

**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(24/25)045

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held Friday 7th March 2025 at 9.00am
Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus**

PRESENT:

Professor S Rigby (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal Research & Innovation and Deputy Vice Chancellor); Professor A Al-Dubai; Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment); Professor P Barron (Dean, Business School); Dr M Bonnett (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Professor S Dawkes (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Dr H Earnshaw (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr C Garden (Associate Dean of Learning & Teaching); S Gerrard (SACI); N Graham (Vice-Principal, International); Professor G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Professor G Jayalakshmi (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Professor N Karodia (Vice Principal Learning & Teaching and Deputy Vice Chancellor); M Leavitt (School of Health & Social Care); 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); C Marvis (ENSA Sabbatical); Dr R Osowska (Business School); Professor P Robertson; Dr E Urquhart (Business School); R Wallace (Student Rep); Dr G Wright (Associate Dean, Research & Innovation).

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

APOLOGIES:

F Accolla (Student Rep); F Ali (Student Rep); Dr R Haddrill (School of Health & Social Care); Dr F McQueen (School of Applied Sciences); Dr N Pitropakis (School of Computing); B Stillie (Associate Dean of Learning & Teaching).

OBSERVERS:

Q Miao (Court Member); K Green (Career Development Consultant).

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 22 NOVEMBER 2024

AB(23/24)29

- 2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Academic Calendar for Taught Postgraduates (minute 3.2)

Academic Board received an update on the ongoing consideration around the use of the academic calendar for taught postgraduate programmes to ensure that the structure of our academic year optimises our key student intake points. It was noted that the working group was now focussed on how and when a change should be made, cognisant of the need to ensure a compelling business case and clear pedagogical reasons for change. It was noted that a paper would be brought to the June meeting of Academic Board for consideration.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

AB(24/25)31

- 4.1 The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the significant financial difficulties facing UK Universities. The relatively strong financial position of the University was noted, its strengths recognised and the need for the University to work rapidly to build on its current competitive advantage was emphasised. The need to continue investing resources in IT, estates and processes to ensure resilience was noted as was the work underway to ensure the University would remain financially sustainable into the future. Growth areas which would help address the financial challenge were highlighted and it was recognised that there would be a need to contract to some degree.
- 4.2 A recent Graduate Academic Integrity case which had resulted in the rescinding of an academic award was noted and the risks to students of engaging with academic writers was highlighted.
- 4.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

5. FUTURE ACADEMIC FOCUS

AB(24/25)32

- 5.1 Academic Board received the paper which proposed that Academic Board sponsor a ten-week academic strategic refresh based on quantitative and qualitative insights into our current areas of excellence and future areas of focus. It was noted that possible outcomes of this work may include the identification of areas for growth or development, a view on our current academic structures and indications of ways to focus our effort in future to deliver our core missions. It was noted that a report on findings would be presented to Academic Board at its June meeting and thereon to Court.
- 5.2 Discussion followed during which the rationale and focus of the review was further clarified. It was noted that the trade unions had been engaged on the exercise and would continue to be involved as the work progressed. It was also noted that the section of the paper on the outcomes of the mapping work should have included research under the fourth bullet, and would be amended accordingly.
- 5.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **approved** the academic strategic refresh exercise.

6. ADMISSIONS CYCLE UPDATE REPORT 2025*

AB(24/25)33

- 6.1 Academic Board considered the paper which presented an update on student applications and the recruitment and admissions process for the 2025 admissions cycle. It was noted that an amended version of table 13 would be circulated to members following the meeting. **(ACTION VP (International))**
- 6.2 In discussion the range of activities underway to improve recruitment were highlighted and examples of specific measures being taken within Schools were noted. The importance of focusing on an outreach strategy for nursing was also highlighted. The positive impact of ongoing work to improve student engagement and retention was also recognised. It was agreed that a presentation on home student recruitment and recruitment strategy would be provided at a future Academic Board meeting.
- 6.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

7. STUDENT ENROLMENTS AND FORECAST FOR 2024/25*

AB(24/25)34

- 7.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on student enrolments against student targets for the academic year 2024/25 to date, excluding TNE and Online student forecasts. The approach and timing of student number planning this year was also highlighted.
- 7.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update.

8. STRATEGY DELIVERY UPDATE: RESEARCH & INNOVATION

- 8.1 Academic Board received an update on progress with delivery of the Research & Innovation Strategy. Overall positive progress with implementation was noted and areas of future priority were highlighted. It was agreed that the Vice Principal Research & Innovation and Deputy Vice Chancellor would produce a written summary of the areas covered in this update for circulation to Academic Board following the meeting. **(ACTION VP (R&I) & DVC)**
- 8.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

9. U!REKA EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE UPDATE

AB(24/25)35

- 9.1 Academic Board received an update on the development of the U!REKA (Urban Research and Education Knowledge Exchange) Consortium of which the University is a founding member. The range of opportunities for engagement were highlighted.
- 9.2 Academic Board **noted** the update.

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.

- 10. Minutes of Education and Student Experience Committee meeting held on 13 November 2024.**

AB(24/25)36

The minutes were **noted**.

11. Minutes of Education and Student Experience Committee meeting held on 12 February 2025. **AB(24/25)37**

The minutes were **noted**.

12. Minutes of Research & Innovation Committee meeting held on 20 November 2024. **AB(24/25)38**

The minutes were **noted**.

13. Minutes of Research & Innovation Committee meeting held on 22 January 2025. **AB(24/25)39**

The minutes were **noted**.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

14. **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND INNOVATION FUND (KEIF) STRATEGY *** **AB(24/25)40**

- 14.1 Academic Board **noted** the University's Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Fund (KEIF) Strategy documents that were submitted to the Scottish Funding Council on 31 January 2025.

15. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2023/24** **AB(24/25)41**

- 15.1 Academic Board **noted** the report which summarised achievements and performance against the 2023/24 Annual Plan and presented the latest figures for the KPIs. The report was presented to December 2024 Court.

16. **ACADEMIC APPEALS AND INTEGRITY ANNUAL REPORT*** **AB(24/25)42**

- 16.1 Academic Board **noted** the annual report on matters relating to the areas of academic appeals and academic integrity. The paper had been presented and discussed in detail at Quality & Standards Committee.

17. **COMPLAINTS & STUDENT CONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT*** **AB(24/25)43**

- 17.1 Academic Board **noted** the annual report on matters relating to complaints and non-academic student conduct. The paper had been presented and discussed in detail at Quality & Standards Committee.

18. **TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (2 of 3)*** **AB(24/25)44**

- 18.1 Academic Board **noted** the Top Risks monitoring report. The paper had been presented and considered in detail at Court's Audit & Risk Committee.

19. **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2024/25**

Noted as:

06 June 2025 at 09.00.

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