

## **West Lothian College**

### **Learning and Teaching Committee**

**Wednesday 28 February 2018 - 2.30pm**

**Tour – Engineering Centre – 2.30pm**

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### Learning & Teaching Committee

Minute of the Meeting of the **Learning and Teaching Committee** of the Board of Governors held on **Wednesday 29 November 2017** at 9.15 am in Pavilion B Barbour Suite in the College.

**Present:** Sue Cook (Chair)  
Tom Bates  
Mhairi Harrington  
Sarah Kerr  
Iain McIntosh  
Alan Morton  
Lorna Reid

**In attendance:** Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise)  
Claire Glen (Quality Manager)  
George Hotchkiss (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning)  
Lorna Jenkins (Access & Support Service Leader) (Item 17.50)  
Richard Lockhart (Board Member) - Observer  
Diane Mitchell (Centre Head, Workforce Development) - Observer  
Karine McNair (Secretary to the Board)  
Anne Wilson (Minute Secretary)

#### Presentation – Workforce Centre Head

A presentation was given by Diane Mitchell (Centre Head, Workforce Development) on her experience as an observer at the Learning & Teaching Committee over the last year. The presentation also included the purpose of her role as a Centre Head in the College.

The Committee thanked Diane Mitchell for her very positive constructive and upbeat presentation.

#### 17.43 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the Committee meeting, in particular, a special welcome was extended to Tom Bates (new Board Member), Karine McNair (new Secretary to the Board) and Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise) on attending their first meeting of the Learning & Teaching Committee. It was noted that Richard Lockhart (Finance & General Board

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Member) was attending the meeting as an observer. Lorna Jenkins was attending for Item 17.50.

No apologies were received.

### **17.44 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **17.45 Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minutes of the meeting of 6 September 2017 were approved as a true record.

### **17.46 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

Members noted the paper detailing actions following the last meeting.

The Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee gave an update of the actions:

Actions 1, 2 & 4 - All completed.

Action 3 - Deferred to the next Committee meeting (ELS visit) on 28 February 2018.

There were no other matters arising not otherwise on the agenda.

**The Committee agreed for agenda item 17.50 be presented next.**

### **17.50 UCAS and Articulation Report**

The Access & Support Service Leader introduced the UCAS and Articulation Report for 2017 entry (College year 2016-17) which provided information on the number of students from West Lothian College who articulated to university and also to which university they progressed.

The Access and Support Services Leader gave explanations where necessary.

The Committee noted the information as provided by UCAS and the various arrangements that were in place to support students through the application process and progression to university.

It was noted that articulation on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years for advanced standing to be provided in the next UCAS and Articulation Report.

**Action 1: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

The Committee thanked the Access & Support Service Leader for the very informative report.

**17.47 Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2017-2018 Update – Dashboard**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning presented the ROA 2017-2018 Update Dashboard.

It was noted by the Committee that the ROA dashboard was showing an overview in relation to targets. It was highlighted by the Committee that there appeared to be a high number of amber arrows. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning assured the Committee, more robust data was being received now the amber arrows were expected to become green.

The Committee requested a more detailed commentary on actions and the rationale underpinning the assessment of progress be produced for the next Learning & Teaching Committee meeting.

**Action 2: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

The Committee agreed to note the report.

**17.48 New Regional Outcome Agreement 2018-21 Summary**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning presented the summary guidance for the New ROA 2018-21 which:

- reflects the Scottish Economic Strategy
- is informed by local and national labour market information
- requires to contain stretch targets in relation to recruitment and attainment within priority groups.

The Committee noted the timelines for the draft ROA submission which had to be submitted to the Scottish Funding Council by 15 December 2017.

The Committee requested that the draft ROA be presented as a summary report, on a powerpoint presentation at the next Committee meeting.

**Action 3: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

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The Committee thanked Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning for the summary of ROA guidance.

### **17.49 Draft Evaluative Report and Draft Enhancement Plan**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning presented the Draft Evaluative Report and Draft Enhancement Plan.

The Committee noted that the Draft Evaluative Report and Draft Enhancement Plan had been submitted to Education Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council on 31 October 2017. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning thanked the Quality Manager for all her hard work on the production of the Draft Evaluative Report and Draft Enhancement Plan.

It was noted that an Endorsement Meeting would take place on 14 December 2017 with Education Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council.

The Committee were content with the Draft Evaluative Report and Draft Enhancement Plan being presented to the Board of Governors on 12 December 2017.

### **17.51 Student Association Report**

The Student Association President presented the report on the work of the Student Association in the period from September to November 2017.

The paper outlined the new Sparkle evaluative workbook for class representatives that had been launched this term. The Sparkle feedback had been stronger in some areas than others and was still a work in progress document. The Teaching Staff Board Member agreed to work with the Student Association on the Sparkle feedback for the collation of data.

It was noted by the Committee that future reports would be more structured.

The Student Association President discussed the level of poverty amongst students at the College and it was agreed that the Bursary Officer be contacted in the first instance for more information.

#### **Action 4: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

The Committee thanked the Student Association President for a great report.

**17.52 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Report**

The Quality Manager presented a report on the work carried out across the Quality and Learner Services function during the period from September to November 2017.

The Quality Manager went through the report and it was noted that there had been considerable self-evaluation activity during September-November with the new internal Quality Improvements in Learning and Teaching Services (QUILTS) framework. The output from QUILTS had resulted in detailed overall Quality Improvement Plans for all College areas with the impact of actions being completed by December 2017.

Learning and Teaching Observations – To-date 47 observations had been undertaken and the rest would take place in Block 2. Positive feedback had been received from staff to-date, and the process of using Moodle had worked very well.

The Quality Manager indicated that an early indication of Key Performance Indicators were positive, with early withdrawal for FE full-time having reduced by 1%.

The Committee thanked the Quality Manager for a high level report and noted the paper.

