

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21 June 2021
at 3.45 pm by Webex Video Conference**

Present: J Boyle (Chair); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); R Adams; S Brannan; Lord Brodie (Chancellor's Assessor); J Chittleburgh; Professor S Cross; G Cullen; A Duggal; A Houghton; Dr S Jiwa; Dr S Moir; S Nairn; Dr H Patrick; G Scholefield; Professor A Scullion; R Tomlinson; N Woodcock; Professor L Yellowlees.

Apologies: Professor N Antonopolous; H Fyfe; C Ibanez; D Mohan; J Morrison-Ross; M Thomson.

In attendance: D Cloy (Secretary to Court); G Day (Interim Director of People & Services); N Graham (Vice Principal (International)); A McGoff (Director of Finance & Operations); C Millar (Head of HR Capability & Engagement) (item 19); G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences (item 14); J Rees and D Bird (ENSA) (until item 8); F Smart & M Grimwood (DLTE) item 10.

Observing: E Divine & M Akinpelu (incoming ENSA Sabbatical Officers); B Rennie (Head of Health & Safety).

1. OPENING REMARKS, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1. The meeting had been preceded by a presentation from the Dean of the School of Health & Social Care on the strategic development of the School, which members attending had welcomed.
- 1.2. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and welcomed Emily Divine and Matthew Akinpelu (incoming ENSA Sabbatical Officers observing Court as part of their induction). Bob Rennie (newly appointed Head of Health & Safety) was also welcomed to the meeting as an observer. Rex Tomlinson was also welcomed to his first Court meeting since formally taking up membership.
- 1.3. Reflections were invited on the Court/SLT strategy session held on 12th May. Members had welcomed the session and looked forward to being able to attend future sessions in person.
- 1.4. The apologies were **noted**.

Part A For discussion and decision

2. MINUTES OF MEETING 22 MARCH 2021

UC(20/21)60

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021 were **approved**.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1. There were no matters arising.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

UC(20/21)61

- 4.1. The Principal introduced her written report and invited questions and comments. An update on progress with the appointment of the roles of Director of People and Services and Director of Strategy & Planning was provided. In relation to a query about the impact of UK/China government relations on the University's relationships with partner institutions in China, it was noted that relationships were not currently impacted, and that work was currently underway to review the due diligence process regarding international partnerships.
- 4.2. Thereafter, Court **noted** the Principal's report.

5. COVID-19: PLANNING AND RESPONSE UPDATE

UC(20/21)62

- 5.1. The Principal introduced the paper, which provided an update on the University's ongoing planning and response activity in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.2. In discussion, the quarantine requirements and potential travel disruption for students arriving from red list countries was recognised as an area of concern and it was noted that consideration was being given to ways to mitigate the risk of disruption to the commencement of in person learning for those students. It was also noted that the case for resuming teaching next term at 1m+ distancing was being made to government and that guidance was awaited.

6. REVIEW OF THE CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION*

UC(20/21)63

- 6.1. The Director of Finance and Operations introduced the report which provided the financial position as at the end of April 2021 and highlighted a number of key points. It was noted that the impact of pension schemes on the University's financial position was being closely monitored through the pensions sub-group of Finance & Property Committee.
- 6.2. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report.

7. PLANNING & BUDGETING 2021/22 to 2023/24*

UC(20/21)64

- 7.1. The Director of Finance and Operations introduced the report which presented the primary outcomes of the planning and budgeting process relating to plans

and budgets for 2021/22 and key performance indicators for the next three years in the context of our new University Strategy.

- 7.2. Discussion followed during which an overview of School involvement in the formation and ongoing monitoring of their plans which ensured their buy-in was noted. A number of areas subject to ongoing review and development around ways of working which would underpin delivery of the plan (including staff recruitment, TNE models, CPD/consultancy) were also highlighted. With regard to student recruitment in the context of the post Brexit reduction in EU students, it was noted that there was good confidence that the University would achieve its SFC student number targets for the coming year. The importance of external engagement and management of partnerships to effective plan delivery was recognised and it was emphasised that Court members should seek to assist with this wherever possible.
- 7.3. Thereafter, Court **approved** the University budget for 2021/22 and **noted** the University Annual Plan for 2021/22.

8. EDINBURGH NAPIER STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (ENSA)

(i) Constitution

UC(20/21)65

- 8.1. The ENSA President introduced the revised ENSA Constitution and associated Schedules which Court had previously approved in principle on 2 November 2021, and for which ENSA had now achieved the required 10% membership participation threshold for the referendum with a majority in favour of the changes.
- 8.2. Court **approved** the revised ENSA Constitution and associated Schedules.

(ii) ENSA Sabbatical Update

- 8.3. The ENSA President provided an update on ENSA's activities and achievements over the past year. Court welcomed the update and thanked the ENSA President for his contribution.

9. INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY

UC(20/21)66

- 9.1. The Vice Principal (International) introduced the paper which provided Court with a well-developed draft of the Internationalisation Strategy 2021-2025 which would go to the University Leadership Team (ULT) for approval later this month.
- 9.2. Members discussed the draft strategy and recognised the importance of effective governance arrangements regarding international partnerships. The integration of the Strategy with other plans was particularly welcomed. The importance of continuing to use of appropriate networks to identify international research partners was also highlighted.

9.3. Thereafter, Court welcomed and **endorsed** the Internationalisation Strategy 2021-25

10. GOLD STANDARD CURRICULUM UPDATE

10.1. Dr Fiona Smart & Dr Marita le Vault-Grimwood (Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement) provided an update on the development and implementation of the Gold Standard Curriculum.

