

Secretary's Board Bulletin

The School and Professional Service representatives of the Board are:

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Ms Caroline Brown,
Director of Administration (IPE)

Ms Philippa Burrell,
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Ms Sue Collier,
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Ms Janice Yew,
Chief Operating Officer and Registrar
(Malaysia)

Welcome to the April 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

Applicant Days

Over three days in February and March the School of Textiles and Design ran Applicant Days at the Scottish Borders Campus, which were a great success with a good turnout. The Institute of Petroleum Engineering (IPE) held a Geoscience Open Day on 4 March to provide prospective postgraduate students with an insight into geoscience opportunities at Heriot-Watt. The event highlighted some of the exciting developments emerging at the University, including the Oil and Gas Innovation Centre, the NERC Centre for Doctoral Training in Oil and Gas and the new Lyell Centre. More Applicant Days are scheduled in April for the Edinburgh Campus.

Accreditation

Civil Engineering programmes at Edinburgh Campus have been re-accredited by the Joint Board of Moderators (JBM) and accredited for the first time at the Dubai Campus. The University is only the second UK institution to run an accredited JBM programme outside the UK, and Civil Engineering is the first Heriot-Watt discipline to run an Engineering Council regulated degree outside the UK.

New Approved Learning Partner

IPE will be welcoming the first cohort of students on the MSc Petroleum Engineering through a new ALP arrangement with the Instituto do Petróleo e Gás established by GALP Energia in Lisbon, Portugal. The new initiative was formally launched on 31 March in Lisbon.

Multilingual Debate

The School of Management and Languages held its annual Multilingual Debate on Wednesday 2 April. There was considerable interest and both the morning and afternoon sessions were fully booked, with 450 pupils in each session. This event provides valuable experience in a 'live' interpreting environment for SML's fourth year and MSc languages students. It also offers a high profile 'shop window' for potential applicants.

2. CAMPUS SERVICES

Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute is being developed on Level 1 of the Postgraduate Centre. The Institute, the fifth Confucius Institute in Scotland, will aim to help Scottish companies to engage with China and increase the provision of Chinese language learning for business purposes. The facility is being developed in partnership with Hanban, the organisation charged with promoting Chinese learning and language across the globe.

The new Institute will build on Heriot-Watt University's China strategy to help forge new partnerships, attract more well-qualified students to study in Scotland and help foster joint research collaborations across Heriot-Watt.

The University, which already has expertise in applied languages, will launch an undergraduate degree in International Business and Management and Chinese Language in 2014. This will form the core of the Scottish Confucius Institute for Business and Communication (SCIBC).

Heriot-Watt's Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies in the School of Management and Languages, already runs Chinese teachers' programmes and expanding this CPD activity is an important part of the initiative. The SCIBC will enable the University to promote understanding of Chinese business, language and culture, attract more students to train as Chinese interpreters and to support the Scottish Government's China strategy.

3. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PR/Events

Events held recently include:

- Society of Petroleum Engineering Distinguished Lecturer Talk with Professor Gary Couples, IPE (18 February)
- 'Help with the Professor', Dr Uwe Krueger Leadership Lecture (20 February)
- Shell Geoscience Day and the opening of the Wouter Hoogeveen Laboratory (4 March)
- American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) Distinguished Lecturer Talk with Professor Terry Engelder, Penn State University, USA (12 March)
- Modern Alchemist Royal Instruction Lecture (26 March)

Development & Alumni

A 'soft' launch of the Lyell Centre to energy sector alumni took place in Aberdeen. Trevor Garlick, Regional President BP, sponsored a Heriot-Watt alumni table at the Oil and Gas UK Breakfast Briefing for the Principal to meet graduates working at BP in Aberdeen.

The Watt Club Annual Meeting and Debate was held on 11 March with Mike Ross, recent graduate and student body President, leading a debate team discussing Scottish Independence against a team led by Professor Paul Jowitt from the School of the Built Environment.

Media Services

Reciprocal visits have been undertaken between Media Services and British Geological Survey staff involved in delivering graphics, cartography and digital imaging services. The purpose of the visits was to raise awareness of the respective skills and abilities and to explore the potential for future collaborative working.