**17.53 Learner Attainment Sub Group Minutes and Remit**

Vice Principal, Curriculum and Planning presented the Learner Attainment Sub Group minutes and remit and advised the Committee that this new group with selected Board members, had been established to scope out high level detail regarding learner attainment.

**17.54 College Key Performance Indicators 2016-2017**

Vice Principal, Curriculum and Planning introduced the Key Performance Indicators for 2016-2017 which showed the College's Key Financial and Non-Financial PIs for the period 2013-2014 to 2016-2017.

Vice Principal, Curriculum and Planning confirmed that good progress had been made on the non-financial indicators in relation to three targets with FE full-time requiring further improvement and that early indications were showing that withdrawals were going in the right direction but close monitoring would take place.

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The Committee noted the learner performance indicators.

The Principal gave an update regarding an issue which has just come to light with regard to the College's 2015-16 Performance Indicator (PI) for HE Full-Time (HEFT) Successful Students. The issue related to the coding of "success" for Higher National Students highlighted through a new process where the Scottish Funding Council results from the FES database with the National Articulation database.

"Success" for Higher National Students was defined as students achieving the Group Award i.e. the HNC or HND qualification. However the College's Unit-e system had coded these students as successful if they achieved 70% of units but not necessarily the Group Award. This affected 27 students and the impact of removing these students from the calculation would be to reduce the HEFT Success PI for 2015-16 from 70% to 66%.

The College was not the only College affected as the SFC had identified thirteen Colleges in total with this error although given the College's size the impact on the PI was much greater.

The Principal reassured the Committee there had been no falsification of records, none of the students have been certificated by SQA and they have not graduated from the College. The only place this had been incorrectly noted was on the FES database.

The programme within the Unit-e system which calculates the PIs was set up in 2010-11 and was complex. The complexities of the programme made it difficult to see that the calculation was being done in this way but the programme has now been corrected. The correction was done prior to the submission of the 2016-17 data so the Performance Indicators for 2016-17 have been correctly calculated.

The concern of the Principal was the SFC advised the Chief Statistician of the Scottish Government about this issue without prior consultation with the Principal or Senior Team. Discussions had however taken place between the College and SFC at a fairly low key and transactional level since May 2017.

SFC informed Scottish Government that it planned to restate the PIs for both 2014-15 and 2015-16 and highlight the impact on the colleges' concerned in the 2016-17 PI Publication. At this time the impact on the 2014-15 PI was not known but it was likely to have a similar impact.

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The Principal had requested a meeting with SFC as a matter of urgency as the situation had a potential for reputational damage. The meeting had been arranged for 5 December 2017.

### 17.55 Any Other Competent Business

There were no other items of business.

### 17.56 Review of Meeting, Supporting Papers and Development Plan

The Committee were content with the updated Development Plan.

### 17.57 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 28 February 2018 at 9.15 am.

**Note:** There were no matters discussed during the meeting, during which Members declared any conflict of interest, or the Secretary to the Board was aware from the Register of Interests that discussion could give rise to such a conflict.

Signed .....  
Chair, Learning and Teaching Committee

Date .....

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### Learning & Teaching Committee

Action update from the Learning and Teaching Committee Meeting of 29 November 2017.

**Action 1: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning - UCAS and Articulation Report** - It was noted that articulation on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years for advanced standing to be provided in the next UCAS and Articulation Report.

To be completed following data receipt from UCAS.

**Action 2: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning - Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2017-2018 Update – Dashboard** - The Committee requested a more detailed commentary on actions and the rationale underpinning the assessment of progress be produced for the next Learning & Teaching Committee meeting.

Agenda item

**Action 3 - Vice Principal, Curriculum and Planning - New Regional Outcome Agreement 2018-21 Summary** - The Committee requested that the draft ROA be presented as a summary report, on a PowerPoint presentation at the next Committee meeting.

Agenda item

**Action 4: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning – Student Association Report** - The Student Association President discussed the level of poverty amongst students at the College and it was agreed that the Bursary Officer be contacted in the first instance for more information.

Verbal update

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### **Learning & Teaching Committee**

#### **Applications Update**

The attached report provides an overview of the current status of Full Time and School applications for the Academic Year 2018-2019.

The Learning and Teaching Committee is asked to note that these figures are representative of the status of courses as at 20 February 2018 and that figures are changing on a daily basis. To-date 788 interviews are planned.

School students are able to apply on line for 2018-19 and the College is actively involved with schools in shaping study choices.

This information is used to inform marketing activity during the run-up to academic session 2018-2019. Work is being undertaken in MIS to allow this information to be presented in relation to Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) sub-targets as well as in relation to Centres. This data will then inform more segmented marketing activity.

Applications and recruitment will be monitored by the Applications Group and Senior Team.

#### **Action**

The Learning and Teaching Committee is asked to discuss the report.

#### **George Hotchkiss**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning  
28 February 2018

### FT Applications v Target 2018-19 @ 16 February 2018

Row Labels	Sum of Student No's Target	Sum of Total Applications**	Sum of Total offers	Sum of Full Offer Accepted	Sum of Conditional Offer Accepted
Beauty Therapy And Hairdressing	182	232	10	2	2
Business And Creative	320	220	59	2	41
Childhood Practice And Sport & Fitness	490	457	211	22	43
Computing And Engineering	288	161	8	0	4
Construction And Motor Vehicle	176	164	23	6	2
Health, Social Care, Science & Ss	382	480	181	51	50
Hospitality And Communities	254	161	5	1	1
Workforce Development	57	2	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2149</b>	<b>1877</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>143</b>

### Schools Applications v Target 2018-19 @ 16 February 2018

Row Labels	Sum of Student No's Target	Sum of Total Applications**	Sum of Total offers	Sum of Full Offer Accepted	Sum of Conditional Offer Accepted
Beauty Therapy And Hairdressing	58	56	0	0	0
Business And Creative	89	31	0	0	0
Childhood Practice And Sport & Fitness	48	14	0	0	0
Computing And Engineering	55	6	0	0	0
Construction And Motor Vehicle	64	36	0	0	0
Health, Social Care, Science & Ss	78	11	0	0	0
Hospitality And Communities	82	7	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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### **Learning & Teaching Committee**

#### **Student On Course Evaluation (SOCE) Report**

The attached report is an analysis of student feedback gathered through SOCE, the College's internal survey tool.

