Statute of the Alfred Nobel Business College

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Section I – General Provisions

Article 1 – Name and Establishment

1. The institution shall operate under the official name *Alfred Nobel Business College* (hereinafter referred to as "the College").
2. The College has been established as a higher education institution in accordance with Maltese law and the applicable provisions of the Education Act.
3. The College is a legally and professionally independent entity, capable of acquiring rights and assuming obligations in its own name.
4. The College was founded with the aim of contributing to the advancement of higher education in Malta and at the international level, offering programmes of study that are both academically rigorous and responsive to labour market needs.

Article 2 – Legal Personality and Autonomy

1. The College enjoys academic, organizational, and financial autonomy within the framework of applicable Maltese and European legislation.
2. The College has the authority to determine the content, structure, and methods of its teaching, learning, and research activities, subject to compliance with the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) regulations.
3. The College may cooperate with other higher education institutions, professional bodies, and enterprises in Malta and abroad to achieve its mission.
4. The autonomy of the College shall always be exercised in harmony with the principles of quality assurance, transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct.

Article 3 – Seat of the College

1. **The registered seat of the** College is located at:

   Suite 8, Ta' Mallia Buildings, Triq in-Negozju, Mriehel Industrial Zone, BKR 3000, Malta.

2. The College may establish additional administrative units, learning centres, or representative offices both within Malta and abroad, subject to the approval of the Maintainer and, where required, the competent Maltese authorities.

Article 4 – The Maintainer

The College is maintained by *Alfred Nobel Business College Ltd.* (hereinafter referred to as "the Maintainer").

1. The Maintainer guarantees the legal, financial, and infrastructural foundations required for the sustainable operation of the College and ensures that the College complies with all statutory and accreditation requirements.
2. The Maintainer shall exercise its rights in accordance with this Statute, the internal regulations of the College, and the standards of the MFHEA.
3. In fulfilling its role, the Maintainer may engage external advisors and experts to provide specialist support.

Article 5 – Mission of the College

1. The mission of the College is to provide high-quality, internationally benchmarked higher education, delivered in a flexible and fully online mode.
2. The College is committed to widening participation in higher education by enabling adult learners and working professionals to pursue advanced studies at the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) Level 7 and beyond.
3. The College promotes innovation, ethical responsibility, and academic excellence in teaching, learning, and research.
4. The College seeks to integrate cutting-edge knowledge with practical skills, thereby preparing graduates for leadership roles in their professional fields.

Article 6 – Objectives of the College

To fulfil its mission, the College shall:

a) Offer accredited higher education programmes aligned with the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
b) Engage in scientific research, development, and creative activity in the disciplines it teaches.
c) Publish academic works, learning resources, and digital educational tools to support students and the wider community.
d) Provide academic and administrative support services, including academic advising, counselling, online library access, and technical support.
e) Establish cooperative partnerships with universities, research institutions, professional organisations, and industry stakeholders, both locally and internationally.
f) Promote the employability of graduates by maintaining strong connections with the labour market and aligning curricula with evolving industry needs.

Article 7 – Compliance with MFHEA Regulations

1. The College undertakes to comply with all requirements and guidelines issued by the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

2. All programmes, policies, and practices of the College shall be aligned with the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF), the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).
3. The College shall ensure continuous monitoring, internal quality assurance, and external evaluation in accordance with MFHEA standards.

Section II – Governance and Organisational Structure

At Alfred Nobel Business College, governance is based on clear lines of responsibility, proportionate structures fit for a small, fully online institution, and alignment with MFHEA and ESG expectations.

Article 8 – The President/ Head of Institution

The **President/Head of Institution** is the chief executive officer responsible for institutional strategy, legal compliance, external relations, and overall operational oversight. In a small institution, the President also assumes financial management responsibilities, including budget preparation and resource allocation. The President reports to the Maintainer and ensures that academic, administrative, and financial operations align with the College's mission and regulatory requirements.

Article 9 – The Academic Director

The **Academic Director** leads academic quality and standards across programmes, including curriculum oversight, approval of syllabi within Academic Board policies, academic staff coordination, and alignment with accreditation requirements and industry expectations. The Academic Director chairs the Academic Board (see Article 10), ensures effective monitoring of teaching, assessment, and student progression, and works closely with the Quality Assurance Officer.

