

AB (19/20) 026

**EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COURT**

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on **29 November 2019** at **0900**
in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus

PRESENT: Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor) (Convenor); Professor A Tobin (Vice Principal of Learning & Teaching); Professor N Antonopoulos (Vice Principal of Research and Innovation); Dr J Brodie (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr S Cable (School of Health & Social Care); Dr P Chapman (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Mr J Fraser (ENSA President); Dr J Hails (School of Arts & Creative Industries) (*from item 5*); Dr G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Sciences); Prof S Keates (Dean, School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr S Logie (Director, School Support Service & Academic Registrar); Dr D Maclean (Interim Dean, School of Arts & Creative Industries); Professor Alison McCleery (Professoriate) (*from item 5*); Dr L Mora (Business School); Dr S Wells (School of Computing).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A McLachlan (Head of International Operations and Admissions); Ms C Taylor (Director, Information Services); Dr C Steen (Clerk)

APOLOGIES: Professor A Sambell (Senior Vice Principal & Deputy Vice Chancellor) Ms N Graham (Vice Principal for International); Professor P Barlow (School Head of Research); Ms K Bryce (Student Campus Representative, Merchiston); Professor S Dawkes (School Head of Learning & Teaching); Dr A Fonzone (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr M Leggate (School Officer responsible for Quality Enhancement); Dr C Mahoney (School of Health & Social Care); Dr E Malone (School of Applied Sciences); Dr G Matthews-Smith (School Head of Research); Ms N N Nathaniel (Student Campus Representative, Sighthill); Professor S Smith (Dean, School of Computing); Mr M Thomson (School of Engineering & the Built Environment); Dr N Urquhart (School of Computing); Dr G Wright (School of Applied Sciences).

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1. The Convenor welcomed members who had joined Academic Board since the October 2019 meeting. It was noted that a small number of vacancies remained to be filled (by election).
- 1.2. The apologies were noted.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2019 AB(19/20)015

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- a) There were no matters arising.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AB(19/20)016

- 4.1. Members were advised that the report on university-business interaction had been published on 27 November 2019 and encouraged members to read the document. A paper addressing the report, and the direct consequences and challenges affecting Edinburgh Napier, would be submitted to a future Academic Board.
- 4.2. It was noted that Queen Margaret University hosted the area's Business Gateway on campus. It was suggested Edinburgh Napier should investigate whether a similar arrangement could be developed (with links to the proposed Innovation Hub).
- 4.3. The Equality and Human Rights Commission report on racial harassment in the university sector was highlighted. Members were advised that the University was looking at how to respond to the report's recommendations and integration with other University plans addressing equality issues.
- 4.4. It was noted that the Scottish Government had advised the University sector that a budget announcement was unlikely until mid-January 2020, assuming a clear victory in the UK General Election. It was possible the announcement might be later (i.e. February/ March 2020).
- 4.5. The Principal's Report was noted.

5. DRAFT UNIVERSITY STRATEGY AND UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION, LEARNING & TEACHING AND INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES **Verbal Report**

5.1. Members were reminded of the extensive consultation which had taken place on the new University strategy during 2019. The emerging pillars (Creating Knowledge, Enhancing Networks and Inspiring Careers) and attendant goals for the new strategy were outlined, i.e.:

- Develop a collaborative, interdisciplinary environment aligned to academic themes to create knowledge to solve real world problems;
- Grow and utilise our expertise to shape and influence policy and practice nationally and internationally;
- Enhance strategic partnerships with business and industry through the development of an innovation hub in order to support sustainable growth and impact;
- Deliver a dynamic and engaging portfolio that supports current and future business and industry needs through partnership working in curriculum development;
- Raise our international profile through learning, teaching and research partnerships;
- Facilitate students to grow their individual networks and social capital;
- Grow our inclusive and vibrant learning environment where research, teaching, enterprise and professional practice are inextricably linked to enrich the curriculum, enhance graduate attributes and enable individuals to succeed;
- Enhance our provision through flexible and innovative delivery models, supporting a wide range of learners in order to address the changing needs of society, and
- Create a stimulating environment where staff can flourish, develop their careers and contribute fully to the university's success.

5.2. Feedback had highlighted a need for environmentally sustainable growth, a wish to refresh the University's values, a focus on interdisciplinary collaboration, and improvements in the work-related and international experiences offered to students.

5.3. Members were advised that the draft strategy would be considered by Court in December 2019. Final consultation on the strategy with staff would take place in a range of forums throughout January and February 2020 before the strategy was submitted to Court in March 2020 for approval.