The survey was completed in November/December 2017.

#### **Action**

The Learning and Teaching Committee is asked to discuss the report.

#### **Simon Earp**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise  
28 February 2018



**west lothian**  
college

## **SOCE Report**

**2017 - 2018**



**Opening Doors**

**Fair Access for All**

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## Executive Summary

SOCE is the College internal survey that evaluates student satisfaction across curriculum and service areas.

The survey aims to capture and analyse the views of all students and use information gathered to inform continuous improvements to our service delivery.

### **Key findings:**

- Overall student satisfaction is up 2.3% on 2016-17
- Awareness of the Student Association profile is improved and students are happy with the service the Association provides for them
- Students are generally positive about the College and the support they receive from lecturers and support staff
- The overall response rate is down 6% and is not representative of all modes of study
- The satisfaction rate in learning and teaching is declining across the question set
- Qualitative responses note that some students do not have sufficient volunteering/work placement opportunities for students
- Stability in timetabling, staffing and service quality are essential elements of a positive student experience
- Qualitative responses note that some courses do not engage students sufficiently with employers
- Qualitative comments are often insufficient to inform judgements about action to be taken
- ICT problems continue to affect student satisfaction
- Students are not aware of the Volunteer Hub or the opportunities presented to them through the Student Association and the Volunteer Hub
- There are too many surveys which may be negatively impacting on student and staff engagement

The recommendations for enhancement made in this report should not be viewed in isolation but should be used as part of a number of validated sources of evidence to inform effective evaluation of learning and teaching and service delivery.

## Introduction

Student on Course Evaluation (SOCE) is an annual survey carried out by West Lothian College to determine student satisfaction in areas such as learning & teaching, ICT, facilities, admissions and student support. The survey is carried out in November each year, and all students, full time, part time and distance learning, are encouraged to complete the online form.

The purpose of SOCE is to give students the opportunity to comment anonymously on various aspects of their experience at West Lothian College. The College values the input of students to enable us to critically reflect on the quality of service provision in all areas of the College and believes this to be an intrinsically productive exercise for both staff and students..

The feedback gathered is used to inform improvements and ensure all major concerns are addressed with a view to improving overall student satisfaction.

The research examined the student experience at West Lothian College across a range of areas including:

- Learning and Teaching (14 Questions)
- Student Association (5 Questions)
- Information Services (4 Questions)
- College Atmosphere (4 Questions)
- Facilities and Estates (3 Questions)
- Corporate Social Responsibility (2 Questions)
- Admissions and Enrolment (9 Questions)
- Bursaries and Student Support (2 Questions)
- Preparation for Learning, Life and Work (7 Questions)
- Equalities and Diversity (4 Questions)

The SOCE questions remained the same for 2017-18 to allow a direct comparison and benchmarking to the 2016-17 SOCE analysis. A new section to the report entitled 'Key changes for improved Student Satisfaction in 2017-18' is introduced for this year to allow a commentary on key changes that were made as a result of the 2016-17 SOCE analysis.

The report will give an overview of the method used to collect the data, the response breakdown per centre and overall analysis for each main area within the survey. The SOCE question set, key comments and percentages for each question are included within the appendix. An overview infographic is noted in Appendix B.

The report breaks down satisfaction responses for a variety of services across the College and presents key findings for each area.

## Survey Methodology

The survey is an on-line tool to make gathering and reporting information as efficient and cost effective as possible and to work to reduce printing.

The online evaluation used a 54 item Likert-scale survey that contained standard College statements to which the respondent marked against 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree', 'strongly disagree'. Given the exploratory nature of this research, detailed qualitative information was also utilised to help present students' viewpoints. Open-ended response/comments boxes were available at the end of each section in order to gather this qualitative data.

Responses were gathered from 1201 students enrolled on a course at West Lothian College.

The research utilised an online survey provider – Survey Monkey, to assist in constructing the questionnaire in an appropriate format and also provided a place to host the evaluation.

A link to the survey was emailed to all course tutors with an explanation of its purpose and instructions on how to complete it. The survey was also targeted directly to students. Students were given 4 weeks to complete the survey. Every week that the survey was open, an update on response rates were sent to course tutors to increase participation.

The survey link was also made available on the home page of the student website, on social media and emailed to all 2017-18 students.

In order to help improve the response rate a chance to win a £50 Centre Voucher, was offered as an incentive to students. This was an incentive similar used in 2016-17, which aided with improving the overall response rate for the survey.

## Overview of Responses

Table 1 shows the overall response rate over the last three academic years. Responses were gathered from **1201 students** enrolled in a course at the College. This was down 1.6% on the 2016-17 SOCE response rate. **24%** of the AY 2017-18 student cohort responded to the SOCE survey in November 2017 which, although still exceeding the target response rate of 1200, is not high enough. The College is currently exploring ways in which to reduce the number of surveys our students are asked to participate in with a view to increasing the overall response rate.

### Response rate three year comparison

<b>2015-16 Response Rate</b>	<b>2016-17 Response Rate</b>	<b>Response Variance %</b>	<b>2017-18 Response Rate</b>	<b>Response Variance %</b>	<b>Number of enrolments in AY 2017-18</b>	<b>2017-18 Response rate as % of AY 2017-18 enrolments</b>
1055	1221	+15.7%	1201	-1.6%	4921	24%

### Student Satisfaction comparison

Tables 2 and 3 show overall student satisfaction over three years and a breakdown of student satisfaction levels per Academic Centre over the last two years.

Positively, overall student satisfaction has increased for the second consecutive year.

The biggest increase in satisfaction per centre is in Computing and Engineering, at 4.8%, and Business and Creative at 4.1%.