Article 10 – The Academic Board

1. **Purpose & Scope:** The Academic Board is the senior academic authority responsible for academic standards, programme approval (within institutional policies), assessment regulations, and monitoring of student outcomes.
2. **Composition (proportionate):** Academic Director (Chair), President (ex-officio), Programme Coordinator(s), Quality Assurance Officer, one Student Representative, and invited academic staff as needed.
3. **Functions:**
    a. Approves new/modified syllabi and programme documentation prior to submission to MFHEA where required;
    b. Oversees assessment regulations and appoints Assessment Boards;
    c. Reviews Annual Programme Monitoring Reports and External Examiner feedback;
    d. Ensures academic integrity and continuous improvement actions.
4. **Meetings:** Convened at least three times per academic year; minutes are recorded by the Registrar.

Article 11 – Programme Coordinator and Programme Committee

Programme Coordinator.
Responsible for day-to-day management of the MSc IT programme (curriculum delivery, scheduling, assessment calendar, VLE consistency), coordination of syllabi, and ensuring alignment with programme learning outcomes.

Programme Committee (proportionate).
Programme Coordinator (Chair), module/subject leads (including Leader Lecturer), Quality Assurance Officer (or nominee), one Student Representative, Registrar. Meets at least twice per academic year to monitor delivery, student feedback, and assessment deadlines, escalating issues to the Academic Board as needed.

Article 12 – Legal Representative

The ***Legal Representative*** ensures institutional compliance with applicable laws and represents the College in legal matters, including review of contracts and policies, management of legal risks, and support to the President on regulatory obligations.

Article 13 – Quality Assurance Officer

The ***Quality Assurance Officer*** coordinates internal QA processes in line with the Institutional QA Manual and the ESG standards. Responsibilities include policy maintenance, evidence collection (surveys, moderation records, programme reports), coordination of Annual Programme Monitoring, support to periodic review, and reporting to the Academic Board and President.

Article 14 – Head of Department (HoD)

The ***Head of Department*** is responsible for overseeing academic delivery, ensuring the alignment of courses with institutional standards, supervising lecturers, supporting the development of learning materials, and contributing to curriculum updates and academic quality.
The HoD reports directly to the Academic Director and works in cooperation with the Quality Assurance Officer and Programme Coordinators.

Article 15 – Teachers and Lecturers

Teaching staff deliver high-quality online teaching and learning, design and mark assessments against published rubrics, participate in moderation, provide timely feedback, engage in CPD relevant to online pedagogy, and support students to achieve intended learning outcomes with academic integrity.

Article 16 – Sales and Marketing Director

The **Sales and Marketing Director** is responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing the institution's marketing, communication, and student recruitment activities.

The Director ensures that promotional activities comply with legal requirements, accreditation guidelines, and the institution's mission.

The Sales and Marketing Director also oversees partnership development, branding strategy, and public communication, and collaborates with the Administrative Office and Academic Management to support programme visibility and institutional growth.

Article 17 – Registrar / Administrative Support (Study Officer)

The **Registrar** manages admissions, enrolment, academic records, timetabling, committee servicing (minutes, papers), and graduation documentation. The Registrar supports QA evidence management and ensures GDPR-compliant handling and retention of student and assessment data.

Article 18 – IT / e-Learning Support

IT and e-Learning Support ensure reliable operation of the VLE and online tools (account provisioning, troubleshooting, uptime/back-ups), provide user support to staff and students, and implement reasonable cybersecurity and data-protection measures commensurate with the College's size and risk profile.

Article 19 – Student Representation

Student Representatives are elected/appointed for one academic year and participate in the Programme Committee and Academic Board on academic matters. They gather and present student feedback, and receive responses to agreed actions ("You said – We did"). Training and induction are provided to support effective participation.

