

University of St Andrews

University Court

REINFORCED EXTRAORDINARY COMMITTEE OF COURT (RECC)

Note of the SEVENTH meeting of RECC held on Friday 24 July 2020

The Committee met remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Dame Anne Pringle, *Senior Governor (Chair)*; Professor Sally Mapstone, *Principal*; Professor Stuart Monro, *Deputy Chair of Court and Convenor of G&N*; Mr Adrian Greer, *Chancellor's Assessor*; Mr Jonathan Hewitt, *General Council Assessor*; Professor Mark Harris, *Senate Assessor*; Ms Donna Pierz-Fennell, *Non-Academic Staff Assessor*; Mr Dan Marshall, *President, Students' Association*; Mr Nigel Morecroft, *Non-Executive Member and Convenor of RemCom*; Professor Sir David Wallace, *Non-Executive Member and Convenor of ARC*.

In regular attendance: Professor Lorna Milne, *Deputy Principal and Master of the United College*; Mr Alastair Merrill, *Vice-Principal Governance*; Mr Derek Watson, *Quaestor & Factor*; Ms Margaret Sinclair, *Executive Officer to the University Court & Senate*.

In attendance: Professor Brad MacKay, *Senior Vice-Principal and Vice-Principal International Strategy and External Relations*.

1. Minutes of RECC Meeting 6

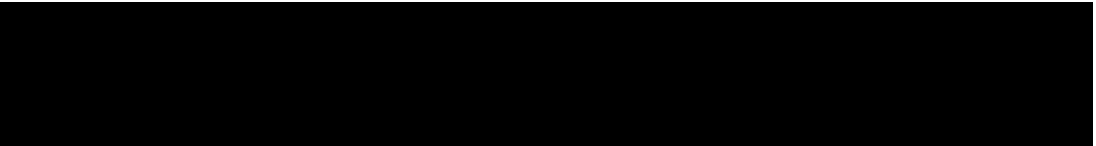

- 1.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2020 (on file, RECC/19/20) as a correct record.



2. Matters considered


2.1. Update from Principal



The Committee received a verbal update from the Principal.


- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]




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- Work continued on the proposed usages of the UK Government and Scottish Governments' research support funding allocation. In order to ensure clear communication with staff and, where relevant, students about these and other issues a series of open forums had been scheduled: - 19 August chaired by VP Education; 25 August, chaired by the VP RIS; and 1 and 2 September, chaired by the Principal. A forum for PGR students chaired by the Provost had also been scheduled.
 - The announcement concerning the first phase of the UK Government's restructuring fund had been made on 16 July 2020. 

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- The Principal continued to be involved in regular meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Higher Education and the Deputy First Minister.
 - Plans continued for the permitted phased return of universities to campus learning (in line with Phase 3 of the Scottish Government's route map). Extensive risk assessments had been undertaken on all buildings across the Estate. 

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- All
- current planning had proceeded on the basis of the 2m rule.
- The SFC had issued a quick consultation to inform the first stage of its major review for the Scottish Government of coherent provision and sustainability in the tertiary sector. The deadline for responses was 10 August and Court Members had been invited to submit comments to feed into the University's consultation response. The response would be produced in the PO and the intention was to give sight of it to RECC members at the meeting of RECC on 7 August.
 - Liaison continues with the BAME student network in the context of Black Lives Matter and in relation to the revision and publication of their recent report. The AVP Diversity and the Principal had also joined a meeting of the BME staff network, and they too intended to produce a set of testimonies for submission for Court's consideration.

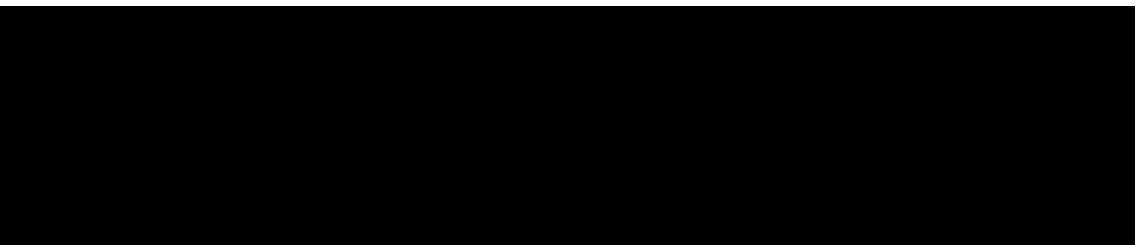
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- RECC was invited to note that the University had topped the National Student Survey for the student academic experience by a considerable margin (for the 12th time in 14 years)
 - Virtual graduations had been recorded which would be broadcast to the relevant cohorts of graduands over the course of week commencing 27 July. Each full ceremony contained recordings made for the occasion of the chapel choir singing the Gaudeamus and other music, prayers by the University Chaplain, addresses by the Principal, and by the Chancellor Lord Campbell, conferral of degrees in absentia, presentations of the Principal's medals, and a wonderful address by Dr Fiona Hill. 

 Any member of Court and RECC who wished to view all or any of the ceremonies could do so via the University website, or via a link which could be obtained from the Court Office.

The Principal answered questions from Members on 

 feedback on the staff BME network meeting; and the ongoing arrangements for a phased re-opening.

3.1 RECC/19/21 – Student Numbers

The Committee noted the paper presented by the Senior Vice-Principal (on file, RECC/19/21, Student Numbers) which provided an update to the position presented to RECC on 10 July 2020 (on file, RECC/19/18).



The Senior Vice-Principal answered questions from Members on acceptance rates, comparison with last year's cycle, and deferrals.

3.2 Financial Planning and Scenario Planning

The Quaestor provided a verbal update to the Committee on the current financial position 

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

4. Update on USS Consultation

The Vice-Principal Governance provided a verbal update.

The USS Trustee had announced the first of two consultations that would take place over the summer period. The main USS consultation on technical provisions for the 2020 valuation was not likely before end of July, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A UUK group of finance specialists had worked since last summer to consider technical detail of this and the Vice-Principal Governance and Finance Director had both participated. The Trustee had now brought forward final proposals to come into effect from 1 August, to allow these new arrangements to be taken into consideration in the 2020 valuation.

[REDACTED]

The University was required to provide a formal response by the beginning of August. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Committee noted the terms of the University's intended response.

5. AOCB

5.1 Appointment of Court Intermediary

The Committee noted the recommendation of the Governance & Nominations Committee that [REDACTED] be re-appointed as Court intermediary for a further year until 31 July 2021.

5.2 Convenor of RECC

The Committee noted that [REDACTED] would remain as a member and Convenor of RECC when [REDACTED] took up appointment as Senior Lay Member. [REDACTED] would sit on RECC in [REDACTED] capacity as Convenor of PARC.

Date of next meeting

The Committee will meet on Friday 7 August 2020 at 2pm, via Microsoft Teams.

Margaret Sinclair

Clerk to the RECC

3 August 2020