



**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(22/23)43

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held Friday 10th March 2023 at 9.00am

PRESENT:

Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor); Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment) (from item 10); Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal Research & Innovation and Deputy Vice Chancellor); Dr C Backhaus (Business School); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Professor C Cross (Dean, Business School); N Graham (Vice-Principal, International); Dr J Hails (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr R Haddrill (School of Health & Social Care); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Professor N Karodia (Vice Principal Learning & Teaching and Deputy Vice Chancellor); V Khattar (ENSA Sabbatical); M Leavitt (School of Health & Social Care); Dr M Leggate (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr K Leitch (School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment); Professor A Machin (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); J Martin (Student Representative); Dr N Pitropakis (School of Computing); B Stillie (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr G Wright (School of Applied Sciences).

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Cloy (Head of Governance and Risk); M Greenhalgh (Director of Strategy and Planning and Secretary to Court); C Taylor (Director of Information Services); A McKendrick (Business Change Consultant) (item 12).

APOLOGIES:

Dr J Brodie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr Peter Chapman (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr A Fonzone (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr S Logie (Director, Student Services & Academic Registrar); Dr D Maclean (Dean, Schools of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr K Macleod (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr F McQueen (School of Applied Sciences); Professor L Mora (Business School); Dr X Pierron (Business School); Professor P Robertson (Professoriate); Professor A Snowden (Professoriate); Dr S Wells (School of Computing).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting.
- 1.2 Members noted with sadness the passing of former colleague, Academic Board and Court member Professor Alison McCleery on 19 February. Condolences were extended to her family.
- 1.3 The apologies were **noted**.

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2022 AB(22/23)28

2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Minute 7.2: Sustainable Inter-Campus Travel Options

Members received an update on the considerations that were being given to sustainable inter-campus transport options. It was noted that there were no current plans for a University run inter-campus transport service, with the use of existing public bus services considered a more environmentally sustainable option. It was noted that timetabling issues were being addressed to minimise requirements for students to move between campuses and that the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Group were continuing to work on the development of a green travel policy.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(22/23)30

4.1 The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the Scottish Government budget which represented a net real-terms reduction in funding for the Higher Education Sector. It was noted that the public funding environment and outlook remained challenging.

4.2 The various reviews and consultations currently underway concerning the sector were highlighted. It was noted that the University was developing its response to the Scottish Government's interim purpose and principles for post-16 education in Scotland which had been published in December. The draft would be circulated to Academic Board members for information. The consideration by the Home Office of possible changes to the international student visa regime was also noted.

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

5. REPORT ON APPLICATIONS 2023/24* AB(22/23)31

5.1 Academic Board considered the paper which presented an update on student applications and the recruitment and admissions process for the 2023/24 admissions cycle. The current position and actions being taken to achieve the 2023/24 student number targets were highlighted.

5.2 Student retention, predominantly amongst first year students, was recognised as a significant factor in achieving SFC targets and was noted to be an area of particular focus, with additional support measures being put in place.

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

6. STUDENT ENROLMENTS AND FORECAST FOR 2022/23* AB(22/23)32

6.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided a summary of student enrolments and forecasts for the academic year 2022/23 student population segments. The challenges in achieving target numbers in certain population segments (recognised as a sector-wide issue) and the mitigating actions being

taken were highlighted. In discussion, the importance of continuing to engage with Schools to help close the pandemic induced skills and development gap to ensure a smooth transition of students from School to University was recognised.

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

7. ANNUAL REVIEW OF KPIS

AB(22/23)33

7.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update against the agreed set of University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which are used to monitor progress towards the University Strategy, 'Shaping our Future: Driving Distinctiveness'. Key points were highlighted from the report, which summarised achievements and performance against the 2021/22 Annual Plan and presented the latest figures for the KPIs.

7.2 Members noted that NSS participation rates were presently down against the same point last year and were asked to encourage participation amongst their students. Discussion followed around ways to encourage survey completion, including approaching students in the coffee queue with a tablet to support completion, active approaches by other students and making space in timetabled classes, or as part of a social event, to encourage completion. ENSA's support in this area was also welcomed.

7.3 Academic Board **noted** the update.

8. PLANNING PROCESS UPDATE

8.1 Academic Board received and **noted** an update on the 2022/23 planning process. The current year's approach was welcomed by members.