Article 20 – Selection and Recruitment of Key Leadership Roles

- **Principles.** Merit-based, transparent, and proportionate to the College's size; equal opportunities apply.
- **Criteria.** Relevant higher-education qualification(s), demonstrable leadership and project/team management, effective communication, ethical conduct, alignment with institutional mission and strategy, and evidence of achievements with references.
- **Process.**
    a. Application (CV and motivation);

      b. Pre-screening against criteria;

      c. Interviews (may include teaching or scenario task);

      d. Reference checks;

      e. President's recommendation;

      f. Approval by the Maintainer.

- ***Documentation.*** The recruitment process is recorded in a proportionate manner.

This includes:

      a) the vacancy notice or role description,

      b) the list of applicants considered,

      c) the final decision with a brief justification

Proportionality. In the absence of an HR department, the process is administered by the President with Registrar support.

Section III – Academic Programmes

Article 21 – Programme Portfolio

The College offers a Master of Science in Information Technology, classified at MQF Level 7 and carrying 90 ECTS. The programme is delivered fully online and designed to equip graduates with advanced theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of information technology, aligned with labour market needs and international academic standards.

The programme includes three elective specialisations, allowing students to focus their studies on distinct domains of IT expertise:

- *Advanced Artificial Intelligence* – Graduates of this specialisation will be able to take roles such as AI Engineer, Machine Learning Specialist, or Research Scientist. The focus is on advanced machine learning techniques, deep learning, and the application of AI in innovative contexts.

- *Advanced Cybersecurity* – Graduates of this specialisation will be prepared for roles such as Cybersecurity Analyst, Security Engineer, and Compliance Officer. The focus is on developing advanced skills in threat detection, secure system design, cryptographic applications, and regulatory compliance.

- *Advanced Business Data Analytics* – Graduates of this specialisation will be able to pursue roles such as Data Scientist, Business Intelligence Specialist, and Data Engineer. The focus is on advanced methods of data management, predictive modelling, and business-oriented analytical approaches to support strategic decision-making.

Each student selects one specialisation, ensuring a personalised study path while maintaining core competencies across the IT field.

Article 22 – Programme Structure and Curriculum

The programme consists of 90 ECTS, distributed across core modules, one specialisation stream, and a final dissertation. Modules are assigned learning outcomes aligned with MQF Level 7 descriptors. Workload is balanced across theory, practice, independent study, and assessment. The curriculum ensures progressive development from advanced IT foundations to independent research and professional application.

Article 23 – Admission and Progression

Admission requires a Bachelor's degree (MQF Level 6) in IT, Computer Science, or a closely related field. Applicants from other disciplines may be admitted if they can demonstrate relevant professional experience. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is applied in line with national guidelines. English language proficiency is required for all applicants. Progression is contingent upon successful completion of modules, with opportunities for reassessment in accordance with Study and Examination Regulations.

Article 24 – Teaching and Learning

The programme is delivered fully online through synchronous and asynchronous methods:

- *Synchronous activities:* live online lectures, interactive tutorials, group discussions, real-time case study analysis.
- *Asynchronous activities:* recorded video lectures, Moodle-based forums, collaborative wikis, and guided reading.
- *Practical applications:* virtual labs, simulations, coding assignments, and project-based learning.
- *Independent learning:* structured self-study supported by reading lists, research tasks, and reflective assignments.
- *Collaborative learning*: group projects, peer review, and student-led presentations.

Academic staff provide continuous feedback, virtual office hours, and one-to-one consultations to ensure student engagement and support. The teaching approach is student-centred, integrating problem-based learning and applied research methods.

Article 25 – Assessment and Examination Regulations

Assessment methods are aligned with module learning outcomes and Bloom's taxonomy, including:
- written examinations,
- analytical essays and reports,
- programming and technical projects,
- group work and presentations,
- the Master's dissertation (20 ECTS).

Assessment follows the principles of validity, reliability, transparency, and fairness. Feedback is provided within established timeframes. Students who fail an assessment may resit according to the Examination Regulations. Appeals procedures are available.

Article 26 – Academic Integrity and Misconduct

The College enforces strict academic integrity standards. Plagiarism, cheating, collusion, falsification of data, or use of unauthorised AI tools are considered serious offences.

Cases of academic misconduct are reviewed by the Academic Integrity Committee, composed of:
- Chair: Academic Director
- Member: one senior lecturer (rotating basis)
- Member: Quality Assurance Officer
- Secretary: Registrar (non-voting)

Sanctions may include grade reduction, reassessment, suspension, or expulsion, depending on severity.

