

**EDINBURGH NAPIER STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Minutes of 7 December 2022**

**Directors in Attendance:** Dr Jenny Rees (JR), Olumuyiwa Opaleye (OO), Vishal Khattar (VK), Dr Ailsa Crum (AC), Isobel Hall (IH), Andy Houghton (AH), Antonio Garcia (AG), Erin Slater (ES), Raneev Shrestha (RS), Prabhsimranjeet Singh (PS)

Elizabeth Oremogunje attended from 6:25 – 6:40pm

**In attendance:** Dee Bird (DB)

**ENSA Advice Service Presentation:** Cecile Guilloteau (CG) Advice Team Lead

**Apologies:** Ekamdeep Bumra (EB)

**Taking the minute:** Susan Finn (SF)

<b>Standing Items:</b>	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b>            JR welcomed everyone to the MS Teams meeting and asked each person to introduce themselves to the Advice Team Lead, Cecile.</p> <p>Apologies were received from EB</p>	
<p><b>Focus On Topic: Advice Service</b>            CG delivered a presentation explaining what the Advice Service does, what kind of academic and welfare advice is provided and changes that have been made over the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new terms and conditions</li> <li>• updated policies</li> <li>• enquiries triage and online booking system (appointments are available via MS Teams, phone, email or in person Mon-Fri 11am-4.30pm))</li> <li>• advice survey to gather student feedback</li> <li>• staff toolkit</li> <li>• refreshed ENSA website – Advice student support intern is also adding information on the cost-of-living crisis</li> </ul> <p>The advice team work closely with university staff and support services as well as external organisations including Advice UK, CPAG, Shelter and other Students' Associations.</p> <p>There were 974 cases in 2021-22 resulting in 574 appointments            The survey shows 100% satisfaction from student feedback.</p> <p>DB pointed out how much the advice service has professionalised under CG's leadership and noted the admin team are also key to the success of the service by fielding some of the initial enquiries.</p> <p>IH and AC commented on the amazing work the team are doing.</p>	

<p>AG complemented CG on the presentation and asked about the staff/student ratio. CG acknowledged that at peak times it has not been possible to reply to all student enquiries. However, CG and one other adviser have since increased their working hours which should help during busy periods going forward.</p> <p>AH asked what support was in place for advisers and how a broader performance dashboard could be put in place. CG confirmed advisers are well connected with the safeguarding team. CG has looked at other associations for ratios with staff numbers and noted they often had three full time advisers.</p> <p>AC suggested adding fact material to the website that may help with the early stages of enquiries. CG confirmed this was already in place for appeals and academic misconduct</p> <p>JR thanked CG for the helpful and useful presentation.</p> <p><b>The next Focus On topic will be Clubs and Societies and how they operate.</b></p>	
<p><b>2. Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of meeting 28 September 2022</b> The minutes of the September meeting were <b>approved</b>.</p>	
<p><b>4. Action Log</b> JR highlighted ongoing actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Fixed Asset Register: DB had been in contact with the University Finance Dept which offered to assist ENSA with this. The auditors are also likely to help.</li> <li>• Review of the student election process: DB noted that a plan has been developed and implemented to improve engagement in the 2023 elections.</li> <li>• JR thanked AC for taking on the chair of the F&amp;R committee and AH for taking on the chair of the HR committee.</li> <li>• Affordability of pay award: DB confirmed the £500 pay award was made in November and this month will include the 1.5% uplift for staff and interns.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Reports from Student President and Co-Presidents</b> The Officers gave an update on the progress against manifestos and key areas and success stories from their reports.</p> <p>OO suggested it may be beneficial to have a HR department to help with the retention and welfare of staff as he believes there is some dissatisfaction amongst the staff team that may be due to work overload but was not specific on the area affected.</p>	

JR noted ENSA pays a small subscription to an HR service which provides advice on employment law and staff also have access to the Employee Assistance Programme available through the University.

OO mentioned the need for a Digital Content Co-ordinator which is noted in agenda item 10.

OO spoke about the panel discussion on the decolonization of the curriculum held on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at Craiglockhart campus. The debate was interesting and went well but may have had more engagement if it had been held on a different day of the week during an earlier time slot.

AG agreed it was an interesting event, he enjoyed the discussion and working with the other panel members.

JR was disappointed VK's report had been received late and noted the format needs more shape and structure going forward.

VK apologised and said this was due to meetings and conferences he had attended.

Issues and concerns raised at the recent Rep Forums have been passed to the relevant departments. VK will keep track of any outcomes.

VK noted that although ENSA 50 numbers are low, the students involved are very engaged with good strong views. Policies are being drafted.

