

**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(14/15)63

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 6 March 2015 at 9.00 am in
the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus**

PRESENT:

Professor A Sambell (Vice-Principal, Deputy Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Dr S Cairncross (Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); M Chapman (School of Life, Sport & Social Sciences); N Graham (Director of International Operations); Dr M Foster (Teaching Fellows/Senior Teaching Fellows); Professor E Hart (Professoriate); R Holmes (School of Accounting, Financial Services and Law); Dr G Hutchison (Head of School from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); Dr P Jaworski (School of Management); Professor J Kennedy (Dean of Research and Innovation); P Miller Judd (Head of School from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); R Kemmer (School of Computing); C Lambert (Director, Student and Academic Services); Dr S Marr (School of Marketing, Tourism & Languages); Professor B Paechter (Assistant Dean from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); A Sharp (School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Care); Lyndsay Shields (Student Representative from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); D Smith (NSA President); Professor S Smith (Director from the Research Institutes); Dr K Stewart (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Professor G Stonehouse (Dean, the Business School); Ryan Strachan (Student Representative from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); D Telford (Director, Information Services); Dr G Webber (University Secretary); B Windram (Assistant Dean from the Business School).

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Cloy (Assistant Secretary) (Clerk); A Quickfall (Head of Planning).

APOLOGIES:

F Alston (Assistant Dean from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); N Ashton (School of Arts & Creative Industries); S Falconer (Head of School from the Business School); Professor M Huxham (Director of Academic Strategy & Practice); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor); I McIntosh (Dean, Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); Rojan Kumar Subramani (Student Representative from the Business School).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting and in particular welcomed Professor Jessie Kennedy (Dean of Research & Innovation) and David Telford (Director of Information Services) to their first meeting.

1.2 The apologies were **noted**

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2014 AB(14/15)40

2.1 The minutes were **approved** as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Proposal to Extend Tenure of Elected Members (6.1)

3.1 It was **noted** that Court had approved the proposal to extend, exceptionally, the tenure of elected Academic Board members whose terms of office were due to expire between January and March 2015 to the end of the 2014/15 session to enable the Board to function effectively prior to its re-constitution ahead of the next session.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(14/15)41

4.1 The Convenor introduced the Principal's written report and invited questions and comments from Board members.

4.2 The possibility of the reintroduction of a post-study work visa for international students in Scotland, following the recommendation in the Smith Commission report, was welcomed by members.

4.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

5. UNIVERSITY STRUCTURES PROJECT: UPDATES

(i) University Structures AB(14/15)42

5.1 The Convenor introduced the paper which provided an update on progress with the implementation of the previous Academic Board decision to move to a School based academic structure. A summary of activity underway under the main strands of the project was given and it was noted that all areas were currently on schedule. In response to a member's question a more detailed update on the options being considered in respect of School support structures was provided.

5.2 Discussion followed during which it was noted that a framework for key academic leadership roles within School structures would be produced which would define a number of common roles within Schools with responsibility for leading on Learning, Teaching & Assessment, Research & Innovation, Academic Quality, Student Experience and Internationalisation. These would support delivery of the Strategy within Schools and perform a key role in Academic Board's committee structure. It was further noted that the intention was to assign these roles through allocation of responsibility to academic staff on the appropriate grade rather than through appointment to a separate promoted role. It was also recognised that regular rotation of such roles within Schools would be positive, and would be encouraged (though not mandated).

