



**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(23/24)60

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held Friday 7th June 2024 at 9.00am
Room 3.d.14, Sighthill Campus**

PRESENT:

Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal Research & Innovation and Deputy Vice Chancellor); O Akindehin (ENSA Sabbatical); Professor A Al-Dubai (Professoriate); Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Dr C Garden (School Head of Learning & Teaching); S Gerrard (School of Arts and Creative Industries); N Graham (Vice-Principal, International); Dr R Haddrill (School of Health & Social Care); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Dr N Pitropakis (School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment); Professor N Karodia (Vice Principal Learning & Teaching and Deputy Vice Chancellor); 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); Dr S Logie (Director, Student Services & Academic Registrar); Dr D Maclean (Dean, Schools of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr R Osowska (Business School); Dr R Patterson (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Professor P Robertson (Professoriate); B Stillie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Professor K Stutterheim (School Head of Research); Dr E Urquhart (Business School).

IN ATTENDANCE:

M Greenhalgh (Director of Strategy & Planning and Secretary to Court); D Cloy (Head of Governance & Risk); A McGoff (Director of Finance & Operations); C Taylor (Director of Information Services).

OBSERVING:

C Marvis (ENSA).

APOLOGIES:

Professor C Cross (Dean, Business School); S Crozier (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); J Irving (Student Representative); Professor G Jayalakshmi (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Dr F McQueen (School of Applied Sciences); A Machay (Student Representative); J Martin (Student Representative); Dr G Wright (School Head of Research).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed attendees to the meeting.
- 1.2 The apologies were **noted**.

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & DECISION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 MARCH 2024

AB(23/24)43

2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

AB(23/24)45

4.1 The Principal introduced her written report. The challenging funding environment for the University and the HE Sector was emphasised and the contributory factors were outlined.

4.2 It was noted that Professor Bill Buchanan had been named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

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

5. INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT UPDATE

5.1 Academic Board received an update on the environmental and policy factors impacting international student recruitment and detailing the range of actions being taken by the University to address the position including the establishment of the Edinburgh Napier University International College (ENUIC). A update was also provided on current developments around global mobility and on the U!REKA alliance of which the University was a founding member.

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

6. ANNUAL PLAN PRIORITIES 2024/25

AB(23/24)46

6.1 Academic Board received the report which provided a status update on the University's Planning Process, with outline priorities for the upcoming academic year 2024/25 and reference to the future planning horizon. Academic Board was asked to note the draft Annual Plan priorities and draft Key Performance Indicators for 2024/25, which, following further refinement, would be formally reported to University Court in June for endorsement.

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

7. FINANCIAL UPDATE

7.1 Academic Board received an update on the University's financial position in the context of the current financial landscape and challenges.

7.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

8. PROJECT VISION UPDATE

- 8.1 Academic Board received an update on the current status of Project VISION. It was noted that a financing strategy to minimise financial risk had been developed and that work would be taken forward in a phased manner, with detailed planning to be undertaken over the next 18-24 months. The recent launch of the Digital Strategy and ongoing space utilisation work were also highlighted. It was noted that stakeholder engagement work would take place as plans were developed.
- 8.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

9. STUDENT RETENTION UPDATE* AB(23/24)47

- 9.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an end of year update on our Enhancing Retention plan for the academic year 2023-24. Recent improvements in exam performance were highlighted and the range of ongoing and planned improvement actions were outlined.
- 9.2 In discussion, experiences and examples of work being undertaken to improve retention within Schools were shared and it was recognised that support was required to help ensure that academic staff could sustain these efforts. It was recognised that planned IT system developments would help in due course but that efforts would continue in the meantime to improve the retention and engagement monitoring tools currently in use. The range of positive collaborations taking place between Schools was recognised and welcomed.
- 9.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

10. QUALITY FRAMEWORK ANNUAL REVIEW AB(23/24)48

- 10.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided the outcome of the routine monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Quality Framework during 2023/24. It was noted that the coming year would see a focus on improving engagement with the annual monitoring process, through work which would seek to ensure the process was impactful and helpful for Schools. It was noted that the revised monitoring process would be brought to the Board at its October meeting.
- 10.2 Academic Board **noted** the annual report on the effectiveness of the Quality Framework.

11. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2024/25 AB(23/24)49

- 11.1 Academic Board received proposed amendments to the University's Academic regulations for academic session 2024/25, following approval by Quality and Standards Committee.
- 11.2 Academic Board **approved** the amendments to the Academic Regulations as detailed in appendix one and two and granted permission for additional amendments to regulations pertaining to the Extenuating Circumstances, Extensions and Deferrals Regulations to be approved via Convenor's Action prior to 2024/25.

**12. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND STANDARDS REVIEW: AB(23/24)50
POSTGRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE ACTION PLAN**

- 12.1 Academic Board received the paper which presented the action plan created in response to the recent Quality Enhancement & Standards Review conducted by QAA Scotland. The plan had been endorsed by ESEC.
- 12.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **approved** the action plan.

13. DOCTORAL COLLEGE IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE AB(23/24)51

- 13.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on the implementation of the Doctoral College and sought approval for amendments to the terms of reference of the Research Degrees Committee, which would be renamed as the Academic Committee of the Doctoral College, and for its proposed sub-groups.
- 13.2 Discussion followed in which it was noted that efforts would be made to ensure connectivity between activities to support research student experience and taught student experience to avoid any duplication of effort. The rationale for the sub-groups was explained and it was confirmed that the operation of the new arrangements would be reviewed after a year. It was agreed that an ENSA Sabbatical Officer would be added to the membership of the Academic Committee of the Doctoral College.
- 13.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update and **approved** the revised terms of reference of the Research Degrees Committee, which was renamed as the Academic Committee of the Doctoral College, with the addition of an ENSA Sabbatical Officer to its membership.

14. ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS FRAMEWORK REVIEW AB(23/24)52

- 14.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on the review and understanding of the current academic promotions framework, while also considering other options. Members of Academic Board were invited to discuss the emerging observations. It was noted that further work would be carried out and a follow up paper would be brought to Academic Board in October.
- 14.2 Members welcomed the review and supported the direction of travel outlined. It was confirmed that the EDI data presented would be checked and that an EDI impact analysis would be part of the review and any potential amendments. It was also suggested that it would be beneficial to provide greater clarity on what external recognition meant in the context of the Learning & Teaching Pathway.
- 14.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the review.

15. ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2029/30 AB(23/24)53

- 15.1 Academic Board **approved** the academic calendar for 2029/30 in the rolling six-year academic calendar. Points raised around particular timings were clarified and would be considered further.

16 ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATES

- 16.1 Academic Board noted the presentation which outlined discussion on potential ways to enhance how we use the current academic calendar to increase our international Taught Postgraduate student recruitment & retention.
- 16.2 Members were invited to promote discussions on this matter within their Schools and it was noted that a report with any recommendations would be brought to the Board in October.

17 HONORARY AWARDS* AB(23/24)54

- 17.1 Academic Board **approved** the Honorary Award nominations recommended by the Honorary Awards and Visiting Titles 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.

- 18. Minutes of Education and Student Experience Committee AB(23/24)56**
meeting held on 15 May 2024.

The minutes were **noted**.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

19. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT AND REGISTER OF ACTIVITY AB(23/24)57

- 19.1 Academic Board **noted** the annual report on collaborative provision.

20. MILITARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AB(23/24)58

- 20.1 Academic Board **noted** the annual report from the Military Education Committee.

21. TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (2 of 3)* AB(23/24)59

- 21.1 Academic Board **noted** the Top Risks monitoring report.

22. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023/24

Noted as:

18 October 2024; 22 November 2024; 07 March 2025; 06 June 2025.

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