IH suggested VK may want to separate daily tasks and meetings and add a section about his manifesto for future reports.

IH noticed on the website there is still a manifesto tracker for the former FTO and suggested VK adds what he is working on to this.

## **6. Report from CEO**

DB noted the promotion of Officer roles has been brought forward to before the end of term and information drop-in sessions are being offered to anyone interested. It is hoped this will help get more people to run for office which should also encourage more people to vote.

DB stressed how difficult it is to find a venue and caterer students can afford for the Societies and Sports Ball. DB and Paul are working daily on this and are looking into costs at the O2 Academy and EICC.

RS asked if the venue catering policies were the same.

DB confirmed both venues have their own kitchens and have their own caterers.

<p>RS suggested clubs and societies could provide their own ticket discount by using membership funds.</p> <p>AC asked if there would be any possibility of additional sponsorship.</p> <p>DB said there are limited opportunities for additional sponsorship due to the media sales buy-out contract with Native.</p> <p>JR and IH commented on how helpful they found the Freshers' Report.</p>	
<p><b>7. Report from Chair of Finance &amp; Risk Committee</b></p> <p>AC provided highlights from the FRC meeting, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finances were as expected at this point</li> <li>○ Native payment was late in arriving – we should keep an eye on this for the next payment</li> <li>○ Rising inflation – ENSA has experienced an increase in certain areas, such as insurance; however, the overall impact has been limited as the University owns the premises</li> </ul> <p>ES asked if there was a risk the university might ask ENSA for a contribution towards funding for heating etc. DB said this is very unlikely.</p> <p>AC then drew attention to the revised Terms of Reference and went through the changes. JR asked the Board to approve the FRC Terms of Reference.</p> <p>PS asked if the monthly finance papers could be added to the ENSA website. JR said the annual accounts are published on the website as they are a public-facing document, providing an overview of the financial year. Regular monthly finance papers against the budget are not published as they do not provide a clear picture of ENSA's financial situation.</p> <p>The terms of reference were <b>approved</b>.</p>	
<p><b>8. Report from Chair of HR Committee</b></p> <p>AH highlighted a few recommended changes to the HRC Terms of Reference that were agreed at the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reference to decision making powers has been removed (as this lies with the Board)</li> <li>○ Complaint handling should come to the Board</li> </ul> <p>AC noticed under item 5, under the heading 'committee remit' there are certain points the committee will review or monitor. It was agreed this should be standardised across the committees. DB to make the change.</p> <p><b>ACTION: DB</b> to revise section in line with FRC ToR</p> <p>The terms of reference were <b>approved</b> with recommended minor revision</p>	<p><b>DB</b></p>
<p><b>9. Update on Governance</b></p>	<p><b>JR</b></p>

JR had received good feedback on the induction event held before the last Board meeting on 28 September.

**Mentoring Opportunity**

JR will be offering this again and may call on a wider pool of people to be involved e.g. former Board members.

IH suggested matching externals, Officers and Directors in a group of three instead of pairs.

Another option could be matching people across F&R and HR committees.

**Action:** JR to contact the new Directors to gauge interest.

**10. Review of Implementation of New Staff Structure**

DB went briefly through the main points of the paper and how the staff structure had evolved since 2020. She then highlighted the *wish list* section of the paper.

DB acknowledged the Officers' concern around workload in the Student Activities area and explained that an Admin Assistant had recently been appointed which should alleviate pressures.

DB will soon be entering into discussions with the University around funding for the coming year.

AH wondered if the University might be more receptive to offering ENSA additional funding. DB agreed that additional resource would help the Advice service reach and support more students and was planning to include this in a funding bid.

DB also felt that funding for events was crucial to increasing student engagement. ENSA's recent Festive Swap Shop at Craiglockhart had failed to engage students, whereas the University's Winter Warmer event held in the Merchiston courtyard on the same day was a great success. The University had a significant budget for events, which ENSA lacked.

IH asked if the Officers could lobby the University.

AC suggested co-branding events and activities. DB agreed and intended to discuss this with the University's Events Officer.

IH suggested keeping the detailed paper on the Staff Structure on record for information for future Directors as it provided a good sense of how ENSA had evolved over the past couple of years.

DB

<p><b>ACTION:</b> DB to prepare a funding bid for the University to reflect ENSA's strategic priorities, including the 'wish list' in the staffing paper.</p>	
<p><b>Items for Information</b></p> <p><b>Forward Schedule of Business</b></p> <p>The ENSA Clubs and Societies would provide a presentation at the next meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. This will allow Directors to find out more about this area and how it operates.</p> <p>The Annual General meeting is 30<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	