



**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(20/21)53

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT**

ACADEMIC BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held Friday 5th March 2021 at 9.00 am by Webex Video
Conference**

PRESENT:

Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor A Tobin (Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching); Ms N Graham (Vice Principal for International); Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal of Research and Innovation); Professor P Barlow (School Head of Research); Mrs G Boag (Dean, Business School); Dr J Brodie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Dr P Chapman (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Mr A Duggal (ENSA President); Dr A Fonzone (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Mr M Greenhalgh (Interim Dean, School of Engineering & the Built Environment & School of Computing); Dr J Hails (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Dr K James (School of Health & Social Care); Dr S Logie (Director, Student Services & Academic Registrar); Professor A Machin (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Dr D Maclean (Dean, School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr C Mahoney (School of Health & Social Care); Professor A McCleery (Professoriate); Dr K Macleod (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr L Mora (Business School); Dr X Pierron (Business School); Dr N Urquhart (School of Computing); Dr S Wells (School of Computing); Dr G Wright (School of Applied Sciences).

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr D Cloy (University Secretary); Ms C Taylor (Director, Information Services).

OBSERVING

Ms S Jiwa (Lay Court Member).

APOLOGIES:

Dr C Backhaus (School Head of Research); Mr P Goyal (Student Campus Representative, Sighthill); Dr M Leggate (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Mr M Fahad Siddiqui (Student Campus Representative, Craiglockhart); Professor A Snowden (Professoriate); Mr M Thomson (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Mr S Kowshik Uppalapati (Student Campus Representative, Merchiston).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting and welcomed lay Court member Shainool Jiwa who was observing the meeting.
- 1.2 The apologies were **noted**.

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2020 AB(20/21)36

2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(20/21)38

4.1 The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the implications of the Scottish budget for the sector and the work underway to seek guidance with the Scottish Government on a consistent set of planning assumptions around Covid restrictions for the next academic year.

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

5. COVID 19: PLANNING AND RESPONSE UPDATE AB(20/21)39

5.1 Academic Board received the paper which reported on key developments in the University's response to the ongoing Covid-19 situation since last meeting. It was noted that there were ongoing sectoral discussions with the Scottish and UK governments in relation to international student issues ahead of the next academic year.

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

6. REPORT ON APPLICATIONS 2021/22* AB(20/21)40

6.1 Academic Board received and **noted** the paper which presented an update on student applications and the recruitment and admissions process for the 2021/22 admissions cycle.

7. STUDENT ENROLMENTS AND FORECAST FOR 2020/21* AB(20/21)41

7.1 Academic Board received and **noted** the paper which provided a summary of student enrolments and forecasts for the academic year 2020/21 student population segments.

8. STRATEGY 2020 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: ANNUAL UPDATE OF 2019/20 PERFORMANCE* AB(20/21)42

8.1 Academic Board received the paper which presented the agreed set of University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which were used to monitor progress towards the University Strategy 2020 – Building Success. The report summarised achievements and performance against the 2019/20 plan and presented the latest and final figures for the KPIs. It was noted that the KPIs and Key Performance Targets (KPTs) for the new Strategy were being finalised for Court approval in March.

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

9. NEW UNIVERSITY STRATEGY UPDATE

AB(20/21)43

- 9.1 Academic Board received an update on the new University Strategy, and noted next steps in terms of communication and implementation. Developments with the implementation of the LTA and R&I Strategies were outlined, and an update on progress with the development of the Internationalisation Strategy, which would be brought to Academic Board in June, was noted. An update on the development of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy was also noted.
- 9.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

10. SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AB(20/21)44 AND SCHOOL OF COMPUTING

- 10.1 Academic Board received the paper which outlined the rationale to meaningfully integrate the School of Computing (SoC) and the School of Engineering and Built Environment (SEBE), considering the academic benefits for doing so and the potential options for the way forward, following a period of consultation. The report concluded that maintaining the status quo was not a viable option given the challenges facing both Schools and consequently, integration of the two Schools or closer collaboration on joint opportunities were seen as the only two options to consider for future organisation and management. It was noted that the new Dean responsible for both SEBE and SoC would take ownership of the process of further evaluation of the collaboration options and the current and planned investments in resources in both Schools, however the Schools would remain as independent academic units during the process of further evaluation. It was also noted that further consultation to gather views of students and other stakeholders would take place.
- 10.2 Discussion followed during which members from SoC and SEBE welcomed the process of consultation and engagement led by the Vice Principal (Research & Innovation) and Interim Dean on behalf of colleagues in the Schools and endorsed the direction of travel. It was recognised that there would need to be suitable underpinning management support for the new Dean to ensure effective day to day running of the Schools and enable them to fulfil their leadership role. It was also recognised that the collaboration mechanisms arising from the process could be extended to support collaboration across all Schools. It was noted that an evaluation of the collaboration options and how to proceed with closer integration of the Schools would be brought to the June Academic Board meeting.
- 10.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the paper.

11. BREXIT UPDATE

AB(20/21)45

- 11.1 Academic Board received and **noted** the paper which presented an update on the latest developments relating to the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union (EU) and the implications for the University of the UK-EU trade deal agreed in December 2020.

12. STUDENT APPEALS, COMPLAINTS & CONDUCT: STATISTICS AND ANNUAL REPORT* **AB(20/21)46**

- 12.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided the annual report on matters relating to the areas of academic appeals, complaints and student conduct.
- 12.2 Thanks were extended to Richard Bews (Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Manager) for his excellent work in supporting this area.
- 12.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

13. INTERIM SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2020/21 **AB(20/21)47**

- 13.1 Academic Board received and **noted** the paper which presented the University's Interim Outcome Agreement 2020/21 as submitted to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). It was noted that the SFC had indicated that an Outcome Agreement for 2021/22 and beyond would be required and would take into account a revised performance framework that is being reviewed as part of the wider review of higher and further education in Scotland. This is likely to be required in summer 2021.

14. ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (ELIR) FOLLOW-UP REPORT **AB(20/21)48**

- 14.1 Academic Board received the paper which sought Academic Board approval for the ELIR Follow Up Report prior to being submitted to QAA Scotland for publication and included an update to the ELIR action plan.
- 14.2 Academic Board **approved** the ELIR Follow Up Report and **delegated authority** to the Convenor of Academic Board to sign off any final amendments based on feedback received from QAA Scotland, prior to final submission.

15. ACADEMIC BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW **AB(20/21)49**

- 15.1 Academic Board received the paper which presented the outcome of the review of the effectiveness of the University's academic governance arrangements conducted by Ernst & Young (EY) as part of their programme of Internal Audit. The report concluded that the University has developed and embedded an academic governance structure which is effective and noted good practice across a number of areas. The review noted no significant areas of concern, but noted that the ongoing success of Academic Board and its sub-committees could be bolstered by improvements to the ongoing effectiveness review process and the new member induction process, for which actions had been agreed and were in progress. It was also noted that a small tidying exercise was required with regards to the Academic Board Constitution to reflect role and structure changes which had impacted the ex-officio membership and which may necessitate some small changes to that membership category. Proposed amendments to the Academic Board constitution would be brought to the June Academic Board meeting.
- 15.2 Academic Board **noted** the outcomes of the review and next steps.

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.

- 16.** Minutes of Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Experience Committee meeting held on 18 November 2020 **AB(20/21)33**

The minutes were **noted**.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 17. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCHERS CONCORDAT: AB(20/21)51 ANNUAL REPORT**

17.1 Academic Board **noted** the report detailing the plans to implement the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

- 18. TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (2 of 3)* AB(20/21)52**

18.1 Academic Board **noted** the Top Risks monitoring report.

- 19. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2020/21:**

Noted as:

04 June 2021 at 09.00.

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