

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 23 March 2020
by Video/Audio Conference**

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 J Chittleburgh; Mr G Cullen; Mr J Fraser; Mr A Houghton; Mr C Ibanez; Dr S Jiwa; Professor A McCleery; Ms G Moran; Dr H Patrick; Ms E Partyka; Professor A Sambell; Professor A Scullion; Ms G Scholefield; Mr S Walls; Mr N Woodcock; Professor L Yellowlees.

Apologies: Mr C Guest; Dr S Moir.

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 A Tobin (Vice Principal, Learning & Teaching).

1. OPENING REMARKS, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1. 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 16 DECEMBER 2019

(i) Open Minutes

UC(19/20)32

2.1. The open minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019 were **approved**.

(ii) Reserved Minutes*

2.2. The reserved minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019 were deferred for approval until the next physical Court meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1. There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIR OF COURT APPOINTMENT UPDATE

4.1. Members noted the election of June Boyle as Chair of Court from 1 August 2020.

- 4.2. It was noted that the Secretary to Court would review the Court Chair election process to ensure any lessons learned are incorporated as appropriate ahead of the next such election.

5. CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

UC(19/20)34*

- 5.1. The Principal introduced the paper which provided an update on the key actions taken to date by the University in response to the rapidly developing Covid-19 situation and outlined the ongoing activity to plan for and mitigate the impact on the University. ULT members outlined actions taken and issues being considered in relation to their respective areas of responsibility.
- 5.2. In discussion a number of points were noted. The current status of campus opening was noted. It was intended to keep student accommodation open, subject to continuing availability of staff to support its operation, and the issue of breaking leases was being considered. The continued opening of the Merchiston Library and JKCC was under review with the intention to close these shortly*. The current financial modelling of short, medium and long term scenarios in order to understand the financial impact on the University and inform appropriate actions to ensure its ongoing solvency was highlighted. In relation to alternative assessment methods, the decision making process and rationale for moving to 7 day open book online exams was explained and it was highlighted that advice would be provided to academic staff on marking open book exams. In relation to international student recruitment it was noted that plans to increase the number of online courses available and promotion to recruit students directly were being accelerated in response to the current circumstances. It was noted that the situation continued to be reviewed on a daily basis and that planning meetings with Schools would begin next week, with plans being adjusted in response to the Covid-19 situation.
- 5.3. Thereafter, Court **noted** the update.

[*these facilities were closed the following morning in light of new government advice.]

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

UC(19/20)35

- 6.1. Court **noted** the Principal's Report.

7. STRATEGY

UC(19/20)36

- 7.1. Court received the paper presenting the proposed new University Strategy that had emerged from the "Shaping Our Future" development process.
- 7.2. It was considered that, despite the current situation with Covid-19, the top level strategy remained robust and relevant and the key elements would not change, however the execution of the strategy would need to be reviewed. It was noted

that the roll out and communication of the strategy would be managed sensitively in light of the current circumstances and would be deferred until the appropriate time. It was further noted that the supporting strategies would be re-visited in light of the Covid-19 situation.

- 7.3. Thereafter Court **approved** the top level University Strategy, **noted** that careful consideration would be given to the appropriate timing for its communication and roll out and **noted** that the supporting strategies would be reviewed.

8. REVIEW OF THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION* UC(19/20)37

- 8.1. Court received and **noted** the report which provided the financial position as at the end of January 2020.

9. ENHANCEMENT LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW UPDATE UC(19/20)38

- 9.1. Court received and **noted** the update on the outcome of the University's recent Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) and noted the plans regarding next steps.

Part B For information

10. ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 6 MARCH 2020 UC(19/20)39

- 10.1. Court **noted** the minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board of 6 March 2020.

11. ENSA ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS UC(19/20)40

- 11.1. Court **noted** the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements of Edinburgh Napier Students' Association (ENSA) for the year ended 30 June 2019.

- 11.2. It was noted that ENSA was continuing to provide advice to students remotely during the Covid-19 situation. It was also highlighted that sports and societies had grown over the past year and that student engagement with the Sabbatical elections had improved from the previous year, with an 11% turnout recorded.

12. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE INCLUSION COMMITTEE UC(19/20)41

- 12.1. Court received the annual report from the Inclusion Committee which outlined key mainstreaming activity undertaken over the reporting period, staff and student diversity data and recommendations for action for the forthcoming reporting period.

- 12.2. In relation to the University's failure to retain Athena SWAN Bronze certification, difficulties with the accreditation process were recognised and it was noted that Advance HE were currently reviewing the process with a view to streamlining it. In the meantime the University was continuing to focus on improving the areas

where it had fallen short. The overall positive progress reflected in the report was welcomed and thanks were extended to those involved for their work in this area.

12.3. Thereafter Court **noted** the report.

13. COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT* UC(19/20)42

13.1. Court **noted** the annual report on matters relating to the handling, recording and reporting of complaints received by the University.

14. TOP RISKS MONITORING SCHEDULE (2 of 3)* UC(19/20)43

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

Part C Not intended for discussion

15. REPORTS FROM COURT COMMITTEES

15.a Finance & Property Committee meeting on 23 January 2020* UC(19/20)44

15.1. The report was **noted**.

15.b Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 4 March 2020* UC(19/20)45

15.2 The report was **noted**.

16. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS / OTHER UPDATES

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

Part D: Reserved Business

17. ENSA PARTNERSHIP UPDATE*

[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.