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Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY

AB(17/18)59

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on **1 June 2018 at 0900**
in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus

PRESENT: Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor A Sambell (Senior Vice Principal & Deputy Vice Chancellor); Professor A Tobin (Vice Principal Learning & Teaching); Ms F Baumann (Student Rep); Mrs G Boag (Dean, Business School); Dr S Cairncross (Assistant Principal); Dr A Fonzone (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr J Hails (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Mr M Innes (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Professor J Kennedy (Dean, Research & Innovation); Dr S Logie (Director, School Support Service & Academic Registrar); Dr E Malone (School of Applied Sciences); Ms P Miller-Judd (Dean, School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr L Muir (School of Computing); Dr I McIntosh (Acting Dean, School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr B Neades (School of Health & Social Care); Professor B Paechter (School Academic Lead, Research); Mr C Rault (Student Rep); Dr E Theodoraki (Business School); Dr N Urquhart (School of Computing); Professor B Webster-Henderson (Dean, Learning & Teaching); Dr B Windram (School Academic Lead, Learning & Teaching).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Cloy (University Secretary); Dr C Steen (Clerk)

APOLOGIES: Dr N Brown (School Academic Lead, Quality Enhancement); Dr N Cimini (School of Applied Sciences); Dr S Dawkes (School Academic Lead, Learning & Teaching); Professor L Dryden (School Academic Lead, Research); Ms N Graham (Vice Principal); Professor E Hart (Professoriate); Professor T Humphrey (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Mr M Khatri (ENSA President); Mr R Lannon (School Academic Lead, Quality Enhancement); Professor Alison McCleery (Professoriate); Dr S Smith (Dean, School of Computing).

1. **OPENING REMARKS, WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

   1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting. The apologies were noted.

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2018**   **AB(17/18)39**

   2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2018 were approved.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

   i) **Amendments to the Academic Calendar (item 9.4):** Members were advised that the working group had split the project into two distinct workstreams: the practical logistics of implementation of the new academic calendar, and the opportunities presented by the new calendar.

   Members were advised that the initial implementation date of September 2019 for the new calendar had proved optimistic and it was recommended that implementation be deferred to September 2020. This was agreed.

   It was noted that the working group was seeking volunteers to assist with the workload of the group. Interested parties were asked to contact the Director, School Support Services. Members were encouraged to think of a suitable title for the project/working group as 'Academic Calendar Working Group' did not reflect the opportunities the project afforded to enhance the student experience.

   Members discussed communication of the project to staff and a number of general suggestions were made, including clarifying the membership of committees and members' roles in communicating with their constituents (including contextualising of papers/minutes as necessary) and the use of existing fora to disseminate information. The Working Group to develop a brief staff communications strategy outlining implementation of the Academic Calendar and to report on progress of the strategy at the first Academic Board meeting of 2018/19.

4. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**   **AB(17/18)40**

   4.1 Members' attention was drawn to the item in the paper on Widening Access. It was noted that the Scottish Government was unhappy with the sector's progress in meeting government targets for widening participation. The sector continued to voice reservations about the use of the Scottish Index of Multiple Depravation (SIMD) to identify target post codes and the dearth of data available for individuals in these locations, while remaining fully committed to

widening participation and the actions agreed by universities in Universities Scotland's 'Working to Widen Access' publication.

4.2 Student mental health was briefly discussed and it was noted that the Scottish HE sector was looking holistically at mental health strategies. Members were advised that Court's Audit & Risk Committee had raised the issue of student mental health at their recent meeting and had requested an update on this area.

4.3 The Principal's Report was noted.

5. CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES FOR 2018/19   Verbal Report

5.1 Members were provided with a brief update on development of the Corporate Plan (and attendant budget) for 2018/19. Individual plans from Schools and Services were now being amalgamated into a single document. Emerging priorities included: a continued focus on widening participation; improving staff/student liaison committees to enhance student engagement and feedback; growing the PhD population, and the continuing response to the National Student Survey.