5.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

(ii) Academic Appointments & Promotions

AB(14/15)43

- 5.4 The Convenor introduced the paper which provided Academic Board with an update on progress with the Academic Criteria for Appointments and Promotions project and outlined the current status of the main strands of the project.
- 5.5 Discussion followed during which it was noted that the PDR process would be important in ensuring that those appointed under the new criteria continued to work at the required level. It was noted that concerns had been expressed surrounding the perceived difficulty of achieving grade progression for those academic staff with a high teaching load. It was recognised that the criteria were stretching and that individual development and workload planning through the PDR process would provide a means to support such staff. It was also noted that a series of workshops were planned to explain the new criteria and help staff understand how to prepare to meet them. It was noted that, having established the new criteria, it was anticipated that the principles would remain the same for a reasonable period, certainly through the current strategy period, although of course they may be subject to future review. It was further noted that those who had worked towards the previous criteria should not be disadvantaged by the introduction of new criteria and would receive support as outlined above.
- 5.6 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

6. REVISED ACADEMIC BOARD CONSTITUTION & COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

AB(14/15)44

- 6.1 Academic Board received the paper which reported on the outcomes of the effectiveness review of its constitution and sub-committee structure and presented a number of initial proposals for the Board's consideration. It was noted that consultation had taken place between December 2014 and February 2015 with Academic Board members and other colleagues concerned with the work of its sub-committees through a written consultation discussion paper and facilitated review workshop. Rich and varied feedback had been received on the discussion areas presented, and a number of key themes arising had been considered and reflected in the proposals outlined which had resulted in a changed approach in many areas from the proposals outlined in the original discussion paper.
- 6.2 Members welcomed the consultation which had taken place and the changes to the proposals which had taken account of the feedback provided. Thanks were extended to the Assistant Secretary and his team for their work on this. It was noted that further detailed work in consultation with key academic and professional support officers would take place between March and May to develop detailed remits and constitutions for the committees which would be presented for the Board's approval in June.
- 6.3 On the question of conducting Board meetings on Wednesday afternoon as suggested in consultation feedback, the Board re-confirmed its previous position that Wednesday afternoons should be reserved for student led activities and staff development and engagement activities and agreed that Board meetings would continue to be held on Friday mornings.

- 6.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **(i) endorsed** the proposed revised constitution and committee structure for further development and presentation to the June meeting for approval; and **(ii) resolved** that it would not meet on Wednesday afternoons.

7. REF OUTCOMES

AB(14/15)45

- 7.1 Academic Board considered the paper which reported on the University's results from the Research Excellence Framework 2014. An update was also provided on activity underway to prepare for the next REF and on measures being taken to help ensure that the University was able to achieve the stretching targets for research set out within the Strategy. It was further noted that the SFC's Research Excellence Grant (REG) allocations to the sector had just been announced through which the University had achieved a small increase in funding in the context of a number of other institutions experiencing reductions.
- 7.2 Discussion followed during which the REF outcome and resulting REG funding allocation were welcomed as a positive result for the University. It was recognised that there was a perception among some staff that if they were not pursuing REF submission then their research time allowance would be removed with the result that they would be channelled into full time teaching. It was noted that this was emphatically not the case or intention and that appropriate communication would be undertaken to clarify the position. It was emphasised that REF, though important, was not the only factor within the strategy for research which was much wider and also recognised the value of pedagogic research. It was further noted that the visualisation tool for the University's REF results would be published on the intranet shortly.
- 7.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

8. UNIVERSITY STRATEGY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & DETAILED ACADEMIC STRATEGY KPIS

AB(14/15)46

- 8.1 Academic Board considered the paper which presented the agreed set of University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which are used to monitor progress towards the University Strategy 2020, and were approved by Court in December 2015. The paper also presented a set of KPIs that will be used to measure and monitor performance against achievement of the Academic Strategy within each School, which is further supplemented by a set of academic measures at subject level.
- 8.2 Discussion followed during which it was noted that there should be consistency in the use of terminology regarding the expression of student numbers in such reports. The presentation of the KPIs was welcomed and it was noted that these would be updated and considered by Academic Board annually to enable it to monitor performance against the Academic Strategy.
- 8.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the paper.