10.2. Regarding a query about the achievability of the KPI measure for all programmes to achieve one star in 21/22, it was emphasised that much of what was required for programmes to achieve this level was already in place and would be facilitated through existing programme approval and annual monitoring processes. The measure was therefore considered to be bold but achievable.

10.3. Thereafter, Court welcomed and **noted** the update.

11. REPORT FROM NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE ON COURT AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP* UC(20/21)67

11.1. The Chair of Court introduced the report on the proceedings of the Nominations Committee meeting held on 10 May 2021 which presented a number of recommendations for approval with regard to the membership and convenorship of Court committees for 2021/22.

11.2. Thereafter, Court **noted** the report of the meeting of Nominations Committee on 10 May 2021 and **approved** the recommendations regarding the convenorship and membership of the standing committees of Court as detailed in the paper.

12. CHANCELLOR APPOINTMENT OUTCOME* UC(20/21)68

12.1. The Chair of Court introduced the report on the process and outcome of the Chancellor Appointment exercise. It was noted that a diverse pool of candidates had been achieved, and that unsuccessful candidates had been followed up with with to explore other ways in which they could support the University. In terms of next steps, it was noted that a plan was being developed to communicate the appointment, that a new Chancellor's Assessor was being identified and that arrangements would be made at an appropriate point to celebrate the contribution of the outgoing Chancellor.

12.2. Court **noted** the report and **endorsed** the appointment of Will Whitehorn as the next University Chancellor for a five year term commencing 1 August 2021.

13. APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY TO COURT

13.1. It was noted that recruitment to the role of Director of Strategy & Planning and Secretary to Court was still in progress, and that Court approval for the appointment to the role of Secretary to Court would be sought by correspondence once the appointment had been finalised.

14. COP26 (UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE) UPDATE UC(20/21)69

14.1. The Dean of the School of Applied Sciences introduced the report which informed Court of the activities and engagements planned for the up-coming United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 1 – 12 November 2021. Given the presence of senior international figures and heads of state at the event, the importance of showcasing the University's work was recognised. The Vice-Chair of Court undertook to follow up with the Vice Principal (Research & Innovation) regarding possible approaches to support this.

14.2. Thereafter, Court **noted** the update.

15. REVISED ACADEMIC BOARD CONSTITUTION UC(20/21)70

15.1. The Principal introduced the paper which sought Court's approval, on the recommendation of Academic Board, for minor changes to Academic Board's constitution which were required because of changes in senior roles.

15.2. Thereafter, Court **approved** the amendments to Academic Board's constitution as presented in the paper.

16. SFC ANNUAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT REPORT UC(20/21)71

16.1. The Principal introduced the report which presented the draft of the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-Led Review (academic quality enhancement).

16.2. Thereafter, Court:

- a) **approved in principle** the format and outline content of the draft report.
- b) **authorised** the Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching) to sign-off the final version of the SFC Annual Report prior to this being submitted to the Council by 30 September 2021.
- c) **authorised** the Chair of University Court to sign and date the statement of assurance to be emailed to the Council with the final report.

17. HONORARY AWARDS* UC(20/21)72

17.1. Court **approved** a proposal for an honorary award, as recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee, and approved by the Academic Board.

Part B For information

18. ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING 8 JUNE 2021 UC(20/21)73

18.1. Court **noted** the minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board of 8 June 2021.

19. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

(i) Annual Report from the Inclusion Committee UC(20/21)74

19.1. Court received the annual report from the Inclusion Committee which outlined the key mainstreaming activity undertaken over the reporting period and included the respective diversity data packs for both staff employment and student profiles.

19.2. Court **noted** the report and the key areas of focus for the forthcoming reporting year in both the staff and student agendas.

(ii) Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 UC(20/21)75

19.3. Court **noted** the paper which presented the University's new set of Equality Outcomes for the period 2021-25 which had been published as required at the end of April.

(iii) Race Equality Action Plan UC(20/21)76

19.4. Court **noted** the Race Equality Plan, which had drawn on the recommendations made by the Short Life Working Group (SLWG) on BAME Inclusion which was discussed at Court in March.

19.5. It was agreed that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion should be subject to further consideration as a substantive discussion item at a future Court meeting.

20. HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT UC(20/21)77

20.1. Court **noted** the annual report on Health & Safety management.

21. RISK MANAGEMENT

(i) University Top Risks for 2021/22* UC(20/21)78

21.1. Court **approved** the Top Risks Register for 2021/22 as recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee.

(i) Top Risks Monitoring Schedule 3 of 3* UC(20/21)79

21.2. Court **noted** the third and final monitoring report for the 2020/21 Top Risks.

Part C Not intended for discussion

22. REPORTS FROM COURT COMMITTEES

22.a Finance & Property Committee meeting on 27 May 2021* UC(20/21)80

22.1. The report was **noted**.

22.b Remuneration Committee meeting on 28 May 2021* UC(20/21)81

22.2 The report was **noted**.

22.c Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 2 June 2021* UC(20/21)82

22.3 The report was **noted**.

23. VALEDICTIONS

23.1. The Chair noted that this was the final Court meeting of lay Court member Shainool Jiwa who had completed her 9-year term on Court and of the Chancellor's Assessor Lord Brodie, who had served 8 years. It was also the last meeting of ENSA President Ankit Duggal and Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching) Alyson Tobin. It was further noted that lay Court member Charles Guest had stepped down since the last Court meeting after serving 5 years on Court. Thanks were extended to them all for their valued contributions to the work of Court.

24. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS / OTHER UPDATES

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

25. CHAIR OF COURT ANNUAL REVIEW FEEDBACK

[The Chair of Court left the meeting during this item]

25.1. The Vice-Chair of Court presented a summary of the feedback received following the annual review of the performance of the Chair of Court. Court **considered** and **noted** the report.

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