

APPROVED
CIRCULATED

AB(10/11)46

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Friday 4 March 2011 at
9.00 am in the Castle Room, New Craig, Craighouse**

PRESENT:

Professor Dame J K Stringer (Principal & Vice-Chancellor)(Convenor); N Ashton (School of Arts & Creative Industries); K Bylinska (President, Napier Students' Association); Dr S Cairncross (Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Dr J Donaldson (Head of School from Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); Professor J Duffield (Vice-Principal, Academic); Professor C Fairfield (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); R Goodwin (Student Representative from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Professor E Hart (Professoriate); Dr P Jaworski (School of Management); R Kemmer (School of Computing); L Juleff (Senior Lecturer from the Business School); C Lambert (Director of Student Affairs); Professor A McCleery (Director of Research); Professor R Mackenzie (Vice-Principal, Commercialisation); A Millar (Student Representative from the Business School); Professor B Paechter (Associate Dean from Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); R Pelik (Director of Academic Development); C Pinder (Director, NULIS); Dr J Rees (Vice-Principal, Academic Quality & Customer Service); Dr J Sharp (Senior Lecturer from Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); S Smith (Head of School from Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Professor G Stonehouse (Dean of the Business School); Dr G C Webber (University Secretary); Dr R Wilkinson (Associate Dean from the Business School); J Worden (Dean of International Strategy & Operations).

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Cloy (Head of Governance & Management Services) (Clerk)

APOLOGIES:

M Chapman (School of Life, Sport & Social Sciences); S Falconer (Head of School from the Business School); Dr S Marr (School of Marketing, Tourism & Languages); Professor M Prowse (Dean of Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); A Sibbald (Associate Director (Academic Enhancement) Academic Development); L Veitch (School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Care).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed a number of new and continuing members to the Academic Board, following recent elections; Stewart Falconer (Head of School from the Business School), Piotr Jaworski (Academic Staff member from School of Management)(continuing member), Dr Shuna Marr (Academic Staff member from School of Marketing, Tourism and Languages), Nicholas Ashton (Academic Staff member from School of Arts & Creative Industries)(continuing member), Professor Charlie Fairfield (Academic Staff member from School of Engineering & Built Environment), Linda Juleff (Senior Lecturer/Reader from Business School)(continuing member) & Professor Emma Hart (Professoriate).
- 1.2 It was **noted** that, following the elections, vacancies remained for the Academic Staff member from Accounting, Financial Services & Law, the Senior Lecturer/Reader from FHLSS and the Teaching Fellow/Senior Teaching Fellow.

Further elections would be held to try to fill these positions ahead of the next Board meeting.

1.3 It was further **noted** that the Board was also in the process of appointing one of its members to the Court, in Place of Professor Brian Sloan who was not re-elected to the Board.

1.4 The apologies were **noted**

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2010 AB(10/11)28 AB(10/11)29

2.1 The minutes were **approved** as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Management Information on Academic Performance *AB(10/11)28 (7.3)*

The Director of Academic Development provided the Board with an update on progress towards the development of the annual digest of management information on academic performance, as reported at the last Academic Board meeting. It was noted that these were being developed in conjunction with the Strategy Key Performance Indicators, and between them would ensure that the Board had the information necessary to effectively monitor academic performance. A trial version of the digest would be presented at the Board's next meeting.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(10/11)30

4.1 The Principal introduced her written report, highlighting the Scottish Government's Green paper on Higher Education, and the wider public funding outlook. It was noted that the University and Universities Scotland responses to the paper had been to favour some form of graduate contribution to the cost of higher education, provided it was transparent, fair and progressive and would maintain wider access to higher education. It was further noted that the actions which had been taken by the University to control costs and invest in activities to grow alternative sources of income would help ensure a strong and sustainable future for the University.

4.2 The Principal also highlighted the UK Border Agency's current consultation on proposed changes to the immigration system which had the potential to adversely affect international student recruitment.

4.3 The University's continued strong growth in applications for undergraduate places was noted, with a 28.1% increase against the UK average of 2.8%.