Recruitment and Admissions

Admissions Office staff are continuing to focus on the processing of 12,786 UCAS applications. All processing is up-to-date as application decisions continue to be returned from Academic Schools.

The new Customer Relationship Management system is entering the final phase of development and is projected to go live in late April. A key focus of the project team is now on testing, training and internal communications ahead of the launch of the system.

All Schools are participating in a series of seven Applicant Visit Days through March and April. These events are being coordinated through the Education Liaison team in Recruitment & Admissions.

The China and East Asia team has been heavily involved in coordinating the programme of events for a senior-level Heriot-Watt delegation visiting China.

This has included the University receiving the prestigious award of 'Outstanding International Partner' Award from the China Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange, part of the Chinese Ministry of Higher Education.

This award recognises a long-standing partnership which now supports 15 articulation pathways between Chinese institutions and Heriot-Watt and has seen student recruitment double from 45 to 90 in 2013/14.

4. FINANCE

Planning has already begun for production of the 2013/14 statutory accounts. The key dates for the coming months have been circulated to Financial Controllers, reflecting the Audit Committee's wish that the external audit is conducted earlier this year than last. KPMG's interim audit will commence on Monday 14 April.

As previously reported, we are seeking to fortify and speed up month end financial procedures. This includes more rigorous monthly balance sheet examination and reconciliation both centrally and at a school level.

Following a recent internal audit observation, we recently met with Financial Controllers to reinforce the need for sound analysis and insightful commentary on a monthly basis. We have also instituted a routine monthly 1:1 meeting between the School Financial Controller and the Group Management Accountant to discuss each School's financial position.

A further internal audit recommendation related to the number and value of supplier invoices 'on hold' pending action to allow them to be paid – most notably including receipting. The total value of invoices on hold is consistently running at between £300k and £500k. We are working with colleagues to reduce that substantially.

5. GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES

ARC UKVI Practitioners Group

The Academic Registrar Councils UK Visas & Immigration Practitioners Group was a very useful meeting and included updates on:

- ATAS
- UUK Topical Issues
- Tier 4 Premium Service
- HEAT/Audit
- Students with uncertain immigration status

From the meeting it is clear that further action must be taken within the University to monitor the immigration status of non-Tier 4 students and further develop our audit action. The Tier 4 Compliance Officer and Director of Governance and Legal Services will lead on these activities.

Watt Women Exhibition

First shown on the Bridge link on the Edinburgh Campus, this features inspirational pioneers from Mary Burton to the present. This exhibition contributes to the SWAN Bronze Award Action Plan and helps to promote the development of a culture of gender equality and diversity at Heriot-Watt.

The exhibition, in the Museum and Archive on the ground floor of the Cameron Smail Library, will run until 13 June 2014. For further information contact Helen Taylor, Archivist: h.e.taylor@hw.ac.uk

Staff Elections to the Court

The Secretariat has begun preparations for a staff election in May 2014 to fill two membership places on the University Court which will become vacant in summer 2014.

Colleagues employed by the University at all campuses are eligible to stand for election and vote in the election and the University encourages colleagues from groups which are currently under represented on the Court to consider putting themselves forward for election. Nominations will be invited from 31 March 2014.

6. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

National Pay Review and Trade Unions' consultation and industrial action

Following implementation of the pay award for 2013, national negotiations have commenced on the settlement for 2014. UCEA have started their consultation with the universities who take part, and meetings are arranged with the combined Trade Unions for negotiations in the coming months.

There is no further co-ordinated strike action from all the trade unions. However Action Short of a Strike is underway for UCU and EIS, which includes a threatened marking boycott from 28 April 2014, and for which contingency planning is taking place.

i-HR

The new i-HR system is now being built with Symatrix and will deliver core HR, self-service for managers and colleagues followed by i-recruitment over the next two years.

Performance and Development Reviews

Colleagues are engaging in the PDR process really well. Participation rates are significantly higher than the same time last year at 55% (vs 19%), and completion rates likewise at 37% (vs 18%). Thanks to all those who are either reviewing, countersigning or recording.

