A meeting of the Graduates Council was held on 20 April 2013.

Chair: Professor Pete Downes, Principal

Present: 35 graduates

In Attendance: Convener of Graduates’ Council Business Committee; University Secretary; Director of External Relations; and Policy Officer (Corporate Governance).

Apologies: Mr C Lovatt, Ms S McMichael.

1. MINUTES

The Graduates’ Council decided: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 21 April 2012.

2. PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

The Principal presented his annual report to the Graduates’ Council (Appendix 1). In doing so he told those present that he welcomed the proposal from the Graduates’ Council Business Committee regarding a reform of graduate engagement, and he highlighted its alignment with the new University strategy and vision.

In presenting his report, the Principal chose to focus upon the University’s vision for the future - ‘to become Scotland’s leading University, celebrated internationally for the quality of its graduates and the impact of its research’. The vision represented a modernisation of the principles, precepts and goals that had driven the University’s history since its inception and which had been enshrined in the Charter. It also focused on key attributes and values that had always been central to the institution. He told those present that in considering the mission statement, core purpose, and core values of the University, the new vision aimed to create an inspiring goal which applied to the whole University - demanding confidence, commitment and focused effort. The key global challenges identified in the new Vision centred on those areas where the University was able to make the strongest impact, deliver tangible benefits and take the lead on transformational change: the sustainable use of global resources, innovative design that would shape the future and the improvement of social, cultural and physical wellbeing.

He told those present that the vision was underpinned by the new University Strategy to 2017, and that together they provided a distinctive and compelling statement of ambition for the University, along with a clear view of our aims and objectives for the next 5 years. The strategy was supported by nine enabling strategies, each covering an essential theme (learning & teaching; research; wider impact; internationalization; employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship; people; information; estate; and financial sustainability) that would be pursued by a dedicated lead supported by an empowered committee and accountable to the Senior Management Team.
The Principal also reported on senior appointments during the past year, league table positioning, financial matters and changes to the policy environment (including the introduction of Outcome Agreements between the University and the SFC, the Post-16 Education (Scotland) Bill and the Review of HE Governance in Scotland). He recommended that graduates review and comment on the proposed Scottish Code of Good HE Governance which had been released for consultation (http://www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/).

In response to questions the Principal confirmed that the changes proposed in the paper to be discussed later in the agenda would not alter in any way the requirement for the Principal to report annually to the Graduates’ Council on the working of the University.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the report.

3. **ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Copies of the audited accounts for 2011-12 were available.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the accounts.

4. **BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

Printed copies of the Convener’s report (Appendix 2) were circulated to members attending the annual meeting. The Convener started by offering his thanks to Mr Charles Lovatt (Vice-Convener of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee), who was stepping down from membership of the Business Committee after many years of service. Mr Lovatt had, he said, been a source of great support to him in his first year as Convener.

The Convener also highlighted that Professor Ann Burchell had chosen not to stand for re-election as a Graduates’ Council Assessor on Court, and as such would step down on 31 July 2013 from this role. He highlighted the contributions which she and Mr Iain Wright had made as Graduates’ Council Assessors on Court and thanked them for their input to the Business Committee.

The Convener also highlighted the work carried out by members of the Business Committee in drafting the strategy paper for consideration later in the agenda. He went on to summarise the Business Committee meetings over the past year, the Committee’s involvement in the election of the Graduates’ Council Assessor on Court, and his attendance at the January 2013 Discovery Days. The Discovery Days were an annual event which he strongly encouraged graduates to attend.

In response to questions the Convener told those present that he would investigate what was happening with the Graduates’ Council Trophy which was previously awarded by the Sports’ Union.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** (i) to note the thanks of the Convener to Mr Charles Lovatt and the Assessors on Court; and
5. **GRADUATES’ COUNCIL ASSESSORS ON COURT**

(1) **Assessors Report**

A report was provided by Mr Iain Wright as one of the two Graduates’ Council Assessors on Court (Appendix 3). Mr Wright confirmed that the Assessors had participated in the affairs of the Court through attendance of Court meetings, membership of the Finance & Policy, Audit, and Governance & Nominations Committees, taking part in interviews for new lay members of Court, and participation in grievance hearings. He told those present that the Principal, University Secretary and Officers of the University had diligently listened to the concerns and issues he and Professor Burchell had raised, and that there had been a robust approach to debate.

Turning to the Assessor on Court election for 2013, Mr Wright highlighted the significant effort and cost that had gone into organising the election to the highest standards. He however expressed concern from a governance perspective that less than 1% of the electorate had chosen to vote in this election.

Mr Wright also highlighted the work being carried out at a national level on a ‘Scottish Code of Good HE Governance’. Mr Wright reiterated the Principal’s encouragement to graduates to engage with the consultation. It was noted that the University of Dundee aligned well to the suggested best practice as a result of recent reviews.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the report

(2) **Assessor Election 2013**

The University Secretary announced the result of the 2013 election by the Graduates’ Council of an Assessor to serve on the Court. With 105 votes, Dr William Boyd (Biography attached as Appendix 4) was elected to serve for the period 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2017 in the first instance in terms of Statute 9(1)(f).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Votes cast</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Boyd (Elected)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Noad</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alastair Wood</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Reynolds</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sue Zaher</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise Bowles</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harin Dias</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald Woomble</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunmi Popoola Mordi</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moutaz Al-Dabbas</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total voters (of which postal)</strong></td>
<td><strong>565(5)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spoilt Voting Papers</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electorate:</strong></td>
<td>55,533</td>
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</tbody>
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The Convener told graduates that the election methodology would be discussed at the next meeting of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee, and that the proposed use of single transferable vote methodology in any future election would be considered at that time (but see also item 8 below).

