



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE
Microsoft Teams
Thursday 23 April 2020, 10.30 am

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------|--|---------------|
| 1 | Minute
To <u>approve</u> the Minute of the previous meeting held on 24 March 2020. | A1 |
| 2 | Matters Arising & Action Log
To <u>raise</u> any matters arising. | A2 |
| 3 | Principal's Communications
To <u>receive</u> an update from the Principal. | Verbal |

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | | |
|----------|--|----------------------------|
| 4 | Director of Finance's Report
To <u>comment</u> on the update from Lee Hamill, Director of Finance. | B |
| 5 | Covid-19: Mitigation and Renewal - Prioritisation and Management
To <u>agree</u> the paper from Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary. | C |
| 6 | Service Excellence Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service Excellence Portfolio Prioritisation
To <u>comment</u> on the paper from Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary.• People and Money Systems Programme Update
To <u>comment</u> on the paper from Gavin McLachlan Vice-Principal and Chief Operating Officer, and Librarian to the University. | D1

D2 |
| 7 | Responding to the Coronavirus- Our City and University Community
To <u>approve</u> the paper from Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainably | E |
| 8 | Social & Civic Responsibility Plan – Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals
To <u>approve</u> the paper from Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainably | F |
| 9 | People Report
To <u>comment</u> on the update from James Saville, Director of Human Resources. | G |

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| 10 | REF 2021 Update
To <u>note</u> . | H |
| 11 | Covid-19 Exceptional Process
Electronic Meeting 14-16 April
To <u>note</u> . | I1
I2 |
| 12 | University Executive Communications
To <u>note</u> the key messages to be communicated. | Verbal |
| 13 | Any Other Business
To <u>consider</u> any other matters by UE members. | Verbal |
| 14 | Date of Next Meeting
Tuesday 19 May 2020 at 10 am. | |



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

24 March 2020

[Draft] Minute

Present: Peter Mathieson (Convener)
David Argyle, Leigh Chalmers, Chris Cox, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Gavin Douglas, Hugh Edmiston, David Gray, Lee Hamill, Colm Harmon, Gary Jebb, Wendy Loretto, Gavin McLachlan, Dorothy Miell, Theresa Merrick, Dave Robertson, James Saville, Jonathan Seckl, Aziz Sheikh, Tracey Slaven, James Smith, Sarah Smith, Sandy Tudhope, Andrew Wilson and Moira Whyte.

In attendance: Fiona Boyd and Kirstie Graham.

Apologies: Richard Kenway and Andrew Morris.

1 Minute **Paper A1**

The Minute of the meeting held on 25 February 2020 was approved.

2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log **Paper A2**

There were no matters arising and the action log was noted.

3 Principal's Communications **Verbal**

The Principal welcomed members to the first University Executive conducted through Teams and extended his thanks for all the hard work underpinning the University's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. He reported that Tracey Slaven was leading the contingency planning group, which was focussing its work on 3 timescales: immediate & contingency issues; the short-term operating model (3 – 5 months) and recovery. In relation to immediate issues, the priority remained protecting our community while retaining our education and critical research as far as possible. The senior leadership team had confirmed the University would honour staff short-term contracts until the end of this academic year and had agreed to release students from the remainder of their accommodation fees if they were vacating University accommodation. These decisions had financial implications as did the expected impact on international student recruitment.

There was extensive discussion, with the following points raised:

- The work of the Academic Contingency Group in providing guidance on assessment for honours students and postgraduate taught assessments to ensure no detriment to students and the importance of following the guidance to ensure consistent messaging;
- The impact on research, with the focus on maintaining research that was directed at Covid-19 and the need to communicate effectively the vital work the University was doing in this area;

- The pause on all capital projects that had not already started;
- The importance of maintaining a focus on student recruitment for session 2020/21 and considering ways to provide a full online experience for the delivery of core materials in semester one, if required;
- The importance of maintaining morale and a forward looking focus, so the University could emerge from this crisis in a strong position.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4 Finance

- **Director of Finance's Report**

B1

Lee Hamill informed members that the circulated update had been superseded by current events which had impacted on the forecasted surplus. There would be short term mitigation in savings on capital expenditure and travel costs and the finance team was currently working on modelling outcomes. Looking ahead to 2020/21 and beyond, scenarios were being worked on based on the expected reduction in overseas students to provide a robust basis for future planning.