Health, Social Care, Science and Social Science achieved a lower response rate than comparable centres which may have impacted negatively on the result for this centre. Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing achieved a good response rate but a drop in overall satisfaction. The drop in satisfaction can be further analysed, linked to a deeper analysis of satisfaction rates for Learning and Teaching.

<b>2015-16 Satisfaction %</b>	<b>2016-17 Satisfaction %</b>	<b>Variance %</b>	<b>2017-18 Satisfaction %</b>	<b>Variance %</b>
88%	90.5%	+2.5%	92.8%	+2.3%

<b>Centre</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Number of potential students in Centre**</b>	<b>Responses per % of Centre</b>	<b>% of overall SOCE responses</b>	<b>Centre 2016-17</b>	<b>Centre 2017-18</b>	<b>Variance %</b>
Assisted Programmes	33	103	32%	2.7%	92%	93.8%	+1.8%
Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing	140	300	47%	11.7%	94.5%	93.2%	-1.3%
Business and Creative	139	506	27%	11.6%	88%	92.1%	+4.1%
Computing and Engineering	205	504	41%	17.1%	85.5%	90.3%	+4.8%
Construction and Motor Vehicle	127	419	30%	10.6%	91.5%	92.7%	+1.2%
Health, Social Care, Science and Social Science	152	556	27%	12.7%	92.5%	92.4%	-0.1%
Hospitality and Travel & Tourism	67	888	7%	5.6%	91.5%	93.9%	+2.4%
Childhood Practice, Sport and Fitness	263	582	45%	21.9%	91.5%	92.1%	+0.6%
Short Courses	63	Unknown	N/A	5.2%	89%	96.4%	+7.4%

\*Due to rounding percentages may not add up exactly to 100%

\*\* Figures include FT, PT, OL, Schools and Community courses (all recorded enrolments for that centre in November of AY 2017-18)

## **SOCE AY2016-17 Recommendations and progress on Enhancement Actions**

The SOCE report of AY2016-17 made a number of recommendations for Centres to follow through on areas where satisfaction levels were low and where negative student feedback had been received. Academic and Service Centres used the SOCE Report to evaluate service delivery and a number of Enhancement Actions were put in place across the College to take student feedback on board.

Actions taken to address recommendations from the SOCE AY2016-17 Report are:

- An improved Keep Warm Plan was implemented to improve information/communication flow to applicants from point of application to enrolment.
- A Business Process Review of the Admissions process was completed and a new email response system introduced. This removed the need to post letters, improving speed and reliability of communications.
- We introduced the first ever West Lothian College Information and Campus Tour Day on a Saturday which aimed to showcase the College facilities and courses and opened up the campus up to all potential applicants, influencers and the local community.
- Student complaints about the lack of resources in the Motor Vehicle were addressed through:
  - Procurement of 6 additional cars for practical classroom work
  - Agreement obtained on risk management of students working on staff cars which allowed the re-introduction of this practical activity for students
  - Partnership agreements have been established with local organisations, such as First Bus, to provide student placement and apprenticeship opportunities
- A Student Induction Survey was introduced to gather feedback on the overall student experience, pre-course entry.
- Induction packs for all students were issued on Induction day which included key information about the Student Association, Terrace Restaurant, Platinum Salon, Safe Guarding, reminder to fill in the Student Induction Survey and the Endurance Fitness Suite.
- The Student Association developed and introduced their SPARKLE feedback tool to amplify the student voice and support continuous improvement in learning, teaching and assessment.
- We introduced a quarterly Success Stories booklet providing improved information for students and other college stakeholders.

- Centres have reviewed course delivery schedules for 2017-18 to work towards reducing assessment overload
- Investment in the visitor's car parking area has created 30 more spaces.
- Investment made in ICT including WIFI cabling, computer refresh, laptop trolleys, and Moodle development, has improved online access to learning and teaching materials and is helping us work towards reduced printing costs.
- A re-focus on course information and overall layout, and a mobile optimised home page of the college website, has ensured ease of application for potential applicants to the College.
- The Student Volunteer Hub was promoted through Student Association attendance at Induction. Volunteering opportunities are also promoted through the College hosting of two Volunteer Network Events and the Volunteer Network Awards Celebration.

## Learning and Teaching

Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

Question	Average satisfaction for 2015-16	Average satisfaction for 2016-17	Average satisfaction for 2017-18	Satisfaction % Variance
The College offers a good range of courses	95%	96%	93%	-3%
My course is what I expected	83%	84%	87%	+3%
Teaching materials are of good quality and relevant to my course	82%	92%	89%	-3%
The standard of teaching accommodation is of high quality	82%	90%	87%	-3%
The standard of ICT equipment is of high quality	68%	71%	66%	-5%
A variety of learning and teaching methods have been used	82%	87%	86%	-1%
The quality and effectiveness of the teaching is high	83%	90%	87%	-3%
There are plenty of opportunities to discuss my progress with staff	81%	87%	84%	-3%
My learning and study skills have been developed during the course	82%	89%	87%	-2%
I have received good information and guidance on what was required for assessments	80%	87%	88%	+1%

The timing of my assessments has been well spaced and logical	70%	77%	72%	-5%
I have received helpful and constructive feedback of my assessments	77%	84%	83%	-1%
Overall guidance and support from my course tutor has been good	84%	93%	89%	-4%
Employers engage with my learning experience in College and the workplace	New Question	61%	60%	-1%

In 2017-18, West Lothian College offered over 80 full-time courses and 100 part-time courses. All full time courses received more applications than there were available places. Despite a diverse range of course options being available, there was a 3% decrease in satisfaction for this question. There is no further qualitative information available from this question to support analysis of additional courses or modes of study students would want to be made available and to inform strategic reviews of the curriculum portfolio.

