ENSA Board of Directors Minutes 3 March 2026

Location: C83a Merchiston Campus & Online
Directors in Attendance: Lang Banks (Chair), Austen Brunton (AB), Ailsa Crum (AC), Evans Eghan (EE), Tony Garcia (TG), Lucy Husband (LH), Sonia Kumar (SK), Beth MacPhee BMac), Chika Marvis (CM), Hannelie Meintjies (HM), Ruaridh Wallce (RW),

In Attendance: Tony Foster (ENSA CEO), Fiona Makou (Academic Community Rep – Business School Intern)
Minutes Prepared by: Susan Finn

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Board members introduced themselves to Fiona Makou, sharing professional backgrounds and connections to Edinburgh Napier University.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the last meeting in November were introduced and approved as an accurate record.

3. Action Log Review

The Board reviewed the outstanding actions. Key updates included:

• Finance & Risk Committee to meet after this Board to review the submitted 2026/27 budget.

• Pension liability one-pager pending handover from outgoing Finance Lead; awaiting university clarity.

• External funding applications submitted – two rejections so far; new budget includes provision for support with bid writing.

• Onboarding & Governance paper shared with updated staff/sabbatical/intern pathways.

• Student Data access progressing following meeting with Steven Logie; benchmarking with Dundee SA informing next steps.

• Governance review still to be convened – Chair, Ailsa and Tony to progress.

• Elayne's farewell event was held in January at the Riverside Suite, Craiglockhart campus.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Chair asked about any declarations of interest from attendees; none were declared.

5. Student Intern Presentation – Business School (Fiona)

Fiona delivered an overview of her disability and chronic conditions project, including student surveys, benchmarking other HEIs, and organising a well-received awareness event with charities and ENU services. Event content was shared by ENU through central channels. She reflected on the value of the role and suggested improved internal comms, small project budgets, and potentially additional hours for future interns.

Board discussion highlighted the importance of strengthening links with DLTE and exploring a wellness space within the Business School.

Action: Consider interns having a small project budget (£100–£150) in 2026/27.
Action: Chika to feed chronic-conditions insights into DLTE curriculum/assessment and Quality & Standards work.

6. Sabbatical Officers & CEO Reports

Each Sabbatical provided one highlight and one challenge from the reporting period.

• Chika: Successful 8-week Employability Programme delivered with four other universities (87% student engagement; £8,900 sponsorship).

Challenge: Rep training drop-off due to communication and scheduling; hybrid and process improvements underway.

• Evans: Napier Student Film Festival feedback positive despite unsuccessful funding bid; partnerships strengthening.

Challenge: Guarantor scheme delays, awaiting system details from ENU.

• Austen: Sports participation increased from 14.5% to 16% following T2 intake; partnership support reduced costs for Sports Ball.

Challenge: Running "Let's Talk About Consent" session – valuable but difficult to attract attendees.

Discussion followed on hybrid vs in-person engagement, accessibility requirements, and data-driven planning for future activities.

7. ENSA Advice Case Management System – Blue Door to AdvicePro

The Board reviewed the Advice Team proposal to migrate from Blue Door to AdvicePro, noting issues with Blue Door reliability, rising costs, and lack of updates. AdvicePro aligns with sector standards and offers improved usability. Data-migration cost exceeds £2k threshold; covered by underspend.

Decision: Approved – proceed with AdvicePro procurement and migration.

Action: Advice Team (Marianne) to finalise implementation plan, timeline, training and integrity checks.

8. ENSA Elections 2026 – Update

21 applications for sabbatical roles; 17 eligible; 1 withdrew. Final: 16 candidates. Voting runs 9–12 March with near 24-hour access. Directors invited to the results event on 12 March at 6pm. On-campus promotion stalls planned across all campuses.

9. Three-Year Budget Submission (2026/27 – 2028/29)

CEO presented submitted budget following guidance from ENU Principal to request +15% uplift. Priorities include intern continuation, community/societies development post, and exploring reduced membership fees. Participation modelling and facility cost impact work underway.

Action: CEO to table refined three-year budget at Finance & Risk committee meeting following staff planning day outcomes**.**

10. Vision, Mission & Values Refresh

Staff workshop completed. Consensus: keep Vision, Mission and Values separate and simple. Updated vision, mission & values to be incorporated into onboarding and comms rollout after planning day.

Action: Comms to produce VMV rollout pack and implementation timeline.

11. Governance & Policy – Short-Term Working Group

Updated onboarding paper includes mapped governance/policy documents (safeguarding, data protection, EDI, complaints, modern slavery, etc.). STWG to validate and prioritise. Finance & Risk to progress CEO objectives and remuneration framework.

Action: Chair, Ailsa & CEO to convene STWG and present implementation plan.

Action: Finance & Risk to draft CEO appraisal and remuneration policy.

12. Finance & Audit / Risk

Committee to meet post-Board to review budget. CEO to clarify meaning of red figures in YTD accounts and include legend in future packs.

Action: CEO to circulate clarification on red-figure convention.

13. People & Culture

Onboarding documentation updated; compassionate language emphasised; aligned with VMV and governance work.

14. Any Other Business

ENU alumni magazine to feature ENSA projects including sport and Uniforce for fundraising visibility.

Next meeting: 9 June 2026.

Action Summary

Action	Owner	Deadline
Finance & Risk to meet post-Board to review 2026/27 budget.	Tony / Finance & Risk	Date tbc
Pension liability one-pager – obtain update from uni	Tony	Next Board
Advice Pro migration plan.	ENSA Advice team -Marianne	Ongoing
Chika to escalate chronic-conditions insights to DLTE.	Chika	Next Quality & Standards Committee
Explore wellness space with Business School.	CEO / Chika	ongoing
Sports cost mitigation plan.	Austen / CEO	ongoing
Refined three-year budget to F&R.	CEO	Post-Planning Day
Vision, Mission & Values rollout pack.	Comms	Post-Planning Day
Governance & Policy STWG plan.	Chair / Ailsa / CEO	Next Board
Draft CEO appraisal & remuneration policy.	Finance & Risk	Next Board
Clarify red-figure convention in finance paper.	CEO / Finance	Next Board