A series of minor changes to the PDR process has been made this year, with changes to the wording of rating categories proposed to CJNCC for further discussion and implementation in 2015.

7. INFORMATION SERVICES

The replacement fileserver infrastructure is now installed and operational from the two datacentres. Much of the data on the old servers will be moved transparently to the new systems, but where any downtime is required, IS will be in touch with the relevant departments.

Following the Cryptolocker phishing attacks suffered last month, IS has introduced security enhancements to email and Web browsing on managed PCs. **It is essential that colleagues remain sceptical and cautious about unsolicited and unexpected emails, especially when these seek sensitive data, such as passwords, or when they contain links to websites.**

The Power Hours sessions for staff on Vision are now available as podcasts and can be accessed by staff in all campuses.

8. REGISTRY SERVICES

Student Systems Unit (SSU)

The SSU has been working with colleagues in Academic Registry, Information Services, Recruitment & Admissions and the Finance Office to ensure that systems are ready for the first enrolment of the Malaysia Foundation Programme on 14 April.

Academic Registry

A graduation ceremony took place in London for West London College students on Friday 21 March. Students were graduating from EBS and SML.

Requests for off-campus examinations are being processed in accordance with the policy for the management of examinations in different time zones.

Quality Assurance

A briefing session for External Examiners was held on 19 March 2014; External Examiners and academic/professional services staff from all Schools were in attendance. The presentations and additional information on External Examining are available on the Academic Registry's Quality website: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/quality/external-examiners.htm>

A podcast of the briefing session on Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes is now available, providing access for colleagues outside the Edinburgh Campus.

Quality Enhancement

The following briefing papers have recently been produced and disseminated or are due for publication:

- Student Learning Experience: Threshold Criteria
- Quality Assurance Processes: Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
- Learning and Teaching Briefing Papers: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/committees/ltb/ltb-briefing.htm>
- The Quality Assurance Briefing Papers: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/quality/qa-briefing.htm>

Careers

The Careers Service, in collaboration with Corporate Communications and IPE, delivered the recruitment afternoon held by Shell as part of the Geoscience Open Day. This involved a number of talks by Heriot-Watt Alumni and was attended by over 100 students.

Student Union

Student elections took place over February and March, where the turnout was down for both the Sports Union and Student Union. Overall student turnout was down from 16.9% to 14.1%. The Student Union sabbaticals for 2014/15 are as follows:

- President – Jessie Nelmes
- Vice President – Miranda Matoshi
- SBC President – Peter Gilchrist

The above students take up office on 1 June. In the meantime the incumbent Sabbaticals should be consulted as normal.

The Student Union received its annual audit for Green Impact in February and is pleased to have retained the Gold Standard rating. Significant improvements have been made in energy consumption, recycling targets and biodiversity.

The Student Shop will be closed on 9 and 10 April for a complete reorganisation. It will reopen on Friday 11 April with a new layout which should improve customer flow and queue management.

The Student Volunteer Awards took place on Friday 28 March. This is the Award's third year in its current form. 124 nominations were received for eight awards.

Rahul Singh, the Disabled Student Officer, was shortlisted for the NUS Scotland Volunteer of the Year Award. The Union was also shortlisted for its Equality and Diversity campaign.

University Health Centre

First Aid training has been delivered through a one day Emergency First Aid at Work course as well as a full 3-day First Aid at Work course for Security Patrol Officers.

9. RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES (RES)

By end of February 142 new awards had been made (year to date total of £22.5m). RES supported 43 proposals in February, with a value of £7.2m. Year to date, proposals are now 317 applications (£57.4m).

The Technology Transfer Office has received 11 Innovation disclosures from staff and several under review for patentability; Income year to date ~£135k with ~25 income generating licenses signed with ~15 in negotiation phase.

Terms have been agreed on License of Solar IP with RSE fellow Klampaftis allowing spinout in late 2014. Business plan for the Oil & Gas Innovation Centre continues to be a major focus of the IPE BD team-funding of £5.6m (SFC) agreed in February.

Updates from the Professional Services Directorates
March – April 2014

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