It is disappointing to note a decrease in satisfaction across 12 out of 14 questions for this segment of the survey. A number of qualitative comments give us some insight into possible reasons for this, for example:

**Question: Teaching materials are of good quality and relevant to my course:**

*“I think it's shocking that lecturers can no longer give us paper handouts...; what about people that can't access the internet?”*

*“I think personally that some of the learning packs and course layout should be handed out sooner and from the beginning we should have a clear understanding of what is required from us.”*

These responses potentially refer to:

- the introduction of staff photocopying limits
- restrictions on printing in the library and the introduction of student charges for photocopying
- increased emphasis on staff and students using Moodle for learning and teaching materials

The first response indicates a possible lack of understanding where staff and students are not clear about college targets for sustainability, the benefits of Moodle, and facilities that are available to ensure all students have accessible access to materials required for their course. The second response is of greater concern as students should have immediate access to course materials.

**Question: The standard of ICT equipment is of high quality**

*“the lack of wifi within t1f1 has had a large impact on my learning and has ruined many lessons”*

*“lack amount of computers, the computers are spread thinly around the college”*  
*“college entered “paper free” too early as ICT is not in every room”.*

We are still receiving negative comments about the strength of our WIFI signal, despite the work that has been done to resolve this. It is disappointing to continue to see comments about the lack of computers when almost all classrooms across the College have a full or partial suite of computers and there are computer suites available in the Learning Resource Centre. It is true that there are times, for example early in the academic year, when we experience very high demand for computers in the Learning Resource Centre and it is possible that feedback like this results from a student not being able to access a computer at a particular time.

At the point of survey, the College was experiencing significant IT problems caused by a Cyber-attack which resulted in significant WIFI and network down time and which may have negatively impacted on the student experience.

**Question: The quality and effectiveness of teaching is high**

*“I would like to see more specialized Lecturers, Lecturing in their specified subject. Receiving information from slide shows every class, makes me lack the motivation to learn, its regurgitated knowledge that I could be reading myself at home or during the class”*

*“Not helpful that tutor left after block one”*

*“We have had five different tutors since our course started in August”*

*“Lecturer is on long term sick leave and despite the best efforts of another lecturer, we’ve fallen behind in the class. We now have a temporary lecturer in but it’s not been as smooth a transition as it could have been”*

*“Two new tutors to the college. Hasn’t always been easy to get bits of info required. I imagine just teething issues as its all new to them too but not ideal for new students when your tutor can’t help”*

There was a significant 3% decline in students saying that the quality and effectiveness of the teaching is high. Qualitative comments examples such as those noted above, highlight a negative impact on the student experience and the importance of stable and effective relationships between the student and lecturer.

Positively, many qualitative comments were very complimentary, praising lecturing staff and the quality of learning and teaching:

*“Loved the course! Gave me so much confidence.”*

*“most enjoyable and the chef was excellent”*

*“Really good course and nice staff”*

**Question: The timing of my assessments has been well spaced and logical.**

*"I find that assessments all seem to fall within a few weeks of each other, which can be a lot of work to do, especially when also working full time."*

*"overload of work at the start, assessments not spaced out enough"*

*"My learning experience at the college has been great, however the only thing I would fault are how close together the assessments are. I have 5 classes, and all the assessments are usually at the same time, I would hope they could be spaced out more."*

*"Time isn't used efficiently, learning is a bit all over the place, days can go by without actually doing anything and assessments are being crammed in at the end of the block"*

The satisfaction rate has dropped by 5% on the previous year for this question and it is disappointing to see the qualitative responses noted above. Action was taken with curriculum centres to address feedback from the previous SOCE report but there is clearly more work that can be done to integrate assessments within units and courses to reduce the assessment burden for students.

**Question: Employers engage with my learning experience in college and the workplace**

*"I feel that more support and guidance should be put in place for going out to placement"*

*"I have not yet had the chance to speak with employers, although some are planned for the future"*

The College has a strategic aim to include work placements and work experience elements in every course and aims to give all students opportunities to engage with employers. Many courses have well established placement opportunities and other areas of the curriculum with less well developed work related opportunities are planning to include this in course frameworks.

Positively, 86% of students reported that they felt confident they could study at a higher level following the completion of their course. This is **up 2%** on 2016-17 and highlights the positive improvements being made to ensure that the students are being supported to attain a positive destination. Destination Analysis figures to be published in March 2018 will, it is hoped, support this.

## Student Association

### Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
I am aware of the Student Association, its purpose and benefit to the Students?	62%	67%	71%	+4%
Do you understand the importance of having a Class Representative?	78%	70%	73%	+3%
Are you aware of who your class representative is?	78%	62%	77%	+15%
Do they keep you informed of any developments and relay information?	64%	52%	58%	+6%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>+7%</b>

It is good to note that satisfaction around the Student Association profile and role has increased significantly in 2017-18 from the previous year. However, while overall satisfaction increased in 2017-18 from 2016-17, the rate of satisfaction is still less in 2017-18 when compared to 2015-16. Reasons for this may be linked to the annual turnover of the student body and the change in Student Association Officers.

There were many positive qualitative comments made, highlighting the good work carried out by the student association. These include:

*“Our Student association is great! Just keep doing what you are doing!”*

*“I feel everything works well as it is.”*

*“I find they are very accessible for my needs. Easy to get hold of and all very helpful.”*

*“As I study in the evenings I am not sure if this applies? We have not heard about any student events etc.”*

*“Organised meetings for part time students.”*

However, as in previous years, respondents did mention that more could be done to ensure all students know about what the Student Association has to offer, especially engaging with part-time students:

*“Didn't know there was one... Second time I have studied part time at West Lothian and I have never heard of it.”*

*“I'm not quite sure as I'm an evening class student.”*

In August 2017, the Student Association developed and implemented their SPARKLE Toolkit to support an effective process for evaluation of learning and teaching. The Toolkit was developed in consultation with NUS, SPARQS and Education Scotland and was an ambitious project for the Student Association. The role of class representatives in the process is a difficult and challenging one and the project has received some negative feedback:

*“Sparkle is patronising, treat us like adults not 5 year olds.”*

*“Stop with the sparkle document”*

*“I think the whole “sparkle” thing is quite patronising in all honesty.”*

*“The sparkle document should be related to students not the tutors.”*

These comments evidence a degree of frustration with the process and a possible lack of understanding about the process and the role of class representatives and students.