9. ESTATES STRATEGY

AB(14/15)47

- 9.1 Academic Board received an update on progress being made in the development of the 2015 Estates Strategy. It was noted that there were an agreed set of values and principles to drive the strategy forward with

Engineering and Computing recognised to be the academic areas most urgently in need of investment. It was noted that Court had expected to approve the strategy in June, however the timetable had been relaxed in light of a number of discussions that were currently in progress which might influence the way the strategy develops. It was also reported that the University was in discussion with the City of Edinburgh Council and Scottish Rugby Union about the possibility of developing the sports facilities next to our Sighthill Campus at Sighthill Park. It was noted that a full consultation draft of the Strategy would be circulated to staff and students at an appropriate point.

9.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

10. STUDENT ENROLMENTS AND FORECASTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/15 **AB(14/15)48**

10.1 Academic Board **noted** the paper which provided a summary of enrolment forecasts for the University's AY 2014/15 on-campus student population segments and gave an indication of enrolments for trimesters one and two.

11. REPORT ON APPLICATIONS FOR 2015/16 **AB(14/15)49**

11.1 Academic Board considered the paper which provided an update on student applications and the admissions process for AY 2015/16. A number of key issues outlined in the report were highlighted.

11.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

12. ELIR UPDATE

12.1 Academic Board received an update on feedback from the ELIR Part 1 meeting and on progress with preparations for the Part 2 Visit. It was noted that positive initial feedback had been received from the review team and that no significant issues had been raised. Thanks were extended to all involved for their work in this area.

12.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

13. STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH NAPIER STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION **AB(14/15)50**

13.1 Academic Board received and welcomed the paper which presented the revised Student Partnership Agreement between the University and the Students' Association and the associated work streams for the period September 2014 to August 2017.

13.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **approved** the Student Partnership Agreement with Napier Students' Association.

14. STUDENT APPEALS, COMPLAINTS & CONDUCT: STATISTICS & ANNUAL REPORT **AB(14/15)51**

14.1 Academic Board considered the paper which presented the annual report on matters relating to the areas of academic appeals, complaints and student conduct. Key points from the report were highlighted and it was noted that this

was the first report received under the new SPSO mandated complaints procedure which included lessons learned and actions taken in response to issues raised through complaints.

14.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

Academic Board received the minutes of the following meetings to confirm that its sub-committees were continuing to meet their remits and were undertaking business on its behalf to the standard it expects.

No comments were raised on any of the minutes on this occasion.

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| 15. Minutes of University Research Integrity Committee held on 04 November 2014 | AB(14/15)35 |
| 16. Minutes of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee held on 27 November 2014 | AB(14/15)52 |
| 17. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 12 December 2014 | AB(14/15)53 |
| 18. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 26 January 2015 | AB(14/15)54 |
| 19. Minutes of Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries Academic Board held on 27 January 2015
Minutes not available for consideration at this meeting. Carried forward to the next meeting. | AB(14/15)55 |
| 20. Minutes of the Business School Academic Board held on 27 January 2015 | AB(14/15)56 |
| 21. Minutes of Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences Academic Board held on 04 February 2015 | AB(14/15)57 |
| 22. Minutes of University Research Integrity Committee held on 17 February 2015
Minutes not available for consideration at this meeting. Carried forward to the next meeting. | AB(14/15)58 |
| 23. Minutes of Academic Strategy & Enhancement Committee held on 18 February 2015 | AB(14/15)59 |

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

24. REPORT ON UNIVERSITY KEY RISKS APPROPRIATE TO ACADEMIC BOARD* AB(14/15)60

24.1 The Board **noted** the report which provided the second assessment of confidence in the management of the University's Top Risks for academic year 2014/15.

25. INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY AB(14/15)61

25.1 Academic Board **noted** the final Internationalisation Strategy as approved by ULT.

26. SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENT

AB(14/15)62

26.1 Academic Board **noted** the final Outcome Agreement as submitted to the Scottish Funding Council.

27. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2014/15:

27.1 Noted as 12 June 2015, 9.00am, Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus.

***denotes a paper to which an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.**