Article 27 – Programme Monitoring and Review

All programmes undergo systematic monitoring and periodic review to ensure quality, relevance, and alignment with MQF standards. Monitoring includes student surveys, staff evaluations, and analysis of learning outcomes achievement.

- *Annual Review:* each programme is reviewed annually by the Academic Board.
- *Comprehensive Review:* every five years, an in-depth review includes external examiners and stakeholder consultation (employers, alumni, industry representatives).
- *Continuous Feedback:* mechanisms such as course evaluations and online discussion forums support ongoing improvement.

Article 28 – Documentation

Documentation of programme delivery and assessment is proportionate and ensures transparency. Records include:

- approved syllabi and module descriptors,
- teaching and assessment plans,
- student achievement records,
- annual and quinquennial review reports.

Section IV – Quality Assurance

Article 29 – Quality Assurance Framework

The College is committed to maintaining a robust quality assurance (QA) framework in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the MFHEA requirements. The QA framework ensures that all academic and administrative activities are planned, implemented, monitored, and reviewed systematically.

The *Quality Assurance Officer* oversees the framework and reports directly to the Academic Board, while responsibility for quality is shared across all levels of governance, staff, and students.

Article 30 – Programme Design, Approval and Review

All programmes of study are designed in accordance with the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) Level 7 descriptors, ensuring alignment with the College's mission and the needs of the labour market.

Programme approval requires validation by the Academic Board and final endorsement by the College President. Programmes are subject to regular reviews, at least annually, to ensure relevance, academic rigor, and compliance with external standards.

Reviews include feedback from students, alumni, employers, and external experts, and are supported by formal programme review reports and action plans.

Article 31 – Monitoring and Student Feedback

Continuous monitoring of programmes and teaching quality is undertaken through student feedback surveys, focus groups, and course evaluations. The Registrar coordinates data collection, and the Academic Board analyses results and oversees the implementation of improvement measures.

Students are formally represented in QA processes through their elected representatives, ensuring that the student voice is central to programme development and enhancement.

Article 32 – Academic Staff Evaluation and Development

The College conducts periodic evaluation of academic staff, considering teaching effectiveness, student feedback, scholarly activity, and engagement in professional development.

All lecturers are expected to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) annually, aligned with the College's CPD plan. Support is provided through training, peer mentoring, and access to digital learning resources.

Article 33 – Academic Integrity and Misconduct

The College upholds the principles of academic honesty, originality, and integrity. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification of data, and unauthorised use of AI tools without acknowledgement.

All student submissions are subject to plagiarism detection tools integrated into the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Suspected cases of academic misconduct are reviewed under the procedures defined in the Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Policy. This includes preliminary review by the lecturer and Programme Coordinator, referral to the Academic Integrity Committee, a formal hearing, and the right of appeal.

Sanctions may range from formal warnings to grade penalties, module failure, suspension, or expulsion, depending on severity.

Article 34 – Continuous Improvement and External Reference Points

The College adopts a culture of continuous improvement by benchmarking its policies and programmes against international best practices. External experts are consulted in programme validation and periodic review.

Quality assurance policies are reviewed on an annual basis by the Academic Board and the QA Officer, ensuring compliance with evolving MFHEA guidelines and European standards.

Section V – Research, Development and External Cooperation

Article 35 – Research Principles

1. Research at the College is designed to complement its primary mission of delivering high-quality online education.
2. The focus of research activities is on applied information technology and digital learning practices, reflecting the College's academic strengths.
3. The College acknowledges that it is not a research-intensive institution but commits to fostering an environment where staff and students engage with research in ways proportionate to its size and resources.
4. Research priorities are aligned with teaching excellence, student development, and the future needs of the digital economy.

Article 36 – Student Research

1. Student research is primarily expressed through the Master's dissertation and project-based learning integrated into the curriculum.
2. All dissertation projects must demonstrate originality, methodological rigour, and relevance to the field of information technology.
3. Supervisors guide students in identifying suitable topics, ensuring that projects are achievable within the available timeframe and resources.
4. Research training is embedded within the Research Methods module, equipping students with the knowledge and skills to conduct independent research.