- **Planning Round Update**

B2

The Executive approved the EUSA and EUSU plans progressing to Policy and Resources Committee on 3 April 2020 and Court on 27 April 2020 due to their earlier financial year end. It was agreed to delay the final plans and proposals for investment until Policy and Resources Committee on 1 June 2020 and Court on 15 June 2020 to allow more time to assess the impact of Covid-19.

5 Gujarat Biotechnology University Update

Paper C

The Executive considered an update on the proposed strategic partnership with the Government of Gujarat for the University to play a key role in the development of the Gujarat Biotechnology University.

There had been a productive visit by the Project Team to Gujarat in early March and it was proposed to enter the first part of a two-stage agreement by signing a Memorandum of Agreement in May 2020 to initiate Stage 1 of the agreement. This would initiate a number of workstreams over 4 months to finalise the operating detail for the partnership before entering the binding Stage 2 Collaboration Agreement.

There was discussion of the potential impact of Covid-19 on the timescales and funding. Whilst recognising this, the opportunity aligned with the University's strategy in creating a strong academic partnership in India with a focus on translational research and teaching and it was important the University continued to be forward looking and outward facing. The Executive approved the proposal progressing to Policy and Resources Committee and Court for approval.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

6 Outcome Agreement

Paper D

The Executive supported the draft single year Outcome Agreement for 2020/21 and delegated authority to Tracey Slaven to refine the detail of the document in advance of Policy and Resources Committee and Court on 27 April 2020 for approval in advance of submission to the Scottish Funding Council by 30 April 2020.

7 Open Management Actions – Internal Audit Reports

Paper E

The Executive noted the number of open management actions had increased as a result of new audit reports coming into scope of the report and members were asked to facilitate closure of actions within their own areas of responsibility, engaging with the internal audit service to resolve these.

8 People Report

Paper F

The Executive noted that UCU had paused the ballot for the next round of industrial action and it was expected that forgone pay from the recent industrial action would be used to support student hardship funds.

There was general appreciation from all members for the work of staff in responding to the crisis and continuing to support students and colleagues through this unsettling time.

9 Any Other Business

Verbal

The Executive received a verbal update on the Service Excellence Programme with members informed that the core IT implementation for HR and Finance systems was progressing as a priority.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 23 April 2020 at 10.30am through Microsoft Teams.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

Director of Finance's Report

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update on the following key financial matters in light of the current Covid-19 crisis:

- The likely impact to the University's 2019-20 financial results as a result of significant additional expenditure;
- The University's current cash reserves and liquidity;
- Initial modelling of the impact that a significant reduction in revenue in 2020-21 and beyond would have on University Surpluses, Cash Reserves, Liquidity and Financial Covenants;
- Details of the mitigating actions that have been taken thus far, as well as mitigations that could be taken in the future.

2. An update on the University's disinvestment strategy is provided and also reports the latest¹ University management accounts (excluding Subsidiaries) position up to the end of February (period seven).

Action requested/Recommendation

3. The University Executive is asked to review and comment on the latest update.

Paragraphs 4-44 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

45. The University manages its financial risk by not breaching the Group risk appetite as described in its financial metrics. The current Finance Strategy provides a target surplus range of 3% - 5% to remain sustainable.

Equality & Diversity

46. Specific issues of equality and diversity are not relevant to this paper as the content focusses primarily on financial strategy and/or financial project considerations.

Next steps & communication

47. We would welcome feedback as outlined in the discussion above.

Consultation

48. The paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

Further information

49. <u>Author</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Rachael Robertson	Lee Hamill
Deputy Director of Finance	Director of Finance

¹ At the time of writing full March (period eight) management accounts were not available.

