

Secretary's Board Bulletin

The School and Professional Service representatives of the Board are:

Ms Ann Marie Dalton,
Secretary of the University (Chair)

Mr Mark Adderley,
Director of Human Resources

Ms Caroline Brown,
Director of Administration (IPE)

Ms Philippa Burrell,
Director of Administration (SBE)

Ms Sue Collier,
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Mr Malcolm Deans,
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Ms Maggie Dunn,
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Ms Lesley Lindsay,
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Mr Andrew Menzies,
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Ms Theresa Merrick,
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Ms Lorna Morrow,
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Mrs Kathy Patterson,
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Mr Derek Penman,
Director of Administration (EPS)

Mr Campbell Powrie,
Director of Administration (SML)

Mr Mike Roch,
Director of Information Services

Ms Sheelagh Wallace,
Director of Administration and Registrar
(Dubai)

Ms Janice Yew,
Chief Operating Officer and Registrar
(Malaysia)

Welcome to the October edition of the Secretary's Board Bulletin, the regular communication from the Secretary's Board.

The Secretary's Board is the forum for those who lead the Professional Services across the University to meet and work together to ensure we are delivering coherent and co-operative services across the University to support teaching, research and the student experience.

The purpose of this Bulletin is to share with you examples of the varied and important work being undertaken by Professional Services colleagues across the University.

The topics reported are chosen to celebrate successes; highlight the more unusual and non-routine work of the Professional Services and, where appropriate, give insight into challenging or difficult work.

More detailed information can be found in the minutes of the Secretary's Board, which can be found at:

<http://www.hw.ac.uk/committees/secretarys-board/minutes.htm>

Feedback is always welcome. Please contact ProfessionalServices@hw.ac.uk with any comments or suggestions.

We hope you enjoy reading this months' Secretary's Board Bulletin.

Ann Marie and the members of the Secretary's Board

1. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTORS OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE SCHOOLS (School of Textiles)

Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing (RAM)

The recruitment cycle for 2013/14 is virtually complete. To identify problematic areas, Schools are evaluating their recruitment against targets. With the general increase in student numbers the re-designation of James Watt Centre I as teaching space has been extremely timely.

RAM activity for 2014/15 entry is now underway and Schools supported the well-attended undergraduate open days held on 27 and 28 September 2013.

Induction/Enrolment

Working closely with colleagues in central services, Schools have been heavily involved in induction and enrolment activity for new students. Online enrolment of continuing students is also a major exercise and includes managing student progression difficulties and the associated academic appeals. A key activity is ensuring the completion of enrolment by the latest enrolment dates, particularly for those on Tier 4 visas.

Schools are preparing for the Autumn round of Taught Postgraduate Award Boards. Approved award decisions are required by 11 October 2013 to meet the deadline for the November 2013 graduations.

REF

REF submissions are undergoing final scrutiny and approval in advance of the impending REF submission deadline.

The School of Management and Languages has refreshed its Research Centre webpages and these will be launched once the final REF submissions have been signed off.

2. CAMPUS SERVICES

National Performance Centre for Sport

We would like to thank all colleagues who have assisted us in developing the successful bid to host the National Performance Centre for Sport. Although led by Campus Services, many other sections have and will play vital roles and such a big success demonstrates what collectively can be achieved.

Sports Union

Induction events have been held for members of executive committees, sports ambassadors, and club committee members.

Heriot-Watt Community Sport Hub

Fourteen local clubs now participate in the University's Community Sport Hub. The affiliation process, for clubs to be officially part of the Hub, is currently being drafted. Dialogue with local clubs has been very positive.

The Hub attended the Volunteer Recruitment Fair on 25 September at Edinburgh College to promote various volunteering opportunities. More information about the Hub can be found at <http://www.hw.ac.uk/sports/community-sport-hub.htm>

3. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Communications

An internal communications review is underway. The review will provide an insight into how the information and internal communication channels are performing at the University.

As part of the review, all colleagues at all campuses will be invited to complete a survey in early November. The results of the survey will be used to inform recommendations for improving internal communications across the University.