4.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the written report.

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

AB(10/11)31

- 5.1 The Vice Principal (Academic) introduced the paper which presented the University Strategy Key Performance Indicators, as noted by Court at its 20 December meeting. It was noted that work was underway to use these high level KPIs to develop more detailed lower level academic KPIs, down to school and programme level, to support effective planning going forward.
- 5.2 Discussion around the types of indicators which should feed into the KPIs to measure academic excellence followed, during which it was agreed that measures around the number of good honours degrees awarded, the added value the University provides as an institution and measures of the quality of staff, such as research performance, should be considered. The particular value that students placed on employability was also noted. It was also noted that it would be desirable to include comparative figures and/or benchmark where relevant and possible.
- 5.3 It was noted that the current suite of low level academic KPIs would be presented to the Board for discussion at its next meeting.
- 5.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the written report.

6. STUDENT RETENTION ANNUAL REPORT

AB(10/11)32

- 6.1 The Vice Principal (Academic Quality & Customer Service) presented the annual report on student retention which highlighted the University's position within key performance indicators and the activities undertaken and planned to enhance student success.
- 6.2 It was noted that internal figures for 2008/09 & 2009/10 entrants indicated that the figures shortly to be published by HESA would show an overall improvement in retention. This indicated that the actions which had been taken since 2006/07 in relation to student retention were having a positive effect. The Board was of the view, however, that insufficient progress had been made in this area, and that efforts to enhance the student experience and student retention must be maintained. In particular all Schools/Faculties should be required to work towards benchmark targets.
- 6.3 Discussion followed during which retention issues affecting Schools within FHLSS were highlighted. It was also noted that the increase in applications and the qualifications of applicants would be expected to result in significant improvements in retention in future. The Board looked forward to receiving subsequent reports indicating clear improvements.
- 6.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

**7. STUDENT APPEALS, COMPLAINTS & CONDUCT:
ANNUAL REPORT**

AB(10/11)33

- 7.1 The Director of Student Affairs introduced the paper which presented the annual report on student appeals, complaints and conduct. It was noted that the untimely death of the previous Appeals, Complaints & Conduct Officer had

meant that the detailed statistical data and analysis provided in the previous year could not be reproduced this year, but would be included in reports for future years. Progress towards the development of revised regulations covering Student Conduct, Mitigating Circumstances, Academic Appeals and Student Complaints for 2011/12 was also noted. It was noted that these revised regulations would be brought to the Board for final approval.

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

8. UPDATE ON ELIR VISIT

8.1 The Director of Academic Development provided an update on the first Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) visit which had taken place on 2 and 3 February 2011. It was noted that no issues of concern had been raised thus far, and that the panel had complemented the contribution of the student representatives. Preparations for the second visit were underway and the excellent work of the team involved in preparing for and contributing to the review was recognised.

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

9. ACADEMIC BOARD REVIEW

AB(10/11)34

9.1 The Vice Principal (Academic) presented the paper outlining the initial findings and proposals of the Academic Board Review Working Group (ABRWG), noting that a key objective of the review was to present a sub-committee structure which would reduce complexity, minimise overlap and provide clarity of delegated authority.

9.2 The proposed high level committee structure, which would reduce the number of committees reporting directly to the Board, was highlighted. It was proposed to (i) merge the Research & Knowledge Transfer Committee and Research Degrees Committee to form a Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee, mirrored at Faculty level; (ii) promote the Research & Knowledge Transfer Ethics and Governance Committee to University Level with an expanded remit to form an Ethics and Governance Committee, mirrored at Faculty level; (iii) remove the Co-Curricular Modules Committee; (iv) combine the remits of Quality Committee and LTAC to form a new single University level committee with a remit more focused on policy matters and enhancement, mirrored at Faculty level; and (v) to re-introduce Faculty Boards with terms of reference which align with those of Academic Board with School committees that map to University-level committees to be subsumed into the new Faculty-level committee.