Article 37 – Staff Engagement in Research

1. Academic staff are encouraged to participate in scholarly and applied research activities that enrich their teaching practice.
2. Research outputs may include publications, conference contributions, case studies, or applied projects conducted in cooperation with external partners.
3. The College supports staff participation in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) related to research methods, ethics, and emerging trends.
4. Research engagement is considered in staff appraisal and promotion processes, proportionate to the size of the institution.

Article 38 – Research Ethics and Integrity

1. All research conducted under the auspices of the College must adhere to the principles of academic honesty, transparency, and respect for participants.
2. The Academic Board oversees research integrity and may establish ad hoc Ethics Committees for specific projects where necessary.

3. For collaborative projects, the College may rely on the ethical review procedures of partner institutions, provided they meet international standards.
4. Cases of research misconduct are handled under the College's Academic Integrity Policy.

Article 39 – Research Support and Resources

1. Students and staff are provided with access to the College's online library, digital databases, and e-learning platforms to support research activities.
2. The College ensures training in research tools (e.g., referencing, data analysis software) as part of its learning resources.
3. Resources are scaled appropriately to the size of the institution, with emphasis on online access and open educational resources (OER).

Article 40 – External Cooperation and Partnerships

1. The College recognises that collaboration is essential for enhancing the scope and quality of research.
2. Partnerships are sought with universities, research centres, and industry organisations in Malta and internationally.
3. The College actively explores opportunities for participation in:
   - Horizon Europe, where projects align with its expertise and capacity,
   - Erasmus+, primarily in the area of digital education and mobility of staff and students,
   - other European and national initiatives that strengthen applied research and innovation.
4. External cooperation agreements must be approved by the President and validated by the Academic Board.

Article 41 – Dissemination and Impact

1. Dissemination of research outcomes takes place mainly through:
   - integration into teaching and course materials,
   - student dissertations made available in the institutional repository,
   - academic events, webinars, or joint publications with partner institutions.
2. The impact of research is measured not only by publications but also by its contribution to teaching quality, student employability, and engagement with the wider community.

Article 42 – Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

1. Research and external cooperation activities are reviewed annually by the Academic Board.

2. The review assesses alignment with the College's mission, quality of supervision, and student satisfaction with the dissertation process.
3. Lessons learned are integrated into programme review and staff development planning.
4. The College remains flexible, scaling its research engagement in line with institutional growth and available resources.

Section VI – Financial and Administrative Provisions

Article 43 – Financial Resources and Sustainability

1. The College is a private institution financed primarily through: (a) tuition fees paid by students; and (b) contributions and equity provided by the Founder/Owner.
2. At present, the College does not receive public subsidies or grants. In the future, the College may apply for and administer competitive funding (including EU and national grants) in accordance with applicable regulations and the provisions of this Statute.
3. The College shall ensure that financial planning supports long-term sustainability, prudent risk management, and the continuity of online educational services.

Article 44 – Financial Management and Budgeting

1. The President is responsible for the financial management of the College, including the preparation of the annual budget and periodic financial forecasts.
2. The annual budget is reviewed and approved by the Academic Board. Budget execution is monitored quarterly and corrective actions are implemented where necessary.
3. The President oversees tuition invoicing, cash-flow management, and payment of obligations. Segregation of duties is applied proportionately to the size of the institution (e.g., preparation by the Registrar, authorisation by the President).
4. Payment authorisation thresholds are established by the Academic Board; transactions above the set threshold require dual authorisation by the President and the Legal Representative.

Article 45 – Accounting, Financial Control and External Audit

1. The College maintains complete, accurate and timely accounting records in accordance with applicable Maltese law and recognised accounting practices.
2. Financial statements and management reports are prepared at least annually. Where required by law or by decision of the Academic Board, an independent external auditor is appointed to review and certify the financial statements.
3. Internal financial controls are documented and proportionate to institutional size, including invoice verification, reconciliations, asset registers and secure document retention.

