

Secretary's Board Bulletin

The School and Professional Service representatives of the Board are:

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Mr Mike Bates,
Director of Student Recruitment

Ms Philippa Burrell,
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Ms Sue Collier,
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Mr Mike Roch,
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Mr Martyn Spence,
Director of Marketing and Communications

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(Malaysia)

Welcome to the February 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

The University achieved a major improvement in its research performance at the Research Excellence Framework (REF) outcomes. We have risen to 33rd position in the UK, up from 45th last time. Schools are actively increasing their research activity by the continual recruitment of Global Platform research leaders with approximately 20 Global Platform positions soon to be filled.

As research intensification increases across the University, Schools are undertaking remodelling and upgrading of their laboratories and office space to accommodate the increased number of academic staff, research associates and postgraduate students.

Major renovations in teaching and learning laboratories have also been completed with the Chemical Engineering practical teaching lab and the Physics practical teaching labs recently upgraded.

The 2015 PDR cycle is underway in Schools with meetings planned during January and February for all staff.

2. CAMPUS SERVICES

New Student Residences 2016

The ground breaking ceremony for the new residences 2016 at the Edinburgh Campus was performed Mark Watkin Jones, MD Watkin Jones Group, Principal Professor Steve Chapman and Jessie Nelmes, Student Union President on 26 January 2015. The £20m, 450 bed person build will be a mix of five person flats and studio apartments, all with en-suite rooms. It is the second phase of new residence development at the Campus. A sample flat has been constructed as a quality benchmark in car-park J. The residences are scheduled for completion in mid-2016.

Lyell Centre

Work has started on the new £20m Lyell Centre at the Edinburgh Campus with a ground breaking ceremony performed by John Ludden, Executive Director BGS and the Principal, Professor Steve Chapman on 21 January 2015.

The Centre will be the Scottish headquarters for the British Geological Survey (BGS) as well as a major joint BGS/Heriot-Watt University research centre for geological, petroleum and marine sciences.

Scheduled for completion in early 2016, the Centre will bring together key expertise from both institutions as well as an £8.5m investment in top-level academic recruitment from around the world, providing a huge opportunity for earth and marine science in general and for Scotland in particular.

3. GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES

Freedom of Information requests review of 2014

In 2014 the number of Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) requests submitted to Heriot-Watt rose from 185 to 219, an increase of 20%. Despite the volume increase, 95% of requests were responded within the statutory 20 days, an increase from 93% in 2013. We received only one review request. Our thanks to all colleagues for helping us manage the increased number of requests and deliver an even more impressive response turnover. Without your co-operation and assistance, these results could not have been achieved.

Fire Safety

The University has been working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in an initiative to reduce unwanted fire calls.

A pilot project was conducted in three student residence buildings at the Edinburgh Campus. The project proved its worth by reducing unwanted fire calls from 19 during 2013/2014 to three during the pilot period which concluded on 1 January 2015. This initiative will be consolidated and extended to all student residences at the Edinburgh Campus.

This partnership is the first of its kind in Scotland since the formation of the new Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and places Heriot-Watt as the tertiary education sector lead on strategic collaboration with the enforcing authority.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Performance Development Review (PDR)

As we are now at the start of a new PDR year and a new PDR form has been created, with a focus on the development required to perform your role. The form can be found at <http://www1.hw.ac.uk/hr/htm/pdr/PDR%20Form%202015.docx>

For an overview of the development programmes available to all staff please visit http://www1.hw.ac.uk/hr/s_index.php

The PDR webpages and handbook are also a useful source of information about the process <http://www1.hw.ac.uk/hr/htm/pdr/Handbook1.htm>

iHR

Phase 1 has now successfully gone live with initially a basic HR system for HR staff and a number of nominated local administrators using the system, and now with employee and manager self-service for all colleagues. There have been a number of issues raised during the early stages of go-live, which is to be expected, and these are being logged and addressed as quickly as possible.

Please refer questions in the first instance to https://intranet.hw.ac.uk/ps/hrd/i_HR/Pages/Where-to-get-Help%21.aspx and if not answered there, then refer to IThelp@hw.ac.uk

Some issues require more technical investigation and/or cost to fix and may take longer.

Phase 2 iRecruitment is still planned to go live in 2015.

