EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held Friday 3rd June 2022 at 9.00 am at the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus and by Teams Video Conference

PRESENT:
Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal Research & Innovation and Deputy Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Engineering & the Built Environment and School of Computing); Dr J Brodie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Dr A Fonzone (School of Engineering & the Built Environment) (from item 8); Dr J Hails (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Professor N Karodia (Vice Principal Learning & Teaching and Deputy Vice Chancellor); Dr M Leggate (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr S Logie (Director, Student Services & Academic Registrar); Professor A Machin (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Professor A McCleery (Professoriate); Dr F McQueen (School of Applied Sciences); Dr N Pitropakis (School of Computing); Professor A Snowden (Professoriate); Dr S Wells (School of Computing).

IN ATTENDANCE:
D Cloy (Head of Governance & Risk); A McGoff (Director of Finance & Operations) until item 6); C Taylor (Director, Information Services).

APOLOGIES:
M Akinpelu (ENSA Co-President); Dr C Backhaus (School Head of Research); Dr P Chapman (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr R Cooper (Interim Dean of Business School); M Greenhalgh (Director of Strategy and Planning & Secretary to Court /Interim Vice Principal International); Dr K Leitch (School of Engineering and the Built Environment); Dr D Maclean (Dean, School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr K Macleod (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr C Mahoney (School of Health & Social Care); J Martin (ENSA Campus Representative); A Michael (ENSA Campus Representative); Dr L Mora (Business School); Dr X Pierron (Business School); C Reid (ENSA Campus Representative); B Stillie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr G Wright (School Head of Research).

1.   **WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

1.1   The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting.

1.2   The apologies were **noted.**

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

2.   **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 MARCH 2022   AB(21/22)40**

2.1   The minutes were **approved**.

3.   MATTERS ARISING

3.1   Minute 10: SOC/SEBE Integration: Academic Board Membership

Members noted that the School merger impacted Academic Board Membership as the constitution allows for 2 elected staff members per School and there are 4 in membership across SOC and SEBE currently. To address this, Academic Board **recommended to Court** that Achille Fonzone (SEBE) and Simon Wells (SOC) be permitted to complete their terms of office as Academic Board members, which conclude in September 2023, as a transitional provision further to the School Merger. At this point membership for SCEBE will fall back to the constitutionally permitted two elected staff members which are already occupied by Nick Pitropakis (SOC) and Kenneth Leitch (SEBE) with terms of office running to 2025.

3.2   Minute 7: ENHance Curriculum Framework Implementation

Members noted an update on the implementation of the fast-track Programme Approval Process.

4.   PRINCIPAL'S REPORT   AB(21/22)42

4.1   The Principal introduced her written report and members noted recent experiences of post-brexit friction regarding EU research funding and partnerships arising from the ongoing dispute with the EU regarding the Northern Ireland Protocol which had resulted in the UK's participation with the Horizon Europe programme being frozen. The challenging funding outlook for the sector, with a flat cash settlement announced for the next 5 years, was also noted.

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

5.   PLANNING & BUDGETING UPDATE

5.1   Academic Board received the paper which presented the primary outcomes of the Planning and Budgeting process carried out in 2021/22 relating to plans and budgets for 2022/23 and key performance indicators (and their associated targets) for the University Strategy. A number of priority areas for the coming year were highlighted including efforts to attract 'home' Masters students, implementation of the Curriculum Management Project and addressing challenges in recruiting undergraduate Scottish students in some areas.

5.2   Thereafter Academic Board **noted** the annual plan and draft budget for 2022/23 which would be submitted to University Court at its meeting on 20th June.

6.   ESTATES STRATEGY UPDATE

6.1   Academic Board received a presentation updating on progress with the development of the University's Estates Strategy which was being delivered through project SOFIE (Shaping our Future Infrastructure and Estates Strategy)

and would identify a programme of investment in our infrastructure and estates to underpin deliver of the University Strategy. The arrangements for project governance and associated delivery workstreams were highlighted. It was noted that significant projects arising from the Estates Strategy were expected to emerge in around 18 months time, but that a number of changes to support hybrid working and other smaller improvement projects were already underway.

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

7. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF) RESULTS   AB(21/22)44

7.1 Academic Board considered the paper which provided an overview of the University's Research Excellence Framework (REF2021) results. Members were invited to note the information in the paper, celebrate the research successes of their respective School and Research Centres and to contribute to strategic discussions relating to future REF submission and the ongoing development of the research environment/culture.

