

**APPROVED  
CIRCULATED**

**AB(21/22)018**

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY COURT**

**ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 9.00 am by Webex  
Video Conference**

**PRESENT:**

Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Mr M Akinpelu (ENSA Co-President); Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Engineering & the Built Environment and School of Computing); Dr C Backhaus (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); Dr A Fonzone (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Ms N Graham (Vice Principal for International); Dr J Hails (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Professor N Karodia (Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching); 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 K Macleod (School of Arts and Creative Industries); B Stillie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr N Urquhart (School of Computing); Dr S Wells (School of Computing).

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

A McGoff (Director of Finance and Operations); M. Masson (Clerk)

**APOLOGIES:**

Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal of Research and Innovation); Mr D Cloy (Head of Governance & Risk); Mr M Greenhalgh (Director of Strategy and Planning & Secretary to Court); Dr M Leggate (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr C Mahoney (School of Health & Social Care); Professor A McCleery (Professoriate); Dr L Mora (Business School); Dr X Pierron (Business School); Professor A Snowden (Professoriate); Ms C Taylor (Director, Information Services); Mr M Thomson (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr G Wright (School Head of Research).

**1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting and welcomed Nazira Karodia (Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching), Peter Andras (Dean of SOC and SEBE), Bryden Stillie (School Head of Learning & Teaching) and Matthew Akinpelu (ENSA Co-President for Education & Employability) to their first meeting.

1.2 The apologies were **noted**.

## **PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION**

### **2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 JUNE 2021 AB(21/22)02**

2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

### **4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(21/22)03**

4.1 Members noted the Principal's written report.

### **5. COVID 19: PLANNING AND RESPONSE UPDATE AB(21/22)04**

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.

5.2 Members discussed the existing approach to staff travel overseas for conferences and fieldwork and noted the explanation for the current cautious approach. Members further noted that arrangements for travel would be kept under review as the conditions for overseas travel eased, with the next review point towards the end of October.

5.3 Members discussed the return of students on campus. Concern was expressed that there was evidence to suggest that some students were hesitant about returning to on-campus learning and teaching activity, preferring to access available online options, although it was noted that this varied between Schools. Of particular concern were second year students who had spent much of the last year online with little on-campus experience. It was agreed that a communication to be delivered across a range of channels addressing the perceived concerns and university expectations would be developed with ENSA for the Trimester 2 return.

5.4 Looking to the medium term, work to develop the future learning and teaching model would continue. A number of important considerations were discussed including the need for flexibility in programme delivery particularly for students with diverse learning needs. The future model would also aim to address the constraints in the existing workload model which limited the time staff had for research, CPD and other activities. Other key areas for consideration were noted including work with Advance HE, 'Flexible by Design' work, and the development of the Gold Standard Curriculum. ENSA would also have an important role in articulating the student voice to shape future direction.

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

**6. UPDATE ON FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2020/21 AND BUDGET 2021/22\*** **AB(21/22)05**

6.1 Academic Board received the paper which updated Academic Board on the provisional financial outturn for the year ended July 2021 and budget for 2021/22.

6.2 Thereafter, Academic **noted** the report.

**7. CERTIFICATION OF SHORT COURSES (CREDIT & NON-CREDIT BEARING)** **AB(21/22)06**

7.1 Academic Board received the paper which outlined key issues and recommendations for approval by Academic Board around the certification of short courses, both credit and non-credit bearing. It was noted that, if approved, further work will be undertaken to embed the decisions in the university's regulations and other related protocols.

7.2 Members warmly welcomed the proposals which would be positive for both professional partners and individual learners. Certification would also provide greater visibility for learners regarding pathways and options for building credits and for consideration of advance standing.

7.4 Members noted that the administration associated with the certification proposals would be undertaken within the School Support Service Team who had oversight of learner records.

7.3 Thereafter, Academic Board approved the recommendations in the paper.

**8. STUDENT SURVEYS: OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS\*** **AB(21/22)07**

8.1 Academic Board received the paper which summarised the latest (2021) results of the sector-wide student experience surveys: the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The paper also set out the actions that will address the outcomes of the student experience surveys in 2021 to enhance the student experience.

8.2 Discussion followed and it was noted that particular circumstances in Schools or programmes may have a bearing on the results at a more granular level. In addition, it was considered that the results may have been impacted by the disruption to course delivery that final year students experienced during the pandemic year and a feeling of disappointment on the part of some students that they were unable to access laboratories or undertake practical aspects of their courses.

8.4 The response rates were reviewed and it was noted that the participation rate for the NSS (75%) was much higher possibly because of the involvement of an external market research company. The PTES response rate at 19% was

noted as being particularly low and efforts would be made to engage directly with different cohorts of students in the future.

8.3 Academic Board noted the report.

**9. SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL REVIEW AB(21/22)08**

9.1 Academic Board noted the University's response to the Scottish Funding Council review of coherent provision and sustainability as sent to the Scottish Government.

**10. INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY UPDATE\* AB(21/22)09**

10.1 Academic Board considered the paper which presented an update on developments relating to the implementation of the Internationalisation Strategy 2021-2025 which was considered by Academic Board in June 2021 and subsequently approved by ULT later the same month.

10.2 Members noted the update on each of the different strands of the international strategy and welcomed the opportunities for growth it presented. The provision of funding for shorter overseas mobility opportunities presented by the Turing Scheme, confirmed as starting in 2023, would be particularly welcome by some students who may only be able to travel for short periods.

10.3 Members noted that the CPC had approved the new model for franchise provision and that DLTE staff were now working on the due diligence and quality assurance processes.

10.4 Members noted that the University continued to monitor the current situation in Myanmar for any impact in liaison with other UK institutions.

10.5 Thereafter, Academic Board noted the update.

**11. HONORARY AWARDS\* AB(21/22)10  
(TABLED PAPER)**

14.1 Academic Board **approved** the Honorary Award nomination as recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee, for onward transmission to Court for final approval.

**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.

**12. Minutes of Research & Innovation Committee meeting held on AB(21/22)11  
23 September 2021**

The minutes were **noted**. Academic Board **approved** the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Research & Innovation Committee.

- 13. Minutes of Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Experience Committee meeting held on 29 September 2021** **AB(21/22)12**

The minutes were **noted**. An issue had been highlighted in relation to an operational matter within the University Calendar for Trimester 3. The Director of School Support Service & Academic Registrar would take forward an evaluation of the issues in discussion with Schools and seek to identify a way forward reporting back to LTASEC in due course.

## **PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- 14. ANNUAL REPORT OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION COMMITTEE 2020/21** **AB(21/22)13**

14.1 Academic Board **noted** the report.

- 15. ANNUAL REPORT OF LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT & STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE 2020/21** **AB(21/22)14**

15.1 Academic Board **noted** the report.

- 16. ANNUAL REPORT OF QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE 2020/21** **AB(21/22)15**

16.1 Academic Board **noted** the report.

- 17. TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF ACADEMIC BOARD 2021/22** **AB(21/22)16**

17.1 Academic Board **noted** its Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for 2021/22

- 18. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS 2021/22** **AB(21/22)17**

18.1 Academic Board **noted** its indicative forward schedule of business for 2021/22.

## **19. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2021/22:**

Noted as:

26 November 2021

04 March 2022

03 June 2022

All at 09.00.

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