HRD structure post-iHR

As a result of iHR, and following consultation with colleagues across the University, a new HRD structure is in place with new contact points and new ways of working to provide an improved service and support for iHR. This is detailed on:

<https://intranet.hw.ac.uk/ps/hrd/Pages/Who's-Who-in-HRD-.aspx>

5. INFORMATION SERVICES

Realm-ISD have been working with Information Services, Estates, Student Union and academic colleagues to prepare a strategic vision for library and learning spaces at the Edinburgh Campus. The final report can be viewed at <https://hwlibrary.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/hwu-ed-10-61-150113-library-vision-c-final.pdf>

The next stage of realising this vision is to appoint a design consultancy to prepare an options appraisal for the Cameron Smail Library. A tender has been published in the Official Journal of the European Community and we shall select the preferred supplier shortly.

A Stock Reconfiguration project has been established to identify, in consultation with Schools, those books which no longer meet the University's curricular needs. Approximately 150 linear metres of off-site storage has been arranged to house our reference thesis collection.

A Network Security, Performance and Resilience project has been launched to assess and upgrade the Edinburgh Campus network in preparation for future developments, including replacing the telephone system over the next two years.

6. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

A University-wide digital promotional campaign for postgraduate study was launched in January. Early indications are positive, with registrations for the open day on 4 February up significantly compared to previous years.

Working in close partnership with Schools and other Professional Services, the Marketing and Media Services teams have successfully delivered the 2016 undergraduate prospectus to print ahead of schedule.

Other key corporate publications have been produced this month highlighting the world-leading work being delivered by the University to our stakeholders and partners, as well as to the wider University community. This included the Annual Review, which has been delivered two months earlier than in previous years allowing for much earlier distribution. The 2014 Annual Review can be found at <http://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/annual-review.pdf>

Critical communication activities delivered this month included the launch of the National Student Survey and working with colleagues on the Orkney Campus we supported the 25th anniversary of the International Centre for Island Technology, with local dignitaries joining the Principal to celebrate the ongoing success of the centre.

The new Director of Marketing and Communication, Martyn Spence, took up post on 5 January 2015. Martyn was previously Director of Marketing, Communication and Student Recruitment at Robert Gordon University.

7. REGISTRY SERVICES

Complaints Recording/Reporting

The Office of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), have issued a set of Key Performance Indicators for complaint reporting purposes. HEIs have been reminded of the requirement to report annually on their complaints handling performance in line with SPSO legislation and that institutions should send their annual reports or a link to their published annual complaints report online, to the SPSO.

Local Complaints Officers are asked to reiterate to colleagues the importance of recording all complaints on the Complaints Log, as well as the requirement to resolve complaints within the timescales set out by the SPSO as stated in Heriot-Watt University's Complaints Policy & Procedures.

Student Systems

The SAS Management Group has agreed the outline work-schedule for 2015. This provides an indicative schedule of developments, which is subject to change as priorities are determined.

A 'health-check' of the Banner system has been ordered and will be undertaken by Ellucian in early March 2015. The outcome of this will help us identify the development plan for future years.

CRM developments will be co-ordinated by the Student Systems Unit (SSU) until next academic year. Stuart Wilson is being seconded to SSU full time until September to lead on this work.

The Programme Approval Management System (PAMS) has been heavily delayed, but is now at testing stage. It is planned to go live for 2015/16 and a detailed implementation plan is being developed for approval at the next PAMS Board in February.

Admissions

The 15 January deadline for UCAS applications has now passed. The team is now working with Admissions Tutors in Schools to process and return decisions.

- Overall applications have increased 5% to 13,072
- Scottish applications have increased 1% (SIMD 20/40 applications increased by 9%)
- EU applications have increased 1%
- RUK applications have increased 5%
- Overseas applications have increased 11%

A process of monitoring turn-around times (for all applications) is being developed to ensure applicants receive a good experience of the University.

January Intake

The University Executive agreed to a request from SML to conduct a pilot for the January intake at the Dubai Campus. This has highlighted the need for a review of how student cohorts are managed and the Registry will be leading a project to consider the implications of systems, processes and regulations. This review will incorporate other aspects of multi-start dates for Approved Learning Partner students and for managing PhD students.

Quality Enhancement

There have been revisions to the Compulsory Withdrawal Procedures (CWP) and Student Attendance Policy which will come into effect for the start of the 2015/16 Academic Year. They will be published on the [Academic Policy Bank](#) and circulated to colleagues and students.

Major problems with the delivery of the Course Feedback Survey (CFS) were encountered in semester 1, resulting in a poor student experience and low responses. Investigations on the causes and possible improvements are being developed and will be implemented for the semester two CFS.

Student Barometer

The University will participate in the 2015 summer wave of the Student Barometer (SB) survey and initial discussions have commenced on this in mid-February. The Student Survey Management Group had agreed that the University would not participate in the 2014 autumn wave of the Student Barometer (SB) due to survey fatigue and student participation in the NSS shortly after the SB survey would have been conducted.