Overview of the main stories in the past month

School of Management and Languages

After Heriot-Watt's launch of the first British Sign Language (BSL) interpreting degree in Scotland, BBC Scotland's Health Correspondent Eleanor Bradford was given exclusive access to BSL events to develop a package for all BBC channels – digital, radio and TV – for broadcast on August 12. Her report generated much comment on social media and in specialist titles, with follow-up interview requests.

Institute of Petroleum Engineering

The new Shell Centre for Exploration Geoscience was announced, attracting coverage in Scottish Nationals and several industry-specific online journals. Professor Mercedes Maroto-Valer and team produced their first piece for The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/explainer-what-is-carbon-capture-and-storage-16052>

School of Engineering and Physical Sciences

Research into diabetes has shown that proteins targeted by the cosmetic surgery treatment Botox could hold a cure for diabetes. This attracted coverage across a wide number of online journals and websites, as well as social media coverage.

National Performance Centre for Sport

The final pitches for the National Performance Centre for Sport took place at the start of August. Widespread coverage of the bid was provided by the Edinburgh Evening News, with other national media also covering it. Architectural media were also interested in details of the centre.

Development & Alumni

Focus on data cleaning continues with over 15,000 alumni records updated this year to date. This has also resulted in the identification of a significant number of possible donors.

New alumni e-news, 'In Conversation - monthly', has been created to tie in with the alumni magazine.

Media Services

Media Services has been heavily engaged in delivering an extensive refurbishment programme including:

- Conversion of JWCI for teaching
- Redevelopment of two labs in the Henry Prais Building and two labs in the John Muir Building
- Conversion of two EBS pods into group study areas and the redevelopment of the electronic signage within the Edinburgh Business School

4. FINANCE

Work is being carried out to complete year-end processes ahead of the audit of our published accounts. The audit carried out by KPMG took place between 7 and 25 October 2013.

The introduction of regular reconciliation of balance sheet accounts is a key control in our financial processes. We will use the recent work as a springboard for revising processes to minimise the need for accounting adjustments and to establish a platform for routine formal monthly reconciliation.

Finance and School Financial Controllers continue to meet at the monthly "Oracle Forum" to discuss progress and emerging issues.

A further series of workshops has now been established covering:

- Requisition to Receipt (R2R)
- Purchase to Payment (P2P)
- Travel and Expenses
- Purchase Cards
- Fixed Assets/Capitalisation
- GL Maintenance, security and control
- Accounts Receivable
- Internal Trading
- Foreign Payments
- Payroll and VAT

5. GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES

Information Governance and Security Group

Chaired by The Director of Governance and Legal Services, the Group has been established to have oversight of information security management, which is part of the wider aim to promote the effective and efficient use of information.

For further information contact Ann Jones: a.e.jones@hw.ac.uk

Internal Audit Recommendations

An extensive review of all outstanding internal audit recommendations took place recently. We would like to thank all the participants for their efforts.

Higher Education Assurance Team (HEAT) Visit

The visit from the Home Office's Higher Education Assurance Team (HEAT) was very successful, with feedback from the Team following the visit being favourable. Thanks are offered to all colleagues involved.

As HEAT will conduct all audits going forward, we should expect our next audit within our current licence period (i.e. by April 2017). Universities are generally "low risk" within the total population of Tier 4 sponsors however those with relationships with private colleges might expect to see their risk profile increased.

6. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

i-HR system

The University Executive has agreed to fund phase 1 of a replacement People Management system. This will be implemented in phases over the next two years. This will enable us to replace our existing systems with a single system providing accurate and timely people data.

Staff cards

Staff cards from the library are now available for all colleagues. Additional functionality will be added on in time and the data will be linked to the new iHR system. If you are already a member of the library, replacing your library card with a staff card is a quick and easy process.

Athena SWAN

The University has received the Bronze Award from the Athena SWAN Charter recognising excellence in championing employment of women in the fields of science and technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM).

This is in recognition for the work done by the Self-Assessment Team and other colleagues over the last few months, and sets the ambitions and plans for moving our gender equality agenda forward. The action plan will now be implemented, with ambitions for further submissions from schools or departments.

Staff survey

The next staff survey is planned for spring 2015, reverting to a three year cycle. In advance of then, Schools and Services are reminded to focus on the results of the last survey with colleagues, in order to put in place any local actions to address the outcomes.