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the election of Dr William Boyd as Graduates’ Council Assessor on Court.

6. **GRADUATES’ COUNCIL FUND**

(1) **Report on disbursements**

The Convener of the Board of Directors reported that there was a total of £6,618 available for disbursements from the Fund. Over the last year, no requests for funding had been received; however a project from ‘The Enterprise Gym’ had been supported by the fund. The Convener proposed that the Graduates’ Council Business Committee review the fund and its promotion at its next meeting.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the report.

(2) **Membership of the Board of Directors**

The Convener of the Board of Directors reported that Mr Steven Blane and Dr Jim Smith had been nominated as members of the Graduates’ Council Fund Board of Directors to serve alongside the Convener and the University Secretary.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the composition of the Board.

7. **MEMBERS OF THE GRADUATES’ COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

It was confirmed that Mr Keith Winter had been re-elected as the Convener of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee from the date of the Annual Meeting 2013, for a period of one year.

It was also confirmed that the period of office of Mr Charles Lovatt and Mr David MacLeod as elected members of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee had expired. As such, nominations for candidates to fill two vacancies for the normal four-year period had been invited, with four nominations received in advance and no candidates choosing to stand for election on the day. The candidates were as follows:

- Mr Gavin Dobson (MA Social Sciences (1972))
- Ms Gloria Etim (LLM Energy, Law and Policy (Distinction) (2004))
- Mr David MacLeod (BAcc Accountancy & Finance (2008))
- Mr Ariel-Alexandru Seliman (MSc International business, Marketing and HRM (2013))

63 votes were returned as follows: Mr David MacLeod 25 votes, Mr Gavin Dobson 23 Votes, Mr Ariel-Alexandru Seliman 12 votes, and Ms Gloria Etim 3 votes. There were
no spoilt voting papers. As a result, Mr Gavin Dobson and Mr David Macleod were
duly elected to serve for a period of four years until the Annual Meeting 2017.

The Graduates’ Council decided: (i) to note the election of Mr Winter as
Business Committee Convener;

(ii) to note the expiry of the term of office of
Mr Charles Lovatt; and

(iii) to note the election of Mr Dobson and
re-election of Mr MacLeod to the
Business Committee

8. GRADUATE ENGAGEMENT – A PROPOSAL FOR REFORM

The Convener introduced a paper from the Graduates’ Council Business Committee
which outlined their proposals for the reform of graduate engagement at the
University. The paper outlined suggested changes to the way in which the University
engage with its graduates, including the re-focusing of its offering to graduates,
alteration of services, and provision of a refreshed and contemporary service for
graduates.

Following a meeting of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee earlier that day,
an addendum to the paper was tabled which elaborated on how the formal
connection between the Court (as the University’s governing body) and the
Graduates’ Council could be maintained while the mechanism for the appointment
of graduates to independent lay membership Court was improved. In addition, the
new Vice-Convener of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee (Mr Steven Blane)
proposed that an additional aim be included that defined a requirement that a
minimum of two graduates serve as lay members on the University Court at any
time to ensure that the graduate voice on Court was maintained.

The Convener invited those present to comment on the proposals, and to feedback to
the Business Committee their thoughts and ideas for the future of the Graduates’
Council. Members of the Graduates’ Council expressed their support for the paper,
and the reforms proposed therein.

A former member of the Business Committee highlighted past proposals, and
suggested that a review of these could be useful in the further development of the
strategy paper. While he was supportive of the context and business of the paper, he
expressed a need to ensure that the Graduates’ Council continued to have a role
within the University and the ability to challenge management inter alia through
continuing to have a strong voice on the Court. The Convener confirmed that he
would review past proposals as part of the on-going development of the paper, and
that the right to challenge would be retained, with Assessors on Court being required
to attend the Business Committee and the Graduates’ Council. It was noted that
resources (both electronic and connections to External Relations) had developed
significantly in recent years, and that there was potential for successful reform that
hadn’t been previously possible. Those present highlighted the need to engage with
graduates who are currently not involved with the Graduates’ Council.
In response to questions, Mr Iain Wright (Graduates’ Council Assessor on Court) confirmed that the role of graduates on the Governing body was seen as an important means of engagement and that this aligned to good practice in HE governance and would continue to be supported by the University.

The Principal told those present that the University recognised the need for support from all levels within University for the proposed reforms to be successful, and that he was keen to engage with the Business Committee and provide appropriate support. The Convener confirmed that officers of the University had been engaged with, and supportive of, the Business Committee, and that he was confident of the University’s commitment to supporting the initiatives proposed.

In summarising discussions, the Convener told those present that the paper would now be taken forward by the Business Committee for further refinement of the actions, goals and performance indicators. He asked graduates to provide any additional comments to him via email to graduates@dundee.ac.uk before the next meeting of the Business Committee on 18 May 2013.

In response to questions regarding the changes to the Charter, Statute, Ordinance and Regulations relating to the Graduates’ Council which had been approved by the Graduates’ Council at the Annual Meeting in 2012 the University Secretary confirmed that the University Court had subsequently approved the proposed changes but they were now awaiting Privy Council approval.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** (i) to approve the proposals within the paper.

9. **HONORARY DEGREES COMMITTEE**

It was proposed and seconded that the Convener of the Graduates’ Council Business Committee would serve as the Graduates’ Council representative on the Honorary Degrees Committee. Mr Winter accepted the invitation, and asked members of the Graduates’ Council to contact him with suggestions.

**The Graduates’ Council decided:** to note the nomination of the Convener as the Graduates’ Council representative on the Honorary Degrees Committee.