5.2 Clarification was sought on the perceived changing emphases on teaching and research workload, particularly with regard to promotion. It was noted that all four academic pathways included teaching excellence and it was a matter for individuals and their line managers to determine which of the four pathways was the most suited to their workload. The Principal re-iterated the inter-dependency of teaching and research in a University environment, noting that research was much broader than REF, including a breadth of scholarly activities. It was noted that future editions of 'The Bones' would include examples of academic staff who were promoted and the route they had taken.

5.3 The update on Corporate Plan Priorities was noted.

6. CHANGES TO ULT STRUCTURE: ACADEMIC BOARD   AB(17/18)41 CONSTITUTION AND SUB COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

6.1 Members were reminded that the constitution of Academic Board was in alignment with the requirements of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. Members were advised that the Statutory Instrument enacting changes in the Act with regard to the constitution of Court had recently been approved by the Privy Council.

6.2 The proposed amendments to the Academic Board's constitution, and changes concerning the convenorship and membership of Academic Board sub-committees, were approved.

7. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION STRATEGY UPDATE   AB(17/18)42

7.1   Members were advised that development of the Code of Practice for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise was continuing. The quality of the data relating to research activity in some areas continued to provide cause for concern.

7.2   The positive outcomes in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) were noted.

7.3   Student members raised an issue of communicating with the wider student population on pertinent matters: it was agreed that the availability/development of a suitable online platform would be investigated.

7.4   Members were advised that the career progression framework for research staff was currently being consulted on with the Trades Unions.

7.5   The Research and Innovation Strategy update was noted.

**8. COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY REPORT TO ACADEMIC   AB(17/18)43
BOARD 2017/18**

8.1   The Quality and Standards Manager was thanked for compiling the report.

8.2   It was suggested it would be helpful to include target student numbers in future reports. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

8.3   The Collaborative Activity Report was noted.

**9. ANNUAL REPORT ON QUALITY ENHANCEMENT   AB(17/18)44
ACTIVITY TO THE SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL**

9.1   The Head of Quality & Enhancement was thanked for compiling the report. It was noted that the report would not be finalised until September 2018 once year-end data had been incorporated.

9.2   The Annual Report on Quality Enhancement Activity was noted.

**10. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE   AB(17/18)45
QUALITY FRAMEWORK AND PROPOSED CHANGES
FOR 2018/19**

10.1   Members were advised that there were five programme approvals outstanding. It had been hoped to have all programme approvals complete by the end of May 2018. It was noted that most approval requests took place in trimesters 2 and 3, with very few in trimester

1: resourcing approval panels in trimester 3 was particularly troublesome as students were reluctant to participate due to exams, etc.

10.2 It was noted that module descriptor templates would be made available online by July 2018, with staff training thereafter. The change would allow an online archive of module descriptors to be created.

10.3 It was planned to move to a triage approach for first year reviews for transnational programmes, with the adoption of paper-based and videoconference reviews wherever possible to cut down on the cost of in-country reviews.

10.4 The Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Quality Framework was noted and the Convenor of the Quality & Standards Committee was given authority to approve the Quality Framework prior to its publication.

11. WIDENING PARTICIPATION STRATEGY: PROGRESS REPORT AND PRIORITIES FOR 2018/19   AB(17/18)46

11.1 It was noted that the short-term aim of the strategy was one of engagement and relationship-building, in conjunction with continuing development of the contextualised admissions process. In the longer term, widening of the 'application pool' beyond the local area and 'traditional' applicants would be targeted.

11.2 It was agreed that placement activity associated with the Teacher Education project gave Edinburgh Napier an excellent opportunity to forge close relationships with schools and to access pupils in those schools for recruitment activities, e.g. taster sessions.

11.3 The Widening Participation Strategy progress report was noted.

12. STUDENT RETENTION: PRIORITIES FOR 2018/19   AB(17/18)47

12.1 Members were asked to encourage colleagues to access the data held in COGNOS to identify retention issues within their programmes.

12.2 It was noted that students occasionally suspended studies for various reasons. It was unclear whether these individuals continued to be counted as current students. It was agreed to clarify this.