Stuart Graham
Head of FIRST (Financial Information,
Reporting & Strategy Team)

09 April 2020

Freedom of Information

50. This paper should not be included in open business as its disclosure could substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

Covid-19: Mitigation and Renewal - Prioritisation and Management

Description of paper

1. This paper articulates our proposed approach to ensuring that the University of Edinburgh emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic as a strong, renewed organisation, with a community of staff, students and friends built on our shared values, able to deliver against Strategy 2030. This will require a collective willingness to lead and embrace significant change in established ways of doing things; close and transparent collegial working; and a shared sense of urgency.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. The University Executive is asked to consider and agree the proposed approach to co-ordination and to governance.

Paragraphs 3-29 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Equality & Diversity

30. Failure to consider equality and diversity impacts is an inherent risk given the need for rapid development of recovery plans to secure financial sustainability. Equality Impact Assessment must be considered in programme scope and design phases.

Next steps/implications

31. Establishment of Mitigation and Recovery Group, clarification of scope and timescales of agreed work-streams to support set-up, and update to Policy & Resources Committee and Court.

Further information

32. Authors

Tracey Slaven
Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning

Barry Neilson
Director, Service Excellence Programme

Presenter

Sarah Smith
Vice-Principal Strategic Change and
University Secretary

Freedom of Information

33. Closed. Our approach to mitigation and renewal planning is commercially sensitive.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

Service Excellence Portfolio Prioritisation

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the University Executive with an update on the Service Excellence Programme (SEP).
2. The SEP Board is due to meet on Thursday 23 April 2020 following the University Executive meeting. That Board will receive this paper and will be asked to discuss and approve the four recommendations on programme/project prioritisation given Covid-19, immediate & contingency issues, short term priorities (2-5 months) and looking ahead to recovery/adaption.
3. The approach to Covid-19, both mitigation and adaption, will likely include a number of areas relevant to service excellence (for example student recruitment, student support and administration, efficiencies) and consideration will need to be given on how existing priorities will best align.

Action Requested/Recommendation

4. The University Executive (particularly those who are not members of the SEP Board) are invited to comment on the paper and these comments will be fed into the SEP Board discussion on the afternoon of 23 April 2020.

Paragraphs 5-21 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Further Information

22. Author

Barry Neilson
Director
Service Excellence Programme
23 April 2020

Presenter

Sarah Smith
Vice-Principal Strategic Change and
Governance and University Secretary

Freedom of Information

23. This paper is closed.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

People and Money Systems Programme Update

Description of paper

1. This paper provides the University Executive with an update on the People and Money Systems Programme

2. The SEP Board is due to meet on Thursday 23 April 2020 following the University Executive meeting. That Board will receive this paper and will be asked to comment on and note the update from the People and Money Systems Programme following the detailed discussion and change request presented at the February 2020 Board.

3. The discussion section of the paper draws out the impact of coronavirus on delivery and highlights the other key issues which have been escalated. For a number of weeks, the weekly status report has highlighted that we expect aspects of the quality, costs, time triangle for project delivery will be impacted as a result of impact of coronavirus on programme. The People and Money Programme Sponsor/ Lead, SEP Programme Director and HR and Finance Directors are actively managing this issue.

Action Requested/Recommendation

4. The University Executive (particularly those who are not members of the SEP Board) are invited to comment on the paper and these comments will be fed into the SEP Board discussion on the afternoon of 23 April 2020.

Paragraphs 5-25 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Further Information

26. Author

Barry Neilson

Director

Service Excellence Programme

Presenter

Gavin McLachlan

Vice-Principal and Chief Operating

Officer, and Librarian to the University

April 2020

Freedom of Information

27. This paper is closed.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

Responding to the Coronavirus- Our City and University Community

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes an approach to how the University can respond to community needs arising from the Coronavirus pandemic and work with community groups and citizens to promote a sense of common purpose and well-being in our City and the City Region.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Executive is asked to review and agree the proposed actions.

Paragraphs 3-15 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

16. Risk Management: The health and safety of students, staff and the wider community is paramount. Any response from our community of staff and students would be expert-led and any risk would need to be carefully managed. Putting our values into action will demonstrate the strength of our commitment to social and civic responsibility during this crisis and test our capacity to rapidly mobilise our resource to meet identified community need. This requires careful, agile planning, monitoring and evaluation of all related initiatives.