Generally, respondents understood the importance of having a class representative and are aware of who their class representative is. Within the comments, there is a general desire for more feedback and communication around the measures the Student Association put in place following issues or concerns being raised:

*“They could inform the students what their goals and achievements are.”*

*“Better communication skills.”*

*“Keeping students up to date with events and news is the only way to keep students attention on the fact that the Students Association does actually work on behalf of the students for the students.”*

*“More information to us the students and not just our class rep.”*

## Information Services

### Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
There is good information available about the College and its courses	89%	94%	91%	-3%
I received good advice and information prior to starting my course	78%	81%	80%	-1%
There is a good range of Learner Support services available in 'Spectrum' i.e. Bursary advice and guidance	78%	78%	79%	+1%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

80% students either strongly agreed or agreed they received good information about the course prior to starting.

Of the 7% of survey respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with the information provided prior to starting, the main area of concern highlighted in qualitative feedback is a delay in receiving timetable information:

*"Give timetables and year schedule earlier."*

91% of students stated there is good information available about the College and the courses, which is down from 95% in 2016-17. Although the recorded percentage suggests there is room for improvement, learners responded positively about the information provided to them and the support staff encountered:

*"Warm and welcoming with so much information to hand."*

*"Great College and great Tutors"*

A further area which is captured in the survey is satisfaction with the range of support services. 79% of students are satisfied with the range of learner support services such as bursaries and guidance:

*"I was pleasantly surprised at how fantastic the student support and lecturers have been. Always keen to help."*

*"The staff in student funding are always very pleasant and helpful."*

*"...both departments [Bursaries & Student Support] stand a purpose and I believe they are both great for the students"*

## College Atmosphere

Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
The general atmosphere of the College is welcoming	89%	92%	91%	-1%
My overall first impressions of the College are positive	90%	93%	92%	-1%
I find the College staff friendly and approachable	91%	94%	92%	-2%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

For 2017-18 there has been a 1% decrease in students saying they found the general atmosphere of the College welcoming. Whilst the percentages suggest room for improvement, almost all comments surrounding atmosphere and friendliness of staff were positive:

*“The college staff are helpful and try to give as much information as possible.”*

*“Staff are honestly the best, they are friendly, open and genuinely honest when it comes to feedback.”*

*“Everyone at the college is welcoming, and helpful.”*

*“All staff are friendly and supportive.”*

*“Staff very approachable and always have time to answer any queries.”*

*“It’s great there is no bad atmosphere and I think it is a really good college.”*

92% of students said the overall first impression of the College was positive, which is a decrease of 1% on 2016-17. Despite this slight decrease, comments in this area remain positive:

*“West Lothian College has come on leaps and bounds from my experience studying here 10 years ago. Brilliant college”*

*“Great college. Great to be here and to learn. Thank you.”*

*“It is a great college.”*

The strength of West Lothian College as an inclusive, welcoming environment with supportive, friendly and approachable staff is reflected in the positive comments, and the student satisfaction rate for this element of the survey remains high.

## Facilities and Estates

### Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
The College facilities are adequate for my needs	94%	94%	96%	+2%
Are College catering facilities adequate for your needs?	87%	86%	89%	+3%
Are you happy with the cleanliness of the College?	94%	96%	96%	-
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>+2%</b>

96% of students from West Lothian College said that College facilities were adequate for their needs - up 2% from 2016-17.

Satisfaction surrounding College catering facilities is currently 89%, which is an increase of 3% on 2016-17. This is a positive result although there are qualitative comments surrounding lack of choice and healthy options and a lack of facilities for evening classes:

*"There isn't enough selection"*

*"Lack of catering facilities in the evening. Perhaps more vending machines in all the building."*

*"Healthy food could be cheaper than the actual junk food. it only encourages students to buy chips, or coca cola instead of a bottle of smoothie."*

*"Coffee facilities to be improved for evening classes."*

*"Limited catering for evening classes. Often machine not working"*

In addition to the above comments, there are a large number of comments regarding payment and the provision of card or cash withdrawal facilities:

*"There should be the option to pay by card or have a card machine in the college."*

*"Definitely need to take card payments or offer a cashline or pre-loaded college card for canteen."*

*"Have the canteen accept card or the vending machines take card."*

*"Catering side of things are good, only problem is that bank cards cannot be used"*

These concerns will be addressed in the current academic year as the College is currently implementing Chip and Pin facilities for students and installing a Cash Machine on campus.

Another area which continues to score highly is cleanliness of the College, with 96% of students saying they are satisfied with the cleanliness of facilities. The majority of negative comments are linked to the cleanliness of toilets:

*"The toilets are left filthy at times. I know there's not much college domestic staff can do re: people's poor hygiene standards!"*

Car parking demand consistently exceeds supply and is an area that receives negative comments:

*“Parking within the college is shocking and needs to be addressed.”*

*“Parking is not sufficient.”*

*“Not a lot of onsite parking.”*

*“Parking is terrible.”*

The College has increased parking spaces for AY2017-18 and is doing everything possible to manage parking effectively.

## Admissions and Enrolment

### Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
Were you informed about your interview in time for you to prepare?	74%	72%	72%	-
Were the interview instructions clear?	83%	73%	72%	-1%
Did you get the result of your interview in a reasonable time?	82%	72%	73%	+1%
Did you receive all required information along with your offer of place letter?	78%	74%	73%	-1%
Were the instructions prior to starting your course clear?	75%	87%	90%	+3%
Did you receive all the required information during your induction?	80%	81%	79%	-2%
Did you receive your student matriculation card within 6 weeks' after starting at College?	32%	70%	74%	+4%
Did you receive your student log in within 2 weeks of starting (for logging into your own space on the computers)?	74%	72%	70%	-2%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>-</b>

In 2017-18, 79% of learners who were eligible for a matriculation card received this within 6 weeks. This follows on from implementation of a new process in 2016-17, which saw a marked increase in satisfaction from 31% in 2015-16, to 70%.