Student Union

The Union is leading the East of Scotland partnership for the Big Student Election. The project combines the election cycle of the majority of University and College student Unions in the Central Belt. Elections programme is as follows:

- Nominations open – Wednesday 18 February
- Nominations close – Friday 27 February
- Voting opens – Monday 9 March
- Candidate Question Time – Tuesday 10 March
- Voting closes – Friday 13 March

The Student Union is in the process of incorporating the Union as a company limited by guarantee. The Stage 1 application has been submitted to the Office of the Charity Regulator (OSCR) and will be complete by March. The initial planned incorporation date was 31 January but due to the longer than anticipated process of approval with OSCR, this has now been moved to 31 July to coincide with the financial year end.

8. RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES

The University's overall Grade Point Average rose from 2.48 in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2008 to 3.06 for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014.

Nine new awards have been made amounting to a total of £920,000 new funding. The year-to-date figures are now 98 awards for £12.5 million total. This is down on 13/14 but above 12/13.

Engineering Photonic Quantum Technologies Programme Grant Collaboration Agreement (Professor Gerald Buller, School of Engineering and Physical Sciences, £548k).

Heriot-Watt secured a three-year contract (£580,000) with a large pharmaceutical company for a vaccine testing program (Dr Alastair Lyndon, School of Life Sciences).

Interface enquiries continue to provide collaborative research and licensing opportunities across the University with two £5,000 Innovation Vouchers secured in November and a portfolio of over 30 active projects with Scottish SMEs in this academic year.

The Converge Challenge 2015 launch event took place on Thursday 26 February at the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

9. STUDENT RECRUITMENT

UK Recruitment

Applicant Conversion Events

Conversion events will be taking place from February to April, notably on-campus Applicant Visit Days and Rest of UK Applicant events throughout England and Northern Ireland. These are being organised for the first time through the new CRM system.

Postgraduate Open Day

The annual Postgraduate Open Day takes place on Wednesday 4 February from 1:30pm – 4:30pm in the Postgraduate Centre. Around 200 prospective postgraduate students have registered to attend. The Open Day will include departmental visits, student-led campus tours and advice from the Students' Union, Careers Advisers and help with applying, funding and scholarships.

International Recruitment

Global Recruitment & Marketing Workshop

The second Global Recruitment & Marketing Workshop was held at the Edinburgh Campus on 19 and 20 January 2015. Around 40 staff attended over the two days, notably including recruitment and marketing staff from the Dubai and Malaysia campuses as well as the China & East Asia and Indian Offices.

The workshop focused on aligning recruitment and marketing activities throughout the world and coordinating international recruitment activities in key markets.

The main themes of the workshop centred around:

- Improving Conversion
- Maximising brand strengths as a global University
- Supporting recruitment to the Malaysian Campus
- Developing systems, notably the CRM, to support international recruitment
- Investing in digital technology, notably web and social media development
- International scholarship strategy

CRM Update

There are now 23,000 current applicants and 24,000 enquirers registered on the CRM. Further development is on-going and is currently focusing on launching new post-application communication plans for applicants.

10. DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS UPDATE

The office recently celebrated success when the Binks Trust pledged £20,000 towards building of the Lyell Centre. This was the first confirmed philanthropic funding towards the Lyell Centre, and was followed quickly by £250,000 from the Wolfson Foundation towards a world-leading Climate Change Research Aquarium that will be housed in the lower ground level of the Centre to support Marine Science activity.

Scholarship and bursary support has been confirmed from Fred Olsen with funding of £128,000 pledged towards students in Orkney and a legacy donation of just over £130,000 towards access bursaries.

The Annual Fund telethon got underway in January and over five weeks our group of student callers will be contacting our 7,000 graduates to find out how we can engage better with them, and to seek donations to our fund.

Money raised goes towards a huge variety of projects, including Sports Scholarships, Music Scholarships and funding to enable students to undertake valuable research projects and attend international conferences.

Our events programme for calendar year 2015 begins on 17 February where we welcome back Olympian graduate and honorary graduate Freya Ross to host a Diageo-sponsored Leadership Lecture. With events planned in Edinburgh, London and Aberdeen in the coming weeks we aim to ensure opportunities are available to our alumni body wherever they live in the United Kingdom.

Finally, we will imminently launch the most recent edition of our magazine, In Conversation, which is going to take on a digital-only format in an effort to reduce costs and ensure we remain as environmentally sustainable as possible. We are also nearing completion of a newly designed Development and Alumni website, which should be launched in the first half of 2015.

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