

**APPROVED
CIRCULATED**

AB(13/14)62

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 7 March 2014 at 9.00 am in
the Rivers Suite, Craigmackenzie Campus**

PRESENT:

Professor A Sambell (Vice-Principal, Academic) (Convenor); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor); S Abay ((Student Representative from the Business School); 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); J Derham (Student Representative from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Dr J Donaldson (Head of School from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); S Falconer (Head of School from the Business School); R Holmes (School of Accounting, Financial Services and Law); R Kemmer (School of Computing); 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 (Leader of Research Strategy & Practice); A Morrison (Assistant Dean from the Business School); Professor B Paechter (Assistant Dean from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); R Pelik (Leader of Academic Strategy & Practice); C Pinder (Director, Information Services); 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);

IN ATTENDANCE:

D Cloy (Assistant Secretary) (Clerk); Dr F MacCorquodale (Policy Advisor).

APOLOGIES:

F Alston (Assistant Dean from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); N Ashton (School of Arts & Creative Industries); Professor J Duffield (Vice-Principal, Internationalisation); Professor E Hart (Professoriate); Dr P Jaworski (School of Management); A Smith (Student Representative from the Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences); S Smith (Head of School from the Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Dr K Smyth (Teaching Fellows/Senior Teaching Fellows); Dr G Webber (University Secretary).

1. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting, and in particular welcomed the newly elected member from the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Care, Ailsa Sharp. Thanks were extended to her predecessor Linda Veitch for her contribution to the work of the Board over her 4 year term. The Convenor also welcomed Dr Finlay MacCorquodale (Policy Advisor) who was attending the meeting for discussion of the University Strategy.

1.2 The apologies were **noted**

PART A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2013 AB(13/14)37

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Academic Year Implementation – Week 1 (minute 11.2)

3.1 It was noted that the matters relating to Week 1 had been considered further by the Working Group and the following key outcomes had been agreed for implementation in September 2014: In trimester 1, for new students including direct entrants week 1 will be freshers' week and teaching will begin in week 2. For continuing students in trimester 1, module teaching will start in week 2 but, at programme team discretion, there may be programme level activity undertaken in week 1. In trimester 2 induction will begin in the week prior to week 1 (week 0) and module teaching will commence in week 1. Faculties will take responsibility for ensuring that all students and programmes deliver the appropriate, agreed induction and orientation activities, working closely with Student and Academic Services and the Students' Association. Academic Board **endorsed** this outcome.

3.2 Discussion followed around specific issues, especially the potential late arrival of overseas students. It was noted that all students will be strongly advised to arrive in time for induction activity, however any students entering late, within the limits of the approved university admissions policy, would be dealt with at programme team level. It was further noted that the new arrangements relating to Week 1 would be communicated university-wide shortly.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(13/14)38

4.1 The Convenor introduced the Principal's written report and highlighted the SFC's indicative grant letter which contained a 1% efficiency saving. The planned removal of student number caps for Universities in England was also highlighted and it was noted that this development may have implications for the University's ability to recruit RUK students.

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

5. UNIVERSITY STRATEGY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS* AB(13/14)39*

5.1 The Board received the report which presented an update to the Key Performance Indicators that are used to monitor progress towards the University Strategy 2015. An overview of performance against the indicators was given and key areas and actions, including student satisfaction, league table performance and recruitment of international students to Edinburgh were highlighted. There was discussion around the categorisation of research income as represented in the graphs and the consistency of underlying data. It was noted that this was part of wider issue regarding reliable management

information for research which was currently being considered. Recent positive movements in areas such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and staff satisfaction were also noted. After further discussion on a number of points arising from the report it was noted that the KPIs would be re-defined as part of the work associated with the new Strategy and that the importance of including benchmark data where possible was recognised.

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

6 STUDENT POPULATION FORECASTS AND POST TRIMESTER 2 MATRICULATION NUMBERS **AB(13/14)40**

6.1 The Board received the report which provided a summary of forecasts for the University's on-campus and overseas delivered 2013/14 student population segments and reported on enrolments from both trimesters 1 and 2. It was noted that there had been a reduction in the forecast over-recruitment against the SFC indicative number but the University was currently forecast to miss its target for overseas on-campus population and RUK segments.