- 5.4. It was confirmed there would be a suite of key performance indicators to accompany the new strategy: these were currently being developed.
- 5.5. The draft Learning & Teaching strategy was discussed. The aim of the strategy would be to link the University's academic strengths directly to the curriculum and for stronger bonds between Learning & Teaching and Research & Innovation staff. Research and professional practice would feature more heavily in the classroom and undergraduate students would be exposed to current research activity and knowledge as soon as they started their programme. Students would be encouraged to work with staff to develop the curriculum.
- 5.6. A focus would be placed on the development of 'intangible skills' which better prepared students for the workplace, and the need for regular upskilling as the world of work changed. It was acknowledged that the measurement of 'intangible skills' presented a challenge.
- 5.7. An update on the draft Research & Innovation strategy discussed at the October 2019 Academic Board was presented. The 'success indicators' (i.e. REF submissions, increase in postgraduate research students, increase in research, CPD and consultancy income and increase in grants) were outlined. It was noted that consultation on the strategy was ongoing, with a meeting arranged with the Professoriate. Heads of Research would be soliciting feedback on the draft strategy within their Schools.
- 5.8. Progress with development of the University strategy and supporting strategies was noted.

6. DRAFT OUTCOME AGREEMENT WITH SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL 2020/21 TO 2022/23 AB(19/20)017

- 6.1. Members were advised that the Scottish Funding Council was reviewing the Outcome Agreement process.
- 6.2. The overall trend in MD20 applications, offers and acceptances was noted. It was suggested that recent increases had been due to enhancement of the University's contextual admissions policy.
- 6.3. It was noted that the bulk of MD20 post codes tended to be in west central Scotland, skewing the statistics for the country overall. Edinburgh Napier did, however, tend to perform well against its peers in southeast Scotland in recruiting from MD20 post codes.

6.4. Members noted that some universities were aggressively lobbying careers staff in high schools regarding recruiting pupils to STEM subjects. It was agreed that the Head of Student Recruitment and Admissions would review Edinburgh Napier's activity in this area and make recommendations at a future Academic Board.

6.5. The draft Outcome Agreement 2020/21 to 2022/23 was noted.

7. STUDENT ENROLMENTS AND FORECASTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/20 AB(19/20)018

7.1. Members were advised that the University's intake target for 2019/20 had been increased by 400 FTE students. However, an underestimation of continuing students had negated the need for this increased intake. Work was underway to ensure this did not reoccur.

7.2. Taught postgraduate recruitment was highlighted as particularly positive, with offer-making having been closed in some subject areas. Recruitment from the European Union continued to reduce in line with expectations.

7.3. The report on Student Enrolments and Forecasts for 2019/20 was noted.

8. PLANNING AND BUDGETING GUIDANCE 2020/21 TO 2024/25 AB(19/20)019

8.1. It was noted that the timetable contained in the paper called for School and Service budgets to be agreed by March 2020. Schools and Services were asked to develop key performance targets in their plans based on current 'core' Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These would be revisited once the University-level KPIs had been agreed.

8.2. The Planning and Budgeting Guidance 2020/21 to 2024/25 was noted.

9. ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW UPDATE AB(19/20)020

9.1. Members were reminded that the ELIR visit would take place in the week commencing 2 December 2019. Staff taking part in the review had been contacted. The University was looking forward to a constructive set of meetings and peer review of its activities by subject experts.

9.2. Members suggested the good practice highlighted in the Reflective Analysis should be communicated widely across the

University. It was agreed that, following release of the ELIR review report, appropriate recommendations and commendations would be communicated widely.

9.3. The ELIR update was noted.

10. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK UPDATE AB(19/20)021

10.1. Members were advised that an update on progress with REF would be provided at future Academic Board meetings until conclusion of the REF exercise.

10.2. It was noted that effort was being focused on the presentation of impact case studies. REF preparations had been subject of an audit by internal auditors, EY. Areas for improvement had centred on the monitoring of actions and risks and development of action plans.

10.3. The REF update was noted.

PART B RECEIPT OF MINUTES

11. MINUTE FROM THE RESEARCH & INNOVATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2019 AB(19/20)022

11.1. Members were advised that the R&IC minutes had not been received in time to be included in the meeting papers. The minutes would be circulated at the earliest opportunity.

12. MINUTE FROM THE LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2019 AB(19/20)023

12.1. Members were advised of a mistake in the minutes. In para 4.4, *'It was explained that the future student was forecast to come in to undertake only one or two discrete units of learning and then leave'* was intended to relate specifically to short upskilling, rather than undergraduate, programmes.

12.2. The minute from the Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Experience Committee of 20 November 2019 was noted with this amendment.

PART C ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

13. LEAGUE TABLE PERFORMANCE AB(19/20)024

13.1. Members discussed the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey and, in particular, the change in survey initiation from six to eighteen months after graduation. It was

suggested that keeping in contact with students for this extended period to ensure the survey was completed would be challenging.

13.2. It was agreed the Head of Planning & Business Intelligence and Director of Marketing & External Relations identify the changes in the DLHE parameters and develop a communications strategy for staff and students to maximise participation in the survey.

13.3. The update on League Table Performance was noted.

14. UNIVERSITY TOP RISKS MONITORING REPORT (1 OF 3) AB(19/20)025

14.1. The first report on the management of the top risks for 2019/20 was noted.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

All at 0900 in the Rivers Suite, Craiglockhart Campus:

06 March 2020

05 June 2020