7.2 In discussion the need to ensure appropriate infrastructure and support were in place for research students given the significant growth in numbers anticipated was acknowledged, and it was noted that work was planned to introduce a system to digitise the research student journey. It was also recognised that the potential development of a graduate school would contribute to establishing a supportive environment for research students. It was further acknowledged that there was a need to focus on supporting the experience of research students based overseas to ensure they feel included in their cohort and to foster interdisciplinary activity, and it was noted that a range of physical and virtual activities were being planned to achieve this. The need to ensure appropriate supervisory capacity was noted, and it was recognised that the growth in research studentships was one important part among a range of measures needed to facilitate sustainable research growth. It was noted that the research student community was growing after a decline over some years following a period of significant core funding. It was also recognised that efforts should be made to recruit and support research students from a range of different backgrounds.

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

8. QUALITY FRAMEWORK ANNUAL REVIEW   AB(21/22)45

8.1 Academic Board received the paper which detailed the outcome of the routine monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Framework during 2021/22. Whilst the framework had been broadly operating effectively, it was noted that there were instances of poor compliance with the framework in some areas and that measures were in place to address these.

8.2 Academic Board **noted** the annual report on the effectiveness of the Quality Framework and **approved** that the changes to the Quality Framework presented in Appendix 1 may be signed off as the final version of the Quality Framework prior to its publication.

.

9. **ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2022/23** **AB(21/22)46**

9.1 Academic Board received the paper which presented proposed amendments to the University's Academic regulations for academic session 2022/23, following approval by Quality and Standards Committee.

9.2 Academic Board **approved** the amendments to the Academic Regulations as detailed in Appendix one and two and **delegated authority** for the final revised Extenuating Circumstances Regulations for 2022/23 to be approved via Convenors Action, prior to student matriculation commencing.

10. **ANNUAL REPORT ON QUALITY ENHANCEMENT** **AB(21/22)47**
ACTIVITY TO THE SFC

10.1 Academic Board received the paper which presented a draft of the Annual Report on institution-led review and enhancement activities to the Scottish Funding Council.

10.2 Academic Board **approved** the draft report for onward transmission to Court.

11 **ACADEMIC CALENDAR TO 2027/28** **AB(21/22)48**

11.1 Academic Board **a) approved** the Academic Year Calendar for 2027/28 in the rolling six-year academic calendar, and **b) approved** the adoption of the principle outlined of when the Easter break should fall in the academic calendar, and the consequent changes to the calendar for AY2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

11.2 There was discussion concerning timescale pressure around marking deadlines. It was noted that this matter was under consideration and that the time limit for extensions had been reduced from 10 to 5 days which would help alleviate the challenges.

12. **HONORARY AWARDS REGULATIONS** **AB(21/22)49**

12.1 Academic Board received the paper which set out proposals to revise the regulations and procedures for the award of honorary degrees, emeritus professorships and visiting titles. It was noted that these were currently governed by two sets of regulations: one for honorary degrees and one for emeritus and visiting titles. It was proposed to amalgamate these into one set of regulations overseen by a new Honorary & Visiting Titles Committee. These changes had been approved and recommended by ULT and the Honorary Awards Committee.

12.2 Academic Board **approved** the revised regulations as provided in Appendix 1, which would be put to Court for final approval.

13. HONORARY AWARDS FOR APPROVAL*   **AB(21/22)50**

13.1 Academic Board **approved** the Honorary Award nominations recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee for onward transmission to Court for ensorsement.

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.

14. Minutes of Research & Innovations Committee meeting held on   **AB(21/22)51**
24 March 2022

The minutes were **noted**.

15. Minutes of Research & Innovations Committee meeting held on
26 May 2022

The minutes were not available in time for presentation to the meeting and would be put forward to the next meeting of Academic Board.

16. Minutes of Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student   **AB(21/22)53**
Experience Committee meeting held on 18 May 2022

The minutes were **noted**.

PART C   ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

**17. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CENTRALLY MANAGED   AB(21/22)54
EXAMINATIONS**

17.1 Academic Board **noted** the paper approved by LTASEC on 18th May 2022 with the recommendation that the University formally adopt online as the primary mode of centrally timetabled exam delivery, with an appropriate framework established to support on-campus delivery where required to meet PSRB or other compelling academic issues. In discussion, the communications planned for students and staff on the new arrangements and support available for any students facing challenges arising from it were noted.

18. EARLY CAREER ACADEMICS FRAMEWORK   AB(21/22)55

18.1 Academic Board **noted** the paper and presentation slides which highlighted the progress to date and intended next steps for launching the Early Career Academic (ECA) Development Programme, which will launch in September 2022.

19. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION COMMITTEE: AB(21/22)56
     ANNUAL REPORT AND REGISTER OF ACTIVITY*

19.1 Academic Board **noted** the paper which provided Academic Board with the
     University's Register of Collaborative Provision to update on the range of
     collaborative activity undertaken at School and University level and the awards
     of the University made to those who study with partners both in the UK and
     overseas.

20. TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (3 of 3)*   AB(21/22)57

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

21. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2022/23

Noted as:
14 October 2022
2 December 2022
10 March 2023
02 June 2023

All Fridays at 9.00am, Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus

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