

**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(14/15)17

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 10 October 2014 at 9.00 am in
the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus**

PRESENT:

Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor (Convenor)); N Ashton (School of Arts & Creative Industries); K Cairney (Director of International, Development & External Affairs); Dr S Cairncross (Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); M Chapman (School of Life, Sport & Social Sciences); S Falconer (Head of School from the Business School); R Holmes (School of Accounting, Financial Services and Law); Dr M Foster (Teaching Fellows/Senior Teaching Fellows); M Huxham (Director of Academic Strategy & Practice); P Miller Judd (Head of School from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); R Kemmer (School of Computing); S Key (Head of School from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); C Lambert (Director, Student and Academic Services); Dr S Marr (School of Marketing, Tourism & Languages); I McIntosh (Dean, Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); Professor A McCleery (Director of Research Strategy & Practice); Professor B Paechter (Assistant Dean from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); C Pinder (Director, Information Services); Professor A Sambell (Vice-Principal, Deputy Vice Chancellor); A Sharp (School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Care); D Smith (NSA President); Professor S Smith (Director from the Research Institutes); Dr K Stewart (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Professor G Stonehouse (Dean, the Business School); Rojan Kumar Subramani (Student Representative from the Business School); Dr G Webber (University Secretary); B Windram (Assistant Dean from the Business School).

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Cloy (Assistant Secretary) (Clerk); Dr Anita Ogilvie (Executive Manager (Strategy))
A Quickfall (Head Planning).

APOLOGIES:

F Alston (Assistant Dean from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences);
Professor E Hart (Professoriate); Dr P Jaworski (School of Management); Lyndsay
Shields (Student Representative from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing &
Creative Industries); Ryan Strachan (Student Representative from the Faculty of
Health, Life & Social Sciences).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting and in particular welcomed new members to their first meeting: Pauline Miller Judd (newly elected Head of School from FECCI); Dr Monika Foster (newly elected Teaching Fellow/Senior Teaching Fellow member); Brian Windram (newly elected Assistant Dean from the Business School); Professor Mark Huxham (Director of Academic Strategy & Practice), Rojan Kumar Subramani (Student Representative from the Business School). Andrew Quickfall (newly appointed Head of Planning) and

Dr Anita Ogilvie (newly appointed Executive Manager (Strategy)) who were observing the meeting as part of their induction were also welcomed.

- 1.2 The Convenor advised that Professor Duffield (Vice Principal, Internationalisation) had left the University at the end of July following a period of absence. The Board extended their best wishes to Professor Duffield for the future. Professor Alistair Sambell's appointment to the role of Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor was also noted.
- 1.3 The apologies were **noted**

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 MAY 2014 AB(13/14)84

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

- (i) Academic Regulations (minute 12) **AB(14/15)01**

- 3.1 The Board noted that the Convenors of ASEC and Academic Board had approved by convenor's action some minor amendments to the Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and to the Suspended Study Regulations to enable those regulations to take effect in time for the beginning of the new academic session.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(14/15)02

- 4.1 The Principal introduced her written report and invited questions and comments from Board members.
- 4.2 Updates were given on progress regarding potential collaboration with the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland on areas of common interest and with an initiative to establish a presence for the University in the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI) in Hong Kong.
- 4.3 The positive progress made by the University in the 2014 National Student Survey (NSS) was welcomed, whilst it was acknowledged that further efforts were needed to sustain and improve this position. It was recognised that the University had not performed as well in the 2014 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and that further work was required to improve the experience for students in several areas.
- 4.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

5. ACADEMIC STRATEGY AB(14/15)03

- 5.1 The Vice Principal (Deputy Vice Chancellor) introduced the paper which presented the proposed final Academic Strategy 2014-2020, which had been further developed following discussion at Academic Board in May. Updates were provided on the wide range of activities which were underway to deliver

the strategy and the Board welcomed the progress which had been made to date.

- 5.2 Thereafter, Academic Board **approved** the Academic Strategy 2014-20.
- 5.3 The Vice Principal introduced the tabled paper which presented the proposed academic themes which would help to describe the academic activity of the University to external audiences and help inform the future development of the portfolio. It was noted that these themes had been developed through the short-life working group established by the Board which had fed its deliberations into ULT. Having considered the feedback from the working group, ULT agreed on the following three themes which were considered to be broad and inclusive and which were intended to reflect a positive impact on society: Innovative Sustainable Communities, Wellbeing, and Information Society.
- 5.4 The Board welcomed the themes, and a few minor drafting points were noted which would be incorporated in the final document.
- 5.5 Thereafter, Academic Board **endorsed** the academic themes to support Strategy 2020.