9. PROJECT VISION UPDATE

AB(22/23)34

9.1 Academic Board received the paper which reported on progress to date and the next steps in delivering Project VISION; Shaping our Future Infrastructure and Estates. It was noted that VISION would provide the investment in Infrastructure and Estates to deliver the University's core strategies including our digital strategy and approach. It was noted that Project VISION was working towards two key milestones in 2023: 19 May 2023 to present to Court the size and shape ambitions for the University which will go on to inform our high-level Estate Strategy options. The Estate Strategy options would then be presented to Court on 26 June 2023. From this point Project VISION would develop detailed plans on digital and estates which would be brought to Court in October 2023. It was noted that a size and shape discussion would also be held with Academic Board at its meeting on 2 June 2023, attended by the Director of Property and Facilities.

9.2 Discussion followed during which the importance of ensuring that issues with the condition and attractiveness of the existing estate were addressed through the work of the Project was recognised. Issues around the supply of student accommodation in Edinburgh at present were acknowledged, and the measures being taken by the University to increase the supply of accommodation available to its students were noted.

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

10. EMBEDDED PATHWAY COLLEGE UPDATE

- 10.1 Academic Board received a presentation updating on progress with the proposal to establish an embedded Pathway College within the University to support international undergraduate student recruitment. Key points on the structure and operation of the College were outlined and an overview was provided of the project approach, provision planning and delivery, governance and contractual elements and key dates in the timeline for business case development and approval to facilitate a launch for January 2024. The intention to provide programme coverage across all Schools in due course was noted.
- 10.2 In discussion the importance of addressing student accommodation and teaching space issues to support the planned growth was recognised.
- 10.3 Academic Board **noted** the update.

11. SCHOOL OF COMPUTING, ENGINEERING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT INTEGRATION UPDATE **AB(22/23)35**

- 11.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on the positive progress with the establishment and integration of the School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment.
- 11.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

12. CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE **AB(22/23)36**

- 12.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on the successful implementation of the Curriculum Management Project, which would shortly transition to business as usual. Positive feedback from Schools on the ease of use of the system was noted. Thanks were extended to Andrew McKendrick and all involved for the successful delivery of the project.
- 12.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

13. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT REPORT

- 13.1 Academic Board received an update on Curriculum Development, and noted that the interim report from the The Knowledge Partnership had been received and was in the process of being considered. It was noted that a further update would be brought to the next meeting of Academic Board in June.

14. STUDENT APPEALS, COMPLAINTS & CONDUCT: STATISTICS AND ANNUAL REPORT* **AB(22/23)37**

- 14.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided the annual report on matters relating to the areas of academic appeals, complaints and student conduct. A number of key points arising from the report were highlighted, and thanks were extended to Richard Bews (Complaints and Student Conduct

Manager) and other colleagues involved for their excellent work in supporting this area.

14.2 In discussion, the issue of student mental health and the need to continually review the resources required to provide effective support in this area was recognised and it was agreed that the Head of Student Wellbeing and Inclusion would be invited to present on the work being undertaken to support student mental health and wellbeing at a future Academic Board meeting. The need to monitor the effect of the change in academic appeal regulations was also recognised.

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

15. HONORARY AWARD NOMINATIONS*

AB(22/23)38

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

16. Minutes of Education and Student Experience Committee meeting held on 15 February 2023.

AB(22/23)39

The minutes were not available ahead of the meeting, but were circulated afterward. Members were asked to note that the University's Quality Enhancement Standards Review had been deferred until December 2023 by QAA Scotland.

17. Minutes of Research & Innovation Committee meeting held on 25 January 2023.

AB(22/23)40

The minutes were **noted**.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

18. SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL OUTCOME AGREEMENT

AB(22/23)41

18.1 Academic Board **noted** the University's 2022/23 Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council.

19. TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (2 of 3)*

AB(22/23)42

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

20. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2022/23

Noted as:

02 June 2023 at 09.00.

21. AOB

Members noted the difficulty which had been experienced securing student representation on Academic Board for the current session. It was noted that the issue would be highlighted to the Head of Student Engagement to address as part of their work to support ENSA in the recruitment and allocation of students to University and School Committees, including training and induction to support them in effectively fulfilling these roles. It was noted that opportunities for students to observe Academic Board meetings would be facilitated as part of this work. The background and context to Academic Board's constitutional provisions for student representation was also clarified.

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