that this was a strategic decision that would help support 15,000 local students which were involved annually in Life Long Learning. As you noted Life Long Learning has a couple of different places around the University, one of which is being closed by the foreclosure of a lease and it was thought that we needed to bring these functions together in a place that serves students well, and in fact, pulling up another theme, that serves disabled students better than where they are presently located. So we have been working with them. We met the Bongo Club in December about the timing and hopefully providing them help with finding some where else. The University does not have appropriate accommodation for them unfortunately, but this is a decision that has been taken strategically and for the benefit of those 15,000 students as well.

Chairman: Does that answer your question or do you want to supplement it.

Miss Elspeth Murray: Thank you for that, that clarifies. That helps give some added information to the statement about why the University has made that decision, but my question remains really about what role this organisation can play, or should play or might play in being part of a consultation process with the University. Does the University consult? Does it seek to consult with changes of planning and land-use? We are here in Edinburgh, which is home to Patrick Geddes, the father of town-planning, whose approach to town-planning incorporated sympathy with people and the environment, a synthesis of different view-points and a synergy in bringing together all the different forces that help make change. So I would hope to see, as a graduate who has studied geography here and social anthropology here, that there would be an active role in willingly involving lots of different view-points about how those decisions are made. Is that something that the University hopes to achieve, and if not why not?

Principal: The University is very determinedly consultative, we consult extremely closely with the City of Edinburgh Council, with the City of Edinburgh Planning Committee, and with the local communities and we have had a pattern of open meetings at our main locations which have been open to local residents and to councillors, and we share with the Council a long time in advance our master plans and get commentary back, so I would say one of the reasons why the University's planning applications go through so well is because our colleagues have been very assiduous in engaging in consultation, both with the elected representatives of the City, but also we have 'open house', we had 'open house' in George Square for councillors and residents. As far as the formal processes of making resource decisions the University Court and one of its sub-committees is Estates and Buildings, and in terms of the formality there are three very effective General Council Assessors on the University Court, so that is as it were the formal route through which the General Council as a body has oversight of these matters. I would have to say that we are really quite punctilious about consulting and we are punctilious about giving a lot of priority to the festivals, we liaise; of the some two million and some tickets for Fringe events, about one million are for events in University premises. We have worked very, very hard on that, also extremely hard on the other festivals, we have a major role in the international Science Festival and very strong roles in the other festivals too. But I do think there is an issue for us for the long term, where we have got Moray House School of Education, we have got an Office of Life Long Learning, our community of 15,000 Life Long Learning students is growing robustly as a result of the merger with Edinburgh College of Art, we do have a duty of care for those 15,000 students and to the disabled students amongst them and in the long term I think it is very much in the community's benefit that we serve that body of 15,000 students.

Mr Alan Johnston: If it helps to assuage any concern, if I may have the audacity to suggest that the Business Committee might wish to consider the concerns which you have raised this morning and take a view as to whether the Business Committee structures are sufficient to have a proper input in to planning matters which arise from the estate, would that help?

Miss Elspeth Murray: Thank you.