6.2 Discussion followed during which it was suggested that, in terms of future data presentation, it would be useful to see the previous year's figures for context and for benchmarking data to be included. It was also suggested that a breakdown by country for international segments and inclusion of figures showing implications for the staff/student ratio would be useful enhancements.

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

7. APPLICATIONS FOR 2014/15 **AB(13/14)41**

7.1 Academic Board received the report which provided an update on student applications and admissions processing for academic session 2014/15. The key issues noted were that; undergraduate full time applications were up 5.2%; unique applicants to Edinburgh Napier had grown by 4.79%; UK domiciled UG FT applications were up by 7.59%; EU Domiciled applications were down by 5.88%; full time overseas undergraduate applications were down by 14%; undergraduate FT RUK applications were down 6% and TPG overseas applications were up by 4%. It was noted that process improvements had been introduced to enable faster processing of international and RUK applications.

7.2 Discussion followed during which it was noted that there would be further discussion at ULT concerning applications and conversion activity. A member also made a suggestion about the presentation of data which could be considered for future papers.

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

**8. SCHOOL/RESEARCH INSTITUTE INTEGRATION
UPDATE***

AB(13/14)42*

- 8.1 Academic Board received the report which provided an update on the process and position following the period of consultation on the future of the Research Institutes which had resulted in the Institutes being brought within the academic Schools.
- 8.2 It was further noted that the decision to progress the proposals had entailed the disestablishment of three of the Research Institutes created under a policy approved by Academic Board in July 2009, namely the Forest Products Research Institute, Institute for Product Design and Manufacture and the Institute for Science & Health Innovation, and the Board was invited to formally homologate the disestablishment of these three institutes. A member highlighted a point of accuracy regarding the formation of Research Institutes in the consultation paper which had been circulated on 14 November and it was noted that whilst the Institute structures had been created in 2009/10, not all Institutes were created in that year as stated in the paper.
- 8.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **noted** the position regarding School/Research Institute integration and **homologated** the disestablishment of three of the Research Institutes; the Forest Products Research Institute, Institute for Product Design & Manufacture and the Institute for Science & Health Innovation.

**9. NEW UNIVERSITY STRATEGY:
DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION**

AB(13/14)43

- 9.1 Academic Board considered the paper which provided an opportunity to review and comment on a draft of a new University Strategy for the period to 2020, prior to a final draft being considered by Court. In particular, the Board was asked to comment on feedback from the Court/ULT strategy conference which indicated that it would be helpful if the strategy described, in high level terms, areas of academic strength and potential in the context of the strategic objective "to grow our academic reputation". A number of high level themes were suggested in the paper as a starting point for discussion.
- 9.2 A lengthy discussion followed around the headings suggested during which a wide range of views were expressed. Whilst no clear agreement emerged it was recognised that it was important to develop such themes to inform decisions regarding investment priorities and it was agreed that further work should be undertaken through ULT, RKEC and ASEC. Members were invited to submit further comments to the Vice Principal (Academic).
- 9.3 There followed discussion regarding the draft Strategy during which a number of comments from members were noted. It was noted that there was still some additional work to be done before the Strategy was presented to Court and in particular more detail would be included concerning impact. It was noted that the process of consultation and opportunities provided for engagement in the development of the new Strategy had been welcomed by staff and that a great range of rich and constructive feedback had been received as a result.