9.3 There was broad support for the proposed sub-committee structure, subject to the development of greater detail on constitutions and remits. Discussion focussed on the sub-committee structure during which a number of points were noted, which included:

- Recognition of the importance of Ethics and Governance and the establishment of such committees at Faculty level, given the range of

matters to be considered from Research Degree Theses, Taught Post-Graduate Dissertations and Undergraduate projects along with issues to consider arising from the University's partnerships with private sector and international partners.

- The need to consider how the Ethics and Governance Committee would relate to the Ethics committee (which considers Home Office licensing issues), including the possibility of clarifying the name as in "Academic Ethics and Governance Committee".
- Recognition that the detailed deliberative work currently undertaken by School level committees need not be conducted through the forum of a formal committee.
- The need to preserve the interface between Faculty and Professional Service business.

9.4 It was noted that the ABRWG would reflect on the Board's comments to further develop these proposals, and would seek detailed input from concerned parties in order to bring forward final proposals to the Board's 27 May 2011 meeting.

9.5 Thereafter, Academic Board **endorsed** the initial proposals from the ABRWG as presented in the paper.

10. CHANGE OF SCHOOL NAMES WITHIN BUSINESS SCHOOL AB(10/11)35

10.1 The Convenor presented the paper which reported on Convenor's action taken on 2 February to approve the renaming of Schools in the Business School arising from organisational change which was done to give clarity to the new arrangements necessary to enable elections to the Academic Board to proceed unambiguously.

10.2 The Board **homologated** the decision taken by the Principal as Convenor's action on behalf of the Board to **approve**:

The re-naming of two schools within the Business school in recognition of, and to reflect, underlying movements of academic staff between them:

"The School of Management and Law" to become "The School of Management"

"The School of Accounting, Economics and Statistics" to become "The School of Accounting, Financial Services and Law".

11. ACADEMIC BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AB(10/11)36

11.1 The Board **homologated** the decision taken by the Principal as Convenor's action, to **approve** the continuation of Dr Linda Juleff and Anne Waugh as

members of Co-Curricular Modules Committee representing Academic Board for the remainder of the academic session.

- 11.2 To enable its sub-committees to operate effectively, with continuity for the remainder of the session within the context of organisational change and the Academic Board review, the Board **approved** the position whereby current members of sub-committees would continue in membership irrespective of outcomes of organisational change (assuming they remained in relevant employment), until the end of the current academic session.

12. CO-CURRICULAR MODULES COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT AB(10/11)37

- 12.1 The Director of Academic Development presented the annual report on co-curricular provision from the Co-Curricular Modules Committee, which the Board **noted**.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

The minutes of Academic Board's sub-committees are received to confirm to the Board that its sub-committees are continuing to meet their remits and are undertaking business on its behalf to the standard it expects.

13. **Minutes of Co-Curricular Modules Committee meeting held on 04 February 2011 AB(10/11)38**
14. **Open Minutes of Research Degrees Committee meeting held on 16 November 2010 AB(10/11)39**
15. **Open Minutes of Research Degrees Committee meeting held on 01 February 2011 AB(10/11)40**
16. **Minutes of Research & Knowledge Transfer Committee meeting held on 17 February 2011**
To be received at the next meeting of Academic Board.
17. **Minutes of Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee held on 9 February 2011**
To be received at the next meeting of Academic Board.
18. **Minutes of Quality Committee held on 29 October 2010 AB(10/11)26**
19. **Minutes of Quality Committee held on 11 February 2011**
To be received at the next meeting of Academic Board.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 20. SECTORAL CONSULTATIONS ON ACADEMIC MATTERS AB(10/11)44**

20.1 The Board **noted** the update report on current and past consultations on academic matters with which the University had been involved.

21. REPORT ON UNIVERSITY KEY RISKS APPROPRIATE TO ACADEMIC BOARD AB(10/11)45*

21.1 The Board **noted** the report on the University's key risks appropriate to its remit.

22. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2010/11

22.1 Academic Board **noted** its remaining meetings for the 2010/11 session as follows:

27 May 2011

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