Article 46 – Tuition Fees and Refunds

1. Tuition fees and payment schedules are proposed by the President and approved by the Academic Board.

2. All fees, payment terms and deadlines are published on the College website and in official documentation.
3. Refunds, late payment charges and tuition-related appeals are regulated by the Tuition Fee and Refund Policy.

Article 47 – Grant and Project Funding (Prospective)

1. When the College secures competitive grants or project funding in the future, the President shall designate a responsible officer to coordinate grant management (this function may be performed by the President or a delegate, proportionate to institutional size).
2. Grants shall be administered in separate cost centres with documented eligibility checks, procurement rules, time-recording (where required), and audit trails, in line with the funding agreement.
3. Financial and technical reports shall be submitted to funders on time. Co-funding commitments shall be traceable to the College's approved budget.
4. The Legal Representative ensures compliance with contractual obligations and applicable regulations.

Article 48 – Procurement and Conflict of Interest

1. Procurement follows the principles of transparency, value for money and proportionality. For purchases above a threshold set by the Academic Board, the College obtains at least three quotations where practicable.
2. Conflict of interest declarations are required from individuals involved in purchasing decisions. Any perceived conflict is recorded and managed in line with College policy.
3. Contracts are reviewed by the Legal Representative prior to signature.

Article 49 – Administrative Functions and Records

1. The Registrar/Administrative Support manages admissions, enrolment, student records, academic calendars and graduation documentation.
2. Administrative records are maintained electronically with secure back-ups and access controls, in accordance with GDPR and the College's Records Retention Schedule.
3. Official minutes and documentation for governance bodies are prepared and archived by the Registrar.

Article 50 – Banking, Payments and Asset Management

1. The College maintains bank accounts in its name. Authorised signatories are approved by the Academic Board.

2. Dual authorisation is required for payments above the approved threshold. Bank reconciliations are performed monthly and reviewed by the President.
3. The College maintains an asset register for IT equipment and other fixed assets; disposals follow documented procedures.

Article 51– Information Security and Business Continuity

1. The IT/e-Learning Support ensures appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect financial and administrative data, including encryption, access control and back-ups.
2. Business continuity arrangements provide for alternative access to the VLE and critical systems, data recovery, and communication protocols in case of disruption.

Section VII – Final Provisions

Article 52 – Amendments

1. Any amendments to this Statute shall be proposed by the President of the College.
2. Amendments must be reviewed and approved by the Academic Board before submission to the competent regulatory authority.
3. Amendments shall enter into force only after the necessary approvals have been obtained, where required by Maltese law and MFHEA regulations.

Article 53 – Interpretation

1. In case of doubt regarding the interpretation of the provisions of this Statute, the President shall provide an authoritative interpretation.
2. Such interpretation must be reported to and confirmed by the Academic Board to ensure institutional accountability.
3. Where legal interpretation is required, the matter shall be referred to the College's Legal Representative.

Article 54 – Compliance with Law and Regulations

1. This Statute shall be interpreted and applied in full conformity with the laws of Malta.
2. The College explicitly recognises the authority of the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) and undertakes to comply with all applicable higher education regulations and quality assurance standards.
3. In case of conflict between this Statute and Maltese law or MFHEA requirements, the latter shall prevail.

Article 55 – Entry into Force

1. This Statute shall enter into force on the date of its adoption by the Academic Board of the College.
2. The Statute shall remain in force until duly amended or repealed in accordance with Article 39.

Article 56 – Authentic Version and Language

1. This Statute is adopted in the English language as the official and authentic version.
2. In the event of translation into other languages, the English version shall prevail in case of divergence.
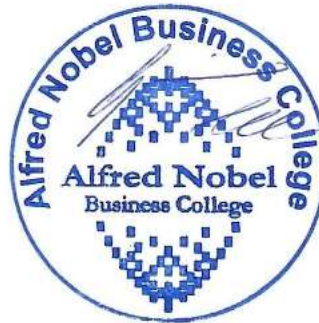
3. For communication with international partners, certified translations may be prepared, but these shall remain secondary to the English version.

Adoption of the Statute

This Statute was formally adopted by the Academic Board of Alfred Nobel Business College on 30.02025, and enters into force in accordance with Article 46.

Signatures

President

Institutional Stamp / Seal: