

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16 December 2019
at 3.45 pm in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus**

Present: Dr G Forbes (Chair); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); Mr R Adams; Ms J Boyle; Mr S Brannan; Lord Brodie (Chancellor's Assessor); Mr G Cullen; Mr J Fraser; Mr C Guest; Dr S Jiwa; Dr S Moir; Ms G Moran; Dr H Patrick; Ms E Partyka; Professor A Scullion; Mr S Walls; Mr N Woodcock; Professor L Yellowlees.

Apologies: Mr J Chittleburgh; Mr C Ibanez; Professor A McCleery; Professor A Sambell; Ms G Scholefield.

In attendance: Mr D Cloy (Secretary to Court); Professor N Antonopolous (Vice Principal, Research & Innovation); Ms K Dewar (Director of People & Services); Mr M Greenhalgh (Interim Vice Principal (International)); Mr A McGoff (Director of Finance & Operations); Professor S Smith (Dean, School of Computing) (item 11); Professor A Tobin (Vice Principal, Learning & Teaching).

1. OPENING REMARKS, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1. The meeting was preceded by a Pre-Court Strategy Presentation on Information Services (overview and future plans), which members had welcomed.
- 1.2. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and the apologies were **noted**.

Part A For discussion and decision

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 OCTOBER 2019

(i) Open Minutes **UC(19/20)15**

- 2.1. The open minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019 were **approved**.

(ii) Reserved Minutes* **UC(19/20)16**

- 2.2. The reserved minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2019 were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1. Minute 7.3: Student Surveys: Outcomes and Actions UC(19/20)17

Court **noted** the update on progress against National Student Survey (NSS) action plans. Actions underway to address feedback arising from the Postgraduate Research Student Experience Survey were also noted.

3.2. Minute 8.2: Report on League Table Performance

This item was deferred to the next Court meeting.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT UC(19/20)18

4.1. The Principal introduced her written report and noted that the implications for the sector following the recent general election result were being considered. In relation to strike action, it was noted that the University had been advised that EIS would re-ballot on a disaggregated basis in Scottish Universities. The Muscatelli report on university-business interaction and its potential implications was also highlighted.

4.2. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

5. REVIEW OF THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION* UC(19/20)19

5.1. Court received and **noted** the report which provided the financial position as at the end of October 2019.

6. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19* UC(19/20)20

6.1. Court received and **noted** the Audit & Risk Committee's 2018/19 annual report to Court.

7. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT AND AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2018/19* UC(19/20)21

7.1. Court received the paper which was presented to enable Court to discharge its statutory responsibilities in respect of the Financial Statements for 2018/19. It was noted that the statements had previously been considered and recommended for submission to Court by the Finance & Property Committee and the Audit & Risk Committee. The change in pension valuation since the draft financial statements had been presented to Court in October was highlighted and explained. It was noted that staff communications were planned to explain the pension valuation issue and its effect on the Financial Statements. It was also noted that there would be merit in providing a fuller narrative concerning pension valuations in future Financial Statements.

7.2. Thereafter Court **approved** the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2018/19, **authorised** the Chair of Court and the Principal to sign the Financial Statements on its behalf and **authorised** the Principal and the Finance Director to sign the Management Letter of Representation on its behalf.

8. ANNUAL REVIEW OF STRATEGY AND ACADEMIC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS UC(19/20)22

- 8.1. Court received the paper which reported on the agreed set of University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which are used to monitor progress towards the University Strategy 2020. The indicators were presented with indicative trajectories for each of the measures to 2020 using 2013/14 as a baseline.
- 8.2. Discussion followed during which the factors underlying the performance of the School of Engineering and the Built Environment against research targets were noted, and the measures being taken to support the School and improve performance in this area were outlined.
- 8.3. Members sought further background on the establishment of the Trimble Technology Lab which would be circulated to members following the meeting.
- 8.4. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

9. DRAFT UNIVERSITY STRATEGY UC(19/20)23

- 9.1. Court received the paper which presented the latest thinking from the ongoing “Shaping our Future” exercise to develop a strategy to take the University beyond 2020.
- 9.2. Members discussed the paper and provided a number of feedback points including; building a narrative to engender an emotional engagement with the strategy, building in the role of the university in our context; need to reference distinctiveness explicitly; greater consideration on sustainable development – suggestion of explicit reference e.g. as per our contribution to the national performance framework; our commitment to carbon neutrality clarified; references to students; consider place of leadership; clarity on how the University will engage externally.
- 9.3. It was noted that testing with staff of the draft and further consultation would take place with staff and students over the next two months, and that Court would consider the strategy further at its strategy day on 24 February 2020.

10. DRAFT SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2020/21 UC(19/20)24

- 10.1. Court received the paper which presented a well-developed draft of the University’s Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council for 2020/21 to 2022/23.
- 10.2. Thereafter Court **approved** this draft as the final submission subject to incorporation of further feedback and any necessary updating of data, and **delegated authority** to the Chair of Court to approve the final submission.

11. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: SCHOOL OF COMPUTING

11.1. Court received a presentation from the Dean of the School of Computing on the strategic development of her School which covered what the School is known for, how it delivers, performance benchmarking and future plans/direction.

11.2. Discussion followed in which Court welcomed the progress made and noted opportunities where the School could contribute to greater interdisciplinary working. Activities underway to support and improve recruitment and retention were also noted.

11.3. Thereafter Court **noted** the presentation.

12. ENHANCEMENT LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW UPDATE

12.1. Court received the update on the University's Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) and noted the overall assessment of "Effective" provided in the initial report. The key commendations and recommendations were outlined and the significant effort of staff across the University in achieving this outcome was recognised.

12.2. Thereafter Court welcomed the outcome and extended thanks and appreciation to all involved.

13. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK UPDATE

13.1. Court received and **noted** the update on progress towards the University's next Research Excellence Framework Submission (REF2021).

Part B For information

14. ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 29 NOVEMBER 2019 UC(19/20)26

14.1. Court **noted** the minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board of 29 November 2019.

15. REPORT FROM REMUNERATION COMMITTEE* UC(19/20)27

15.1. Court **noted** the report from the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 19 November 2019.

16. TOP RISKS MONITORING SCHEDULE (1 of 3)* UC(19/20)28

16.1. Court **noted** the Top Risks monitoring schedule.

Part C Not intended for discussion

17. REPORTS FROM COURT COMMITTEES

17.a Finance & Property Committee meeting on 21 November 2019* **UC(19/20)29**

17.1. The report was **noted**.

17.b Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 27 November 2019* **UC(19/20)30**

17.2 The report was **noted**.

18. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS / OTHER UPDATES

18.1. The dates of future Court meetings were **noted**.

18.2. It was noted that the Chair of Court recruitment process was underway, with 4 applicants being invited to interview in January.

Part D: Reserved Business

19. ENSA PARTNERSHIP UPDATE* **UC(19/20)31**

[Recorded on confidential Reserved Business minute]

[The ENSA President and ENSA Vice-President left the meeting during this item in recognition of their conflict of interest in the matter]

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