Further information

17. Authors

Dave Gorman
Director, Social Responsibility and
Sustainability
Lesley McAra
Assistant Principal Community Relations
Gavin Donoghue,
Deputy Director, Stakeholder Relations

Presenter

Dave Gorman
Director, Social Responsibility and
Sustainability

Freedom of Information

18. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

**Social & Civic Responsibility Plan –
Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals**

Description of paper

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval from the University Executive on the Social & Civic Responsibility Plan as part of Strategy 2030. Strategic objectives, measures of success, key areas of activity and links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are included. Additional work is still to be undertaken on the performance framework and next steps for implementation.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Executive is asked to review and approve the Plan and provide comments or suggestions for any issues to be clarified.

Paragraphs 3-12 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Next Steps

13. Following University Executive review and sign off:

- GASP, SRS to review SDG measures for Performance Framework;
- CAM and SRS to develop a communications and engagement plan; and
- SRS to work with schools, colleges, departments to integrate sustainability / SDGs.

Risk Management

14. Key risks include ethical and reputational, both are associated with not having a clear strategic long-term direction for the University on social responsibility and sustainability issues. Other risks include raising expectations, delivering aspirational but unrealistic goals and failing to achieve buy in from stakeholders. A risk register will be developed and updated annually.

Equality and Diversity

15. Achieving the SDGs and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change require actions by all organisations and individuals. Climate change impacts disproportionately on the poorest and most vulnerable. Tackling climate change and the SDGs makes a major contribution to global justice, gender, education and protection of natural resources.

Further Information

16. Authors

Michelle Brown, Head of SRS Programmes
Dave Gorman, Director of SRS
Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning

Presenter

Dave Gorman
Director of SRS

Freedom of information

17. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

People Report

Description of paper

1. This paper provides an update on people related matters being taken forward by Human Resources and other University departments.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. The Committee is requested to note the content of this paper.

Paragraphs 3-12 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

13. The University has a low risk appetite for both compliance risks and people risks.

Equality & Diversity

14. Equality issues will be considered on a case by case basis for each individual project/piece of work.

Next steps & Communications

15. Future reports will be presented to each meeting of University Executive.

Consultation

16. The paper builds on discussion at previous meetings of University Executive and has been reviewed by the Director of HR.

Further information

16. Authors

Linda Criggie, Deputy Director HR –
Employee Relations, Reward,
Employment Policy, Equality & Diversity

Presenter

James Saville
Director of Human Resources
10 April 2020

Denise Nesbitt, Deputy Director HR –
Learning and Organisation Development
and Resourcing

Freedom of Information

17. This paper is **closed**.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

23 April 2020

REF 2021 Update

Description of paper

1. REF 2021 preparations in response to COVID-19.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. None – for information.

Background and context

3. UKRI's REF team announced postponement of the REF 2021 submission deadline (27 Nov 2020) for an undefined period. Current REF 2021 census dates for staff, impacts and outputs still apply.

Discussion

4. The UK REF team [announced](#) on 24 March 2020, that the submission deadline of 27 November no longer applies.
5. Contingency plans are being considered. As part of this planning, they will conduct a light touch consultation with Institutions before setting a further submission deadline. We will receive at least 8 months' notice of a new deadline.
6. Census dates currently remain unchanged:
 - HESA return and REF-eligible staff on our payroll: 31 July 2020
 - Impacts resulting from underpinning research carried out at UoE: 31 July 2020
7. Outputs publicly available and underpinning research for impact activities: 31 December 2020

REF Board Response: *Round 2 Review to continue with flexibility, acknowledging current priorities*

8. SVP Jonathan Seckl, Chair of the REF Board, proposed continuing the current round 2 review of environment statements and impact case studies. This includes REF Board meetings with Units of Assessment (UoA)/REF teams in Schools and Colleges.
9. This proposal was agreed by REF Board members, particularly as many UoAs had already submitted documentation for review and others were at an advanced stage of development.
10. GaSP REF team have offered extensions to current timelines for some UoAs still to submit draft documentation and, working with Colleges, have identified UoAs

whose deadlines have been postponed to the end June to ease the burden of competing priorities.