9.4 Thereafter, Academic Board **endorsed** the draft of a new University Strategy for the period to 2020.

10. ACADEMIC YEAR IMPLEMENTATION: WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS **AB(13/14)44**

10.1 The Board received the paper which proposed that the University should seek to free up more time on Wednesday afternoons to encourage students to participate in student-led activities such as sport, volunteering and clubs and societies, from the start of the 2014/15 academic year, in response to student feedback. It was noted that this would also provide an opportunity to dedicate time in the week for staff development activities, research, LTA discussions and strategic initiatives, although a note of caution was sounded that such time should not become filled with formal committee meetings. The process followed and consultations which had taken place were detailed and the issues which had been raised by the trade unions, as contained in the appendices to the paper, were highlighted. It was noted that timetablers had been asked to free up Wednesday afternoons where possible working within established timetabling parameters. It was recognised that it would not be possible to achieve this in all cases in the coming academic year, but that further efforts would be made to achieve this fully for the year after. It was noted that there had been broad support for this move during discussion at Faculty Academic Boards.

10.2 Discussion followed during which it was noted that it would be important to monitor any impact of this move on attendance and that this should be picked up during the normal module review process. It was further agreed that communications regarding this decision should emphasise it as a clear example of a positive institutional response to student feedback. Thanks were extended to all those involved in taking this matter forward including the NSA, staff in Student & Academic Services and to School timetabling staff.

10.3 Thereafter, Academic Board **approved** the proposal to free up Wednesday afternoons where possible within the existing timetabling parameters, for student led activities for the 2014/15 academic year.

11. APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND CONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT* **AB(13/14)45***

11.1 Academic Board received the annual report on matters relating to the areas of academic appeals, student complaints and student conduct, which had been considered in detail by QAMRC. It was noted that work was underway to develop a “fit to sit” policy which should, when implemented, reduce the number of extenuating circumstances appeals. Thanks were extended to all those involved in the management and support of these areas.

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

12. NOMINATION FOR AN HONORARY ACADEMIC TITLE*

AB(13/14)46*

12.1 The Board **approved** the nomination for the award of the Honorary Academic title of Visiting Teaching and Research Fellow to the individual named in the paper.

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.

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| 13. Minutes of University Research Integrity Committee held on 05 November 2013 | AB(13/14)47
(Professor McCleery) |
| 14. Minutes of Academic Strategy & Enhancement Committee held on 06 November 2013 | AB(13/14)48
(Professor Sambell) |
| 15. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 11 November 2013 | AB(13/14)49
(Ms Pelik) |
| 16. Minutes of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee held on 05 December 2013 | AB(13/14)50
(Professor Sambell) |
| 17. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 06 December 2013 | AB(13/14)51
(Ms Pelik) |
| 18. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 27 January 2014 | AB(13/14)52
(Ms Pelik) |
| 19. Minutes of Academic Strategy & Enhancement Committee held on 05 February 2014
These were not available for this meeting. To be submitted to the next meeting. | AB(13/14)53
(Professor Sambell) |
| 20. Minutes of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee held on 06 February 2014
These were not available for this meeting. To be submitted to the next meeting. | AB(13/14)54
(Professor Sambell) |
| 21. Minutes of Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries Academic Board held on 11 February 2014 | AB(13/14)55
(Dr Cairncross) |
| 22. Minutes of Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences Academic Board held on 12 February 2014 | AB(13/14)56
(Mr McIntosh) |
| 23. Minutes of the Business School Academic Board held on 13 February 2014 | AB(13/14)57
(Professor Stonehouse) |
| 24. Minutes of University Research Integrity Committee held on 18 February 2014
These were not available for this meeting. To be submitted to the next meeting. | AB(13/14)58
(Professor McCleery) |
| 25. Minutes of Collaborative Provision Committee held on 28 February 2014
These were not available for this meeting. To be submitted to the next meeting. | AB(13/14)59
(Ms Pelik) |

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

26. REPORT ON UNIVERSITY KEY RISKS APPROPRIATE TO ACADEMIC BOARD* AB(13/14)60*

26.1 The Board **noted** the report which provided the second assessment of confidence in the management of the University's top risks for the academic year 2013/14.

27. 2014/15 SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENT AB(13/14)61

27.1 The Board **noted** the final submitted version of the University's 2014/15 Outcome agreement.

28. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2013/14:

Friday **30 May 2014**, 9.00am, Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus.

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