7. INFORMATION SERVICES

The following new services were launched successfully for Semester 1:

- Book Self-Service at the Edinburgh and Scottish Borders campuses
- Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tagged collection at Dubai Campus library
- Expanded student study space in Edinburgh and Dubai
- Microsoft Office365 Email for taught students worldwide
- New reference library at the Malaysia Campus
- MFDs for student printing at Edinburgh Campus
- Staff Cards issued upon request from the Edinburgh Campus library
- Updates to University websites, the IS website and Vision
- Eduroam deployed at Scottish Borders and Dubai campuses and updated at the Edinburgh Campus

8. REGISTRY SERVICES

Briefing sessions on the new policy and procedures for dealing with complaints took place throughout September. Further briefing sessions can be arranged on request. A podcast of the presentation has been made available to all colleagues in all campuses. Hard copies of the "Guide for Students" have been distributed to Local Complaints Officers. Further guidance and relevant documentation can be found here: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/registry/complaints.htm>

Student Systems Unit (SSU)

SSU have been heavily involved in supporting key processes associated with the beginning of the academic year, such as confirmation and clearing for UCAS applicants and Online Enrolment.

Work has begun on a number of key improvements to be delivered during the coming months, such as the Application Review Centre (ARC) which will be used to support the UCAS admissions process.

Academic Registry

Support for enrolment events took place at Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and Malaysia campuses. All campus events were successful and 20,599 enrolments had taken place by 19 September 2013. This includes over 3,000 ALP students.

9. RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES (RES)

In conjunction with Procurement and other sections, a review of all central teaching space has been completed. Drawings have been created to show the capacity and the furniture layout of each room. As a result, some room capacities have been altered taking health and safety into consideration. Each central teaching room will display a layout diagram along with a 'Use of Centrally Timetabled Rooms' poster, which will include guidelines for room users.

The new Student Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures were introduced on 1 September 2013. Three briefing sessions were attended by approximately 60 colleagues from across the University, who provided extremely positive feedback on the new process. A podcast is available for those who were unable to attend.

The Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013-2018 has been published and will be formally launched across the University through a series of promotion and engagement events.

Student Service Centre

The team produced 1,300 student cards in time for the 2013/14 enrolment event, and processed payments for 300 graduations.

Student Support & Accommodation

Some issues have arisen with the RBS branch on campus in relation to their refusal to accept Heriot-Watt University accommodation documentation as proof of address, as well as their refusal to open bank accounts for Syrian nationals. Arrangements are being made to meet with the bank to discuss these and other issues.

The University has secured additional accommodation off campus in order to meet its guarantee of accommodation to all new entrants. This was caused mainly by a larger than expected number of RUK and UG overseas students coming through the clearing process.

HWU Student Union

Freshers' daytime activities were extended this year and have been extremely well received.

Postgraduate events were all oversubscribed and the Student Union has recruited nearly 60 postgraduate students to re-start the Postgraduate Society.

The Executive Committee has voted to end engagement with the Green Impact project due to lack of funds. Last year the Union was awarded a Gold Standard.

University Health Service

In excess of 1,150 students were registered with the Medical Practice at the three day enrolment event during Freshers' Week. NHS registration of new students is ongoing.

As requested by Student Support & Accommodation Services, the practice has agreed to accommodate a sessional Student Counsellor for this semester.

The Heriot-Watt led bid for a Scottish Funding Council (SFC) funded Oil & Gas Innovation Centre has been successful.

To date the University has secured awards totalling £6.6m. Significant awards/proposals include a £500k ESRC grant for the School of the Built Environment on social housing, a £400k Platform grant to the Institute of Petroleum Engineering, a Knowledge Transfer Partnership signed with Glass Scribe (School of Engineering and Physical Sciences, £66K) and the submission of seven Marie-Curie fellowships.

The Technology Transfer Office secured three revenue generating licenses (AY2013/14 totals 8).

SACCADE Diagnostics, a spin-out from Aberdeen University, has been named as the 2013 winner of Heriot-Watt's Converge Challenge.

Updates from the Professional Services Directorates
September – October 2013

I hope you enjoyed reading this edition of the Secretary's Board Bulletin. Should you have any questions or comments please get in touch: ProfessionalServices@hw.ac.uk