An area which has been highlighted as an area of concern is whether learners have received their College log in within two weeks of starting. 76% of eligible 2017-18 learners surveyed received their log in details within the two week timeframe. This percentage has remained relatively stable across the three year period but continues to be highlighted as an area where improvement is needed.

96% of students who had an interview agreed they were informed about their interview in time to prepare, with 95% agreeing the interview instructions given to them prior to their interview date were clear.

Results within the area of admissions and enrolment are positive, in particular around matriculation and pre-entry information. However, satisfaction rates related to course interviews and student log-ins are not improved on 2015-16 rates

## Bursaries and Student Support

### Question set response rate and 3 year comparison

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on LY
Did you receive the help you needed to complete your Bursary application?	83%	89%	87%	-2%
If you used Student Support, did you get the help you needed?	88%	93%	92%	-1%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

Of the survey respondents who completed a bursary application, 87% expressed they were satisfied with the help they received in completing their application.

Positive responses highlighting support provided include:

*“Bursary application dealt with very quickly.”*

*“The staff in student funding are always very pleasant and helpful.”*

A few negative responses indicate that some students find documentation complex and frustrating:

*“Forms were a bit complicated.”*

*“I think you should check if students are coming back and just keep their bursary packs because filling in a bursary form every year when you’re a returning student is very frustrating.”*

*“No communication with student funding when handing in wrong documents”*

Positively, 92% of respondents that accessed student support were satisfied that they received the help they needed, with this positive experience reflected in the comments:

*“Extremely supportive, helpful and friendly.”*

*“I was pleasantly surprised at how fantastic the student support and lecturers have been. Always keen to help.”*

*“[They] have all been excellent help whenever I have had an enquiry or asked for assistance.”*

## Preparation for Learning, Life and Work

### Question set responses and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
My course gives me the opportunity to participate in a meaningful work related experience	67%	80%	80%	-
My lecturer involves me in planning how my course work is scheduled and assessed	75%	78%	78%	-
My course work allows me to participate in charity fundraising and community events	48%	49%	50%	+1%
I am aware of the Student Volunteer Hub and the opportunities for volunteering in the community	N/A	57%	52%	-5%
My course gives me the opportunity to participate in exchange programmes with students from other Countries/ Colleges	N/A	43%	45%	+2%
My course prepares me for employment and meets my career goal	80%	82%	82%	-
Following the completion of my course I am confident I can study at a higher level	84%	84%	86%	+2%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>-</b>

In order to create a stronger workforce for the future, West Lothian College aims to get all learners into a positive destination whether this is further study, employment, training or work experience/ volunteering, by preparing them for learning, life and work.

80% of students said that their course gave them an opportunity to participate in meaningful work placements. As highlighted in previous reports, some courses have more opportunity for work placements than others. For example, childhood practice courses build in placements to the course whereas not all business courses do. Qualitative responses include:

*“No work experience is offered, it’s all theory based and it makes it difficult to visualise how or why, what you’re learning is relevant to what you’re going to experience ‘in the real world’.*

*“More support required for volunteering/work placement if it's to be mandatory.”*

50% of students said the course allowed them to participate in volunteering and community events. This reflects an increase of 1% on 2016-17 results. 52% of students agreed that they are aware of the Volunteer Hub, this represents a reduction of 5% on 2016-17 results.

Responses around volunteering support a lack of awareness in the opportunities available to learners:

*“More information on volunteering please.”*  
*“I never knew there was a volunteer hub at all.”*

45% agree that their course gives them the opportunity to participate in exchange programmes with students from other Countries or Colleges.

82% of students agreed that their course prepares them for employment and meets their career goals, with 86% of students saying they felt more confident that they can study at a higher level after completion of their course.

Qualitative responses give limited information to inform improvements for this area:

*“This course will help me for my job I want to do in the future.”*  
*“I am already studying at level 9, and hope to do more study at the college after.”*

## Equalities and Diversity

### Question set response rate and 3 year comparison:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	+/- on Last Year
I have been treated fairly by the College throughout my period of study	90%	95%	95%	-
The diverse groups that make up the College community broadly get on well together	83%	86%	86%	-
I have found the College generally accessible	93%	96%	94%	-2%
I have not encountered any difficulties when using College services due to my race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or religion/belief	91%	94%	93%	-1%
<b>SECTION TOTAL</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

The response rate for this element of the survey, as with previous years, is high, with **92%** of students agreeing they are treated fairly by the College.

Qualitative responses for this element are almost all positive, highlighting the college values:

*“I’m from South Africa and haven’t felt any different to anyone else.”*  
*“I have a health issue and no one has treated me any differently, apart from providing me with extra support when needed.”*  
*“Everybody is the same at the College; it does not matter where you are from. Thank you.”*

There was only one negative response recorded in the survey surrounding absences due to mental health issues:

*“Absence related to a mental health disability is penalised.”*

The College continues to do good work to widen access for all students and this specific response is not representative of the College overall.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Overall, the survey results for AY2017-18 evidence high levels of student satisfaction across all elements.

We have successfully addressed the majority of concerns raised in the 2016-17 SOCE survey so it is disappointing to see the same type of concerns related to ICT arising again, despite the College's continuing investment in our Estates and IT infrastructure. There has been significant progress in improving the quality of WIFI access for students as well as investment in computer equipment across the College campus. Many of the concerns expressed about the quality of IT have possibly resulted from the cyber threat experienced by the College prior to the winter break and which occurred at the same time as the SOCE survey was being completed.