REF preparation to pause

11. Following the second full round of REF Board and UoA meetings, when all UoA drafts will be close to finalised and poised for any last minute additions/amendments prior to submission, REF documentation preparation is to be slowed/put on hold until further notice. This allows colleagues to focus on other more pressing priorities in the covid crisis. Once the UK REF team sets a new submission date we will reactivate the full REF preparation teams and formally review all documents again 3 months ahead of the new deadline.

Staff census date

12. As mentioned above, the current staff census date remains unchanged. The GaSP REF team are working closely with colleagues in HR and Colleges/Schools to ensure that all eligible staff on the payroll on 31st July are recorded correctly in Oracle for our HESA staff return. This year's HESA return also includes identifying early career researchers. Schools/Research centres are currently identifying and verifying staff using the REF 2021 criteria.

REF & People and Money Programme

13. The People and Money (core system) timelines have implications on our REF submission. This is due to the systems we rely on and the resources available. We have set up a Research Projects Governance Group to monitor the People and Money programme projects, as well as other research-related activity (e.g. Wellcome Trust audit, implementation of Infonetica, new online ethics tool, etc) to ensure that unnecessary bottle-necks and pressure on staff are avoided.

We are currently assuming a March 2021 REF submission deadline to help with planning of activities.

UoA contingency plans

14. UoAs and College REF teams have completed REF-specific contingency plans. This will allow the GaSP REF team work with UoAs who have concerns and highlight to Colleges where REF-specific staff will be out of contract before the new REF submission deadline.

15. The documents are only visible to the UoAs, their College REF team and GaSP REF team.

Resource implications

16. There may be resource implications due to professional services staff employed specifically to work on the REF project. Depending on the new submission deadline, contract extensions may be requested.

Risk Management

17. The submitted contingency plans have not highlighted any additional concerns (at odds with the sector) that lead us to believe that we will not be able to make the full submission when required.

Equality & Diversity

18. EIAs have been identified and written into the [REF 2021 Code of Practice](#).

Next steps & Communications

19. REF Board will continue to monitor the situation and will keep University Executive updated.

Consultation

20. N/A

Further information

21. Author

Jacqueline McMahon
Head of REF 2021

Presenter

Professor Jonathan Seckl
Senior Vice Principal

Freedom of Information

22. Open.



University Executive– Covid-19 Priority Decision Making Process

Recognising the importance of responding effectively to the changing situation, this sets out a process for the University Executive, under delegated authority, to make decisions between meetings subject to following the process set out below.

Process for Decisions by the University Executive between meetings

- The decision should be timing critical and require a response before the next meeting of the University Executive. The Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning, as Convener of the Covid-19 Co-ordination Group, will consider whether a paper requires to be circulated for an urgent decision.
- Papers should be concise and use the University Executive paper template.
- Papers will be circulated electronically to all members of the University Executive, ideally with at least three working days to communicate a decision. In cases of extreme urgency and with the agreement of the Principal, the consultation period may be within 24 hours of circulation of the information.
- Eight members of the University Executive, to include the Principal and the University Secretary, shall be a quorum. In the absence of the Principal, the Senior Vice-Principal may deputise for the Principal and in the absence of the University Secretary, the Deputy Secretary Student Experience may deputise for the University Secretary.
- It is envisaged that this extraordinary decision making process will not need to be called more than twice in any period between the existing monthly meetings of the University Executive.
- A formal minute will be kept and submitted for approval to the next meeting of the University Executive.
- The above process will be reviewed by 31 June 2020.



UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE

Electronic Meeting Concluded on 16 April 2020

Minute

Responded: Peter Mathieson (Convener)
David Argyle, Leigh Chalmers, Sarah Cunningham-Burley,
Gavin Douglas, Lee Hamill, Richard Kenway, Wendy Loretto,
Dorothy Miell, Dave Robertson, James Saville, Jonathan Seckl,
Aziz Sheikh, Sarah Smith, Sandy Tudhope, Moira Whyte and
Andrew Wilson.

1 Fee Policy Amendment – Temporary Removal of Inflation Uplift

The University Executive approved a single year amendment to the Fee Policy for final year postgraduate (taught and research) students, removing any inflation uplift on tuition fees due in 2020/21 following an Authorised Interruption of Studies required as a direct result of Covid-19.