Summary

During the oral evidence given by the three Chairs of University Courts to the Education and Culture Committee on 19 February there was a specific question asked about the ratio of the highest to lowest paid member of staff. We did not have the information but agreed to provide it to the Committee. This information is given below.

We also had a discussion about the extent of consultation that has taken place in connection with obtaining evidence for the Code of Governance that is being prepared. There was some confusion over the extent of consultation so we clarify the position below.

Data on Principals’ pay

The Committee asked about the ratio between the highest paid member of staff in a university and the lowest paid.

Data\(^1\) for 2012 show that the ratio of the median for Scottish principals’ pay to that of the lowest point on the HE sector pay spine was 16.3 to 1.

The Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector\(^2\), which reported in March 2011, was asked to consider the case for a fixed limit on pay dispersion in the public sector, and a ban on managers earning more than 20 times the pay of the lowest paid person in their organisation. This was not taken forward by the Hutton Review but the ratio shown above for universities would have fallen below this limit. Instead, Hutton recommended that the most appropriate metric for pay dispersion is the multiple of chief executive to median earnings, noting that this would ensure public service organisations are accountable for the relationship between the pay of their executives and the wider workforce. The ratio of the median for Scottish principals’ pay to the median for pay of all staff in the UK HE sector was 6.3 to 1.

It is also worthy of note that a principal may not always be the highest paid member of staff in an institution. Sector-wide data are not collected on this but the situation may arise in institutions with medical schools where some staff will receive pay reflecting their senior clinical role. This may set their pay above that of the principal.

Consultation process for the drafting of a new Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance

The Steering Group appointed by the Committee of Scottish Chairs to oversee the production of a new Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance appointed two external consultants to engage with a range of stakeholders across the sector and assist

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\(^1\) Source: UCEA
\(^2\) [http://www hm-treasury gov uk/d/hutton_fairpay_review pdf]
the Steering Group in drafting a code. The consultants have spent significant time talking and listening to the widest possible range of stakeholders, as follows:

Overview of the process

- Meetings have been held with national officers of the relevant trade unions (UCU, EIS, STUC; an invitation has also been made to Unison).
- There have been meetings with Robin Parker, the President of NUS Scotland, and a further meeting with Robin has been scheduled.
- The consultants have visited all nineteen Scottish Higher Education Institutions, and have met staff and student representatives at each of these, except for students at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where timetabling problems precluded a face-to-face discussion. They were given an opportunity to respond by phone or in writing.
- Overall, there have been 60 hours of meetings as part of the programme of institutional visits. There have been over 80 separate meetings during which the consultants met 366 people.
- In all but one case separate sessions with the consultants were given to students, to staff and to senior management. In this one case there were two separate meetings with a mix of students, staff and senior management.
- The consultants also met lay members of the Court / Board at all institutions.
- Details of this work, including the schedules and names of the participants in all the institutional meetings, have been made available and kept up-to-date on a public website: [http://www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/](http://www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/).

Consultation with staff

- Over the course of these institutional visits the consultants met 122 staff representatives, at least 43 of whom are recorded as representing a trade union.
- The programme of meetings in each institution provided for meetings with staff representatives. These usually lasted between 45 and 60 minutes, matching the time given to meetings with senior management and with lay members of Court respectively.
- At two institutions, Strathclyde and Glasgow, meetings with staff representatives totalled one hour but were split into two sessions of 30 minutes – one with trade unions' representatives and one with other staff representatives. Of the 19 institutions, only four have not indicated the presence of a designated trade union representative on their published meeting details (but this does not necessarily mean there was not a representative present).

Consultation with students

- Over the course of these institutional visits the consultants met 71 student representatives. These were usually representatives from student associations.