

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY COURT  
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Friday 2 October 2009 at  
9.00 am in the Castle Room, New Craig, Craighouse**

**PRESENT:**

Professor Dame J K Stringer (Principal & Vice-Chancellor) (Convenor); Dr P Easy (Senior Vice-Principal, Academic Development) (Deputy Convenor); J Brown (School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Care); K Bylinska (President, Napier Students' Association); Dr S Cairncross (Dean of Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); J Dean (School of Management & Law); Professor T Fernandes (School of Life Sciences); Professor M Gray (Associate Dean from Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); J Greig (School of Health & Social Sciences); Dr P Jaworski (School of Accounting, Economics & Statistics); Professor J Kennedy (School of Computing); Professor J Kerridge (Professoriate); C Lambert (Director of Student Affairs); Professor A McCleery (Director of Research); Professor R Mackenzie (Vice-Principal, Research & Knowledge Transfer); Professor B Paechter (Associate Dean from Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); R Pelik (Director of Academic Development); C Pinder (Director, NULIS); Professor M Prowse (Dean of Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); Dr J Rees (Vice-Principal, Academic Quality & Customer Service); Dr J Sharp (Senior Lecturer from Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); A Sibbald (Associate Director (Academic Enhancement) Academic Development); Professor B Sloan (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); I A Smith (Teaching Fellows/Senior Teaching Fellows); Professor G Stonehouse (Dean of the Business School); A Waugh (Senior Lecturer from Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); Dr R Wilkinson (Associate Dean from the Business School); H Wollman (Head of School from Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences).

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

D Cloy (Head of Governance & Management Services (Clerk); S Logie (Assistant Director, Policy & Communications & Clerk to the University Court).

**APOLOGIES:**

N Ashton (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr J Ensor (Head of School from the Business School); A Gilkison (Head of School from Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); L Juleff (Senior Lecturer from the Business School); A Millar (Student Representative from the Business School); R Sutherland (School of Marketing, Tourism & Languages); Dr G C Webber (University Secretary); J Worden (Dean of International Strategy & Operations).

**1. WELCOME**

1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the first meeting of the session and welcomed Kasia Bylinska, who was attending her first meeting as the new NSA President. It was noted that Aaron Millar had joined the Academic Board as the new Student Representative from the Business School and would be welcomed at a future meeting. It was further noted that Stephen Wood and Seana Keenahan were not continuing as FECCI and FHLSS Student Representatives as previously expected and their replacements would be advised in due course. The Convenor thanked Stephen and Seana for their contribution to the Academic Board.

1.2 The apologies were noted.

**PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3 JULY 2009 (AB/09/44)**

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

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

**a) Communication of Admissions Policy (AB09/44(12.2))**

3.1 It was **noted** that Student Affairs had taken forward the communication issues raised at the last meeting in respect of the Admissions Policy. The Policy had been made available through the website, staff intranet and student portal and a reference to it would be included in the acknowledgement letter sent to all applicants for the next admissions cycle. The Policy had also been communicated internally through the staff intranet, as well as through targeted communication to staff involved with admissions and recruitment.

3.2 It was further **noted** that the separate review of the Student Charter, as previously discussed, was underway which was likely to set out responsibilities of each party from the time of matriculation.

**4. CONSTITUTION, MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE AB(09/10)01**

4.1 Academic Board **noted** its constitution, membership and terms of reference for the coming session.

**5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(09/10)02**

5.1 The Principal introduced her written report, highlighting the Draft Scottish Government Budget for 2010/11. Whilst the proposed budget currently protects the SFC budget and is welcomed, it was noted that uncertainty remains beyond the 2010/11 government financial year, with significant further cuts in public spending likely following the UK general election.

5.2 The Principal highlighted the potential effect of proposals contained within the SFC's review of college and HEI teaching funding methodologies, which would disadvantage modern Universities such as Edinburgh Napier if adopted. It was noted that strong representations would be made in response to the review, which closes on 4 December 2010, and that representations would also be made through the professional bodies of those disciplines which would be adversely affected. It was noted that the University needs to continue its efforts to control costs and increase income from non SFC sources.

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

**6. EARLY STUDENT MATRICULATION STATISTICS AB(09/10)03**

- 6.1 The Vice Principal (Academic Quality & Customer Service) introduced the paper summarising the projected outcome from recruitment to the 2009/10 academic year and provided an update on the current enrolment position. The reasons behind the over-recruitment were outlined and it was noted that the level of over-recruitment had reduced significantly since the paper had been written, reducing the amount of fee claw-back anticipated. It was, however, recognised that efforts must continue to be made to ensure the University more accurately meets its recruitment targets.
- 6.2 In response to a concern that Schools where over-recruitment had occurred may be advantaged by receiving more resource to teach the additional students, it was emphasised that the expectation would be that such areas would manage within their budgeted resource with the proviso that the quality of the student experience and stability of those areas would need to be sustained.
- 6.3 Following discussion, it was noted that a revised paper on Student Matriculation Statistics would be brought to the Board's next meeting in November, which would give a fuller representation of the position regarding Research Postgraduate student numbers.
- 6.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update report.

**7. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL AB(09/10)04**

- 7.1 The Vice Principal (Academic Quality & Customer Service) introduced the annual report on institution led review to the Scottish Funding Council, which must be endorsed by the governing body (Court). It was noted that the report had been considered and approved for onward submission by the Quality Committee at its meeting on 4 September and was presented to Academic Board for endorsement and onward submission to Court for endorsement at its meeting on 26 October. It was noted that the report had already been submitted to the Funding Council, at its request, on 30 September.
- 7.2 Discussion followed during which a number of omissions to the report were noted and the importance of Academic Board having the opportunity to discuss and comment on the report before its submission to the Funding Council in future was emphasised.
- 7.3 Thereafter, it was **agreed** that the Vice Principal (Academic Quality & Customer Service) should write to the Scottish Funding Council regarding the timing of submission in future years, to emphasise the importance of enabling adequate scrutiny of the report by Academic Board and Court.
- 7.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **endorsed** the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council for onwards submission to Court.

**8. REPORT ON NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY AB(09/10)05**

- 8.1 The Vice Principal (Academic Quality & Customer Service) introduced the report summarising the University's performance in student satisfaction surveys and league tables (including the National Student Survey) along with the actions underway and planned in response which will impact positively on the student experience. It was noted that a range of other feedback mechanisms were employed by the University to monitor the student experience and that assessment feedback and social space were particular areas of concern which the University was seeking to address.
- 8.2 Following discussion it was noted that it would be useful for Academic Board to receive information on outcomes from a broader range of surveys and league tables as a means of more effectively monitoring the student experience and it was **agreed** that the Vice Principal (Academic Quality & Customer Service) should bring a further report, including such additional sources of feedback, to a future meeting of the Academic Board.
- 8.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the update report.

**PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES**

This section reflects the outcome of the Review of Effectiveness of Academic Board whereby 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.

9. **Minutes of Research & Knowledge Transfer Committee meeting held on 3 September 2009** AB(09/10)06
10. **Open Minutes of Higher Degrees Committee meeting held on 25 June 2009** AB/09/40
11. **Open Minutes of Higher Degrees Committee meeting held on 1 September 2009**  
To be received at the next meeting of Academic Board
12. **Minutes of Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee meeting held on 29 September 2009**  
To be received at the next meeting of Academic Board
13. **Minutes of Quality Committee meeting held 19 June 2009** AB/09/42
14. **Minutes of Quality Committee meeting held 4 September 2009** AB(09/10)09

**PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**15. REPORT ON UNIVERSITY KEY RISKS APPROPRIATE TO ACADEMIC BOARD AB(09/10)10**

[Clerk's note: Annex A of the paper relating to this item is to be withheld from publication and general circulation under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 section 30(b)(i) as its disclosure may substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.]

15.1 Academic Board **noted** the report on the University's Key Risks appropriate to its remit.

**16. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS OF ACADEMIC BOARD AB(09/10)11**

16.1 Academic Board **noted** its forward schedule of business for the 2009/10 session.

**17. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2009/10:**

Academic Board **noted** its schedule of meetings for 2009/10 as follows:

13 November 2009  
12 February 2010  
23 April 2010  
11 June 2010

All on Fridays and to commence at 9.00 am.  
All meetings to be held in the Castle Room, New Craig, Craighouse Campus