12.3 The Student Retention report was noted.

**13. DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT STUDENT EXPERIENCE   AB(17/18)48
THROUGH ENHANCED PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC
TUTORING**

13.1   Dr Clare Taylor, School of Applied Sciences, was thanked for leading the project.

13.2   The proposal that a Personal Development Tutor (PDT) be assigned to a student for the duration of their programme was broadly welcomed. It was clarified that PDTs were not trained counsellors and should not act, or be treated, as such: they should however receive adequate training to allow them to direct students to internal and external sources of support.

13.3   The recommendations made in the paper were approved. The Principal undertook to write to Dr Taylor thanking her for the leading the project.

14. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR SESSION 2018/19   AB(17/18)49

14.1   The amendments to the Academic Regulations; Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Regulations, and Coursework Extension Policy, were approved.

14.2   It was agreed to give the Convenor of the Quality & Standards Committee authority to make further amendments to the Academic Regulations should this be necessary during the Summer 2018 recess.

14.3   It was noted that meetings would be arranged with each School to communicate the changes to the regulations (once finalised).

15. FIVE YEAR ACADEMIC CALENDAR TO 2022/23   AB(17/18)50

15.1   The Academic Year calendar for 2022/23 and implementation of the new academic calendar for 2020/21 were approved.

16. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK UPDATE   AB(17/18)51

16.1   Members were advised that data was still awaited from some Schools: this would be processed over the summer to provide information packs for the mini-REF in September 2018.

16.2   The draft Code of Practice (CoP) would be utilised in the mini-REF to select staff for inclusion in the exercise: feedback and further consultation would then be used to inform further development of the CoP following the mini-REF.

16.3   A module was being developed for WorkTribe which would be used to track progress, auto-allocate staff to Units of Assessment (UoA) and provide UoA leaders with management information.

16.4   The Research Excellence Framework update was noted.

17.   HONORARY AWARDS   AB(17/18)52

17.1   The nomination recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee (for onward transmission to Court for endorsement) was approved.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

18.   MINUTE FROM THE RESEARCH & INNOVATION   AB(17/18)53
COMMITTEE HELD ON 03 MAY 2018

18.1   The minute from the Research & Innovation Committee held on 3 May 2018 was noted.

19.   MINUTE FROM THE JOINT MEETING OF LEARNING,   AB(17/18)54
TEACHING & ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE AND
STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE HELD ON
16 MAY 2018

19.1   The minute from the joint meeting of Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee and Student Experience Committee, held on 16 May 2018, was noted.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

20.   OUTCOME AGREEMENT WITH SCOTTISH FUNDING   AB(17/18)55
COUNCIL 2018/19 TO 2020/21

20.1   The Outcome Agreement 2018/19 to 2020/21 was noted.

21.   HIGHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT RECORD   AB(17/18)56
(HEAR) PROJECT UPDATE

21.1   The Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Project update was noted.

22.   UNIVERSITY TOP RISKS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR   AB(17/18)57
2017/18

22.1   The final report of the management of top risks for 2017/18 was noted.

23. **LETTER OF GUIDANCE FROM THE SCOTTISH**   AB(17/18)58
     GOVERNMENT TO THE SCOTTISH FUNDING
     COUNCIL

     23.1   The Letter of Guidance from the Scottish Government to the
            Scottish Funding Council was noted.

24. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

     All at 0900 in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus:

     19 October 2018
     30 November 2018
     08 March 2019
     07 June 2019

25. **VALEDICTIONS**

     25.1   The Convenor thanked Mr Khatri, Ms Baumann, Mr Rault and Mr
            Arulpragasm for their contribution to Academic Board over the year.

26. **MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

     26.1   Members were advised that Edinburgh Napier participated on the
            above committee with members drawn from the other Edinburgh-
            based universities. A vacancy on the committee had arisen and
            members were encouraged to nominate a representative. All
            nominations to be passed to the Clerk of Academic Board prior to
            close of business, 15 June 2018.