6. DEVELOPING OUR ACADEMIC STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT STRATEGY 2020 **AB(14/15)04**

- 6.1 Academic Board received the paper which invited it to give initial consideration to proposals for changes to the University's academic structure designed to develop leadership capacity and improve accountability and decision making in support of Strategy 2020. It was proposed to consult on and, subject to that consultation, seek approval for the disestablishment of the three faculties with the consequence that schools become the primary academic units of the University. It was noted that the objective in removing the faculty layer would be to redeploy resources to strengthen the schools and corporate leadership, resulting in a more streamlined corporate management structure and a strengthened academic structure. The implications for school structure, committee structure, corporate management structure and professional services were noted as was the outline timetable for developing the proposals, consultation, decisions and implementation. It was highlighted that ULT had committed to there being no compulsory redundancies as a direct consequence of these proposals. The role of the Advisory Board which was being established to support the Project Board was highlighted and it was noted that expressions of interest had been sought from across the University with the intention of involving colleagues from a wide range of roles and areas of the University who would have an important role in facilitating conversations and consultation locally.
- 6.2 Discussion followed during which the importance of achieving a balanced alignment of resource in any future structure was noted. It was also emphasised that, whilst options and scenarios were set out in the paper as a starting point for discussion against a set of principles, there was no pre-determined or preferred outcome and the formal proposal brought to the Board for consideration in December would be fully informed by the consultation which would take place across a wide range of fora. In relation to

a comment concerning meetings of the Advisory Board taking place outside normal office hours and the potential impact on those who might wish to participate who had caring responsibilities, it was noted that, given the short timescale and prior diary commitments, scheduling such meetings during office hours had proved extremely challenging. It was noted that attendance at the Advisory Board was voluntary and that the planned dates had been circulated well in advance which it was hoped would allow adequate time for those in such a position to plan alternative care arrangements.

- 6.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **agreed** to take the proposals outlined in the paper forward through formal consultation with staff and students. Following this consultation, a formal proposal for a new academic structure would be presented to the Board for consideration at its meeting on 5 December 2014.

7. ELIR UPDATE: FEEDBACK ON DRAFT REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS AB(14/15)05

- 7.1 Academic Board received the paper which provided an update on the University's preparations ahead of the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) which would take place in February/March 2015. The paper also highlighted the Reflective Analysis consultation which was taking place during October 2014 which sought a wide range of feedback from staff and students. Board members were asked to engage with, and provide feedback on, the draft Reflective Analysis by the 31st October. Thanks were extended to the ELIR team and to the NSA for their work in supporting the Review.
- 7.2 Thereafter Academic Board **noted** the update.

8. REPORT ON STUDENT SURVEYS AB(14/15)06

- 8.1 Academic Board considered the paper which outlined key themes across the student satisfaction surveys undertaken by the University and identified areas of strength as well as areas of lower satisfaction with the student experience. The paper also outlined the mechanisms used to collect feedback on the student experience and described how the findings from student surveys are taken forward and decisions made regarding future actions.
- 8.2 Discussion followed during which it was noted that assessment and feedback remained an enduring issue in terms of student satisfaction in the NSS, and work being undertaken by Academic Strategy & Practice at Edinburgh Napier (ASPEN) to support programme teams and provide guidance intended to improve this area was highlighted. Disappointment was expressed with regards to the PTES results and it was considered that a transformational shift was required to improve this position and enable the University to achieve the student number growth planned in this area. It was suggested that there was a need to identify the good practice displayed in higher performing areas and share this with areas doing less well. It was also recognised that the acceptance of individual accountability at all levels was essential to addressing these issues, which cannot be resolved by any one individual alone.
- 8.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

9. SFC GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT: UPDATE REPORT **AB(14/15)07**

- 9.1 Academic Board considered the paper which provided an overview of the progress against milestones and targets in the first year of the University's Graduate Employability Project. Key project successes were outlined along with reflections on lessons learned to date. It was noted that the SFC had welcomed progress with the project and had confirmed the third year of funding.
- 9.2 Discussion followed during which the value placed by students and their families on employability was noted and some suggestions around the desirability of involving additional parties in the project were noted and would be followed up. The Board extended its thanks to the team for their work on this project.
- 9.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the report.

10. HONORARY AWARDS* **AB(14/15)08**

[Clerk's note: This paper was tabled and collected from members following the meeting]

- 10.1 Academic Board **approved** the name put forward by the Honorary Awards Committee for an Honorary Degree. The name would be submitted to Court at its meeting on 27 October 2014 to seek endorsement.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

Academic Board received the minutes of the following meetings to confirm that its sub-committees were continuing to meet their remits and were undertaking business on its behalf to the standard it expects.

No comments were raised on any of the minutes on this occasion.

11. Minutes of Academic Strategy & Enhancement Committee held on 02 May 2014 **AB(13/14)77**
12. Minutes of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee held on 08 May 2014 **AB(13/14)79**
13. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 23 May 2014 **AB(14/15)09**
14. Minutes of Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries Academic Board held on 17 June 2014 **AB(14/15)10**
15. Minutes of Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences Academic Board held on 18 June 2014 **AB(14/15)11**
16. Minutes of the Business School Academic Board held on 19 June 2014 **AB(14/15)12**
17. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 30 June 2014 **AB(14/15)13**

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 18. ANNUAL REPORT TO SFC** **AB(14/15)14**

18.1 The Board **noted** the final submitted annual report to the SFC on institution-led processes to maintain and enhance academic quality.

19. TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF ACADEMIC BOARD **AB(14/15)15**

19.1 The Board **noted** its terms of reference, constitution and membership for the 2014/15 session.

20. FORWARD SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS OF ACADEMIC BOARD **AB(14/15)16**

20.1 The Board **noted** the indicative forward schedule of business for 2014/15

21. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2014/15:

05 December 2014

06 March 2015

12 June 2015

All at 9.00am, Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus.

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