The main area of concern from the SOCE analysis is the disappointing decline in student satisfaction in the area of Learning and Teaching. This is the most important part of the survey and critical to student success. Regrettably, it is often difficult to pinpoint actions for improvement as qualitative evidence from students is not given. While most qualitative comments are very positive, there are a number of less positive comments that warrant further investigation and action.

While we continue to meet and exceed our target response rate we capture a small percentage of feedback from the overall student population and responses are not necessarily valid and reliable. There are a number of potential reasons for this including:

- Survey overload and repetition leads to poor student engagement
- Poor staff engagement in the survey results in poor student engagement
- Part time evening students are generally less interested and engaged in wider college life and work
- Question sets are not understood by respondents
- Respondents do not give sufficient qualitative responses

There are a number of recurring themes to be noted:

- Lack of access to WIFI and computers
- Late timetabling
- Staff changes
- Assessment overload
- Food choices/availability in the e-meal café
- Parking
- Lack of awareness of wider College initiatives

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the feedback received from the student respondents included in this survey. Recommendations should be considered by Curriculum and Service Teams to inform evaluation and enhancement planning for AY 2018-19:

- To reduce the overall number of student surveys, SOCE questions sets to be reviewed, consulted on through the Student Association and transferred across to the SSES survey
- The Healthy Working Lives group meet with the Student Association and Catering Manager to explore healthy food alternatives to be made available in the e-meal café.
- Roll out an education campaign in September 2018 to inform students about the College's work to reduce our carbon footprint and reasons for the move away from paper based learning and teaching materials.
- Moodle training to be included as part of Student Induction in September 2018 to improve student access to, and effective use of, learning and teaching materials
- Centre timetabling to be finalised by June 2018 and structured to minimise staff changes post course commencement
- Course assessment scheduling, and opportunities for assessment integration, to take place as a mandatory part of prior verification
- SPARKLE tool to be evaluated for AY2018-19 taking account of student feedback

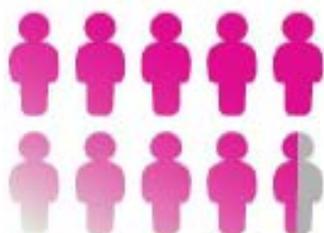
## Appendix A

SOCE question set:

[www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SOCE2017](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SOCE2017)

## SOCE Results – Learning and Teaching

Overall, the 2017-18 SOCE results show 83% of students satisfied with learning and teaching, down 2% from 2016-17. Satisfaction levels can be summarised as follows:



93% of students surveyed thought the College offers a good range of courses



88% felt that they received good information and guidance for assessments – up by 1%



86% agreed that a variety of learning and teaching methods are used – down 1%



89% of students agree that the quality of learning and teaching materials is high, and relevant to their course – down 3%



Overall student satisfaction in learning and teaching has increased 13% since 2015-16, despite a 2% decrease since 2016-17



71% are fully aware of the Student Association and its benefit to students – up 4% since 2016-17



86% of students felt confident they could study at a higher level following the completion of their course



87% of students stated that the quality and effectiveness of teaching is high – down 3%



87% of students stated that their course is what they expected – up 3%



96% of students agreed the overall guidance and support from the tutor has been good



There has been a 2% increase in student satisfaction around students receiving their matriculation card within 6 weeks, now sitting at 74%

## West Lothian College

28 February 2018

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### Learning & Teaching Committee

#### Regional Plan 2017-2018 Update - Dashboard

February 2018

#### Commentary

- 1 The College is on track to realise the credit target.
- 2 Further Education Full-time being closely monitored and student support being increased to support Block 1 remediation and retention of current students.
- 3 Foundation Apps recruitment above target. College working in partnership with Fife Council ad has secured growth.
- 4 Schools activity above target (target 328 actual 445 including Foundation Apprentices from outwith West Lothian))
- 5 Workbased experience being expanded across programmes.
- 6 Business engagement driven by work on Flexible Workforce Fund with 155 employers contacted over recent weeks.
- 7 High demand for and provision of workbased learning.
- 8 Associate student places expanded. (Final number to be confirmed, 30% growth anticipated).
- 9 Several areas of commercial activity above target, NHS below. Overall, contribution percentage being monitored at time of writing. CHS contract approaching tender period.
- 10 International work progressing, 118 students and 21 staff will study/work overseas this year.
- 11 Management Accounts key points:
  - Surplus improvement of £165k compared to December 2017
  - Positive Commercial and Enterprise training position
  - Underspend in some teaching centres

## West Lothian College

28 February 2018

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12 In relation to Carbon Reduction - as a result of participation in the College Energy Efficiency Pathfinder Project in 2017 the College delivered on its 5-year Carbon Reduction Plan by achieving :

- a 17% reduction in annual energy costs; and
- 177 tonnes of Carbon Savings per annum.

**George Hotchkiss**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning

28 February 2018

# Regional Plan 2017 – 2020

	2015/16	Baseline 2016/17	Progress February	ROA Target 2017/18	Progress	Aspirations 2020
<b>1 Activity Target (Credits)</b>	43,088	43,499	42,713 	43,988		45,706
<b>2 Increase Attainment</b>						
FEFT 64%		62%		66%		72 %
FEPT 71%		73%		75%		80 %
HEFT 70%		77%		73%		78 %
HEPT 66%		79%		75%		80 %
Schools 66%		68%		69%		75 %
<b>3 Foundation Apprentices</b>		16		112		200
<b>4 HN and Vocational School Places</b>		250		328		350
<b>5 Full Time Learners with Workplace Skills Assessed</b> Realistic work experience within the course – (52 programmes – 936 students)		936		1300		2000
<b>6 Engage with Businesses</b>		760		1000		2000+
<b>7 Increase workbased upskilling and learning opportunities</b>		12%		20% activity		30% of activity
<b>8 Learner articulation to University</b>		400		405		460 learners
<b>9 Maintain commercial &amp; contract contribution at</b>		27%		25%		27%
<b>10 Increase International Annual Visits/Exchanges</b>		100		100		200+ Learners
Execshdrv/PW/General