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AB(25/26)021

Edinburgh Napier University
University Court

Academic Board

Minutes of the meeting held Friday 10 October 2025 at 9.00 am at the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus

PRESENT:
Professor S Rigby (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor P Andras (Dean, School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment); Professor P Barlow (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Dr M Bonnett (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr S Campbell Casey (School of Applied Sciences); Professor V Charissis (Associate Dean, Research & Innovation); Professor S Dawkes (Dean, School of Health & Social Care); Dr H Earnshaw (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Professor C Garden (Associate Dean of Learning & Teaching); S Gerrard (SACI); N Graham (Vice-Principal, International); Professor G Jayalakshmi (School of Arts and Creative Industries); Professor N Karodia (Deputy Vice Chancellor); M Leavitt (School of Health & Social Care); Dr S Logie (Director, Student Services & Academic Registrar); Dr D Maclean (Dean, Schools of Arts and Creative Industries); C Marvis (ENSA Sabbatical); Dr E Urquhart (Business School); Dr C Smith (Associate Dean of Learning & Teaching); Dr G Wright (Associate Dean, Research & Innovation).

IN ATTENDANCE:
D Cloy (Head of Governance and Risk); Professor C Cunningham (Head of DLTE); M Greenhalgh (Director of Finance, Strategy & Planning and Secretary to Court); Professor G Hutchison (Assistant Principal); C Taylor (Director of Information Services).

APOLOGIES:
Professor A Al-Dubai; Dr K Leitch (School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment); A McGoff (Vice Principal of Business Engagement & Dean of the Business School); Dr F Maclean (School of Health & Social Care); Dr F McQueen (School of Applied Sciences); Dr R Osowska (Business School); Professor P Robertson; R Wallace (Student Rep).

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 10 JUNE 2025 AB(24/25)064

2.1 The minutes were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(25/26)002

4.1 The Principal introduced her written report and highlighted the policy and funding landscape within the UK and Scotland and the challenges and opportunities presented.

4.2 The impact of student experience and graduate outcomes on league tables was noted as was the work that would be undertaken to improve our league table position.

4.3 The upcoming work to refresh the University Strategy informed by inputs from the recent future academic focus review was highlighted and it was noted that a discussion draft would be available by Christmas.

4.4 Members were asked to encourage both academic and professional services colleagues to attend graduation ceremonies.

4.5 In the context of the death of a Glasgow University student by suicide after receiving an incorrect grade, members were advised of the measures in place within the University to minimise the risk of errors in assessment processes and the information and support available to students. The need to make use of the University's compassionate communications guidance and be open to checking for errors was emphasised.

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

5. FUTURE ACADEMIC FOCUS

5.1 An update was provided on progress against the Future Academic Focus work as highlighted at the last meeting. Clarification was provided on the approach to articulating and balancing teaching and research duties, and a summary was given of the strategic working groups which were taking forward the actions identified through the qualitive and quantitative analyses. It was noted that a report on outcomes from this work would be brought after Christmas.

5.2 In discussion, it was noted that the University was alert to ongoing developments and opportunities for closer working with colleges and members reflected on the collaboration and engagement activities currently taking place with the college sector.

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

6. UPDATE ON ANNUAL PLAN AB(25/26)003

6.1 Academic Board received the report which provided an update regarding the Annual Plan priorities for 2025/26.

6.2 In discussion it was noted that investments continued to be made in enabling infrastructure, crucial roles continued to be replaced, and investment would be made in roles where a need was identified.

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

7. UPDATE ON FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2024/25 AND BUDGET 2025/26* AB(25/26)004

7.1 Academic Board received a paper which presented the provisional financial outturn for the year ended July 2025 and budget for 2025/26.

7.2 In discussion, budget allocation considerations and the approach to budget forecasting were clarified, and the assumptions underpinning the budget, which were considered to be cautious and realistic, were explained. The Director of Finance, Strategy & Planning undertook to provide members with further detail on budget assumptions. **(ACTION MG)**

7.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the financial outturn 2024/25 and Budget for 2025/26.

8. ADMISSIONS CYCLE REPORT AB(25/26)005

8.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an overview of the 2025 admissions cycle and current student population estimates.

8.2 In discussion the recruitment work being undertaken focussed on the Scottish student population was outlined, and the need to set and achieve realistic number targets was emphasised.

8.3 Academic Board **noted** the report.

9. STRATEGY DELIVERY UPDATE: INTERNATIONALISATION AB(25/26)006

9.1 Academic Board received the presentation which updated on progress against the Internationalisation Strategy.

9.2 Discussion followed during which US market recruitment activity was outlined. It was confirmed that the University held the data necessary to monitor against the Basic Compliance Assessment (BCA) metrics for international students. The need to remain focussed on the experience of international students on campus was noted. The Vice-Principal (International) and the ENSA Co-President would explore ways ENSA could support international recruitment activity outside the meeting.

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

10. STUDENT SURVEYS: OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS* AB(25/26)007

10.1 Academic Board received the paper which summarised the latest (2025) 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 included a summary of the results from the Module Evaluation survey undertaken internally at Edinburgh Napier during the academic year 2024/25. A summary of the actions that will be taken following analysis of the results was also provided and included School Student Success Action Plans, provided as an appendix.

10.2 Discussion followed during which the approach being taken to address actions in Schools was clarified.

10.3 Academic Board **noted** the report.

11. ACADEMIC CALENDAR TO 2030/31 AB(25/26)008

11.1 Academic Board received the paper which invited Academic Board to approve the Academic Calendar for 2030/31, based on the revised academic calendar approved by Academic Board at its meeting in June 2025.

11.2 Academic Board **approved** the Academic Year Calendar for 2030/31 in the rolling six-year academic calendar, with Option 2 as set out in the paper being adopted for 2029/30.

12 STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING UPDATE AB(25/26)009

12.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on the work undertaken to support student mental health and wellbeing in 2024/25 and which commented on current issues.

12.2 Members welcomed the report. In discussion it was emphasised that there was a whole institution approach to supporting students. The measures in place to guide staff on referral pathways and sources of support for students were outlined and the ongoing communication campaigns to raise awareness amongst students were highlighted. The work underway to embed mental health and wellbeing in the curriculum was also noted.

12.3 Thereafter Academic Board **noted** the report.

13 HONORARY AWARDS: FUTURE PROCESS AB(25/26)010

13.1 Academic Board received the paper which set out proposals to revise the supporting structure and procedures for the awards of honorary degrees, emeritus professorships and visiting titles.

13.2 Academic Board **approved** the proposed revised process in principle, subject to revised regulations and procedures being brought for approval to the November meeting of Academic Board and recommended to Court for approval in December.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

Academic Board received the minutes of the following meetings if its sub-committees.

14. Minute from the meeting of Research and Innovation Committee held on 3 June 2025. AB(25/26)011

14.1 Academic Board **noted** the minutes.

15. Minute from the meeting of Research and Innovation Committee held on 17 September 2025. AB(25/26)012

15.1 Academic Board **noted** the minutes.

16. Minute from the meeting of Education and Student Experience Committee held on 6 June 2025. AB(25/26)013

16.1 Academic Board **noted** the minutes.

17. Minute from the meeting of Education and Student Experience Committee held on 24 September 2025. AB(25/26)014

17.1 Academic Board **noted** the minutes.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

18. TERTIARY QUALITY ENAHNCEMENT REVIEW (TQER): STRATEGIC IMPACT ANALYSIS AB(25/26)015

18.1 Academic Board **noted** the update on preparations for the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review including the contents of the Advance Information Set and Strategic Impact Analysis which had been approved by ULT and submitted to QAA in accordance with the TQER deadlines.

19. EDUCATION & STUDENT EXPERIENCE, COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 AB(25/26)016

19.1 Academic Board **noted** the report.

20 QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 AB(25/26)017

20.1 Academic Board **noted** the report.

21 RESEARCH & INNOVATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 AB(25/26)018

21.1 Academic Board **noted** the report.

22. TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF ACADEMIC BOARD 2025/26 — AB(25/26)019

22.1 Academic Board **noted** its Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for 2025/26.

23. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS 2025/26 — AB(25/26)020

23.1 Academic Board **noted** its forward schedule of business for 2025/26.

24. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2025/26

Noted as:
21 November 2025
06 March 2026
05 June 2026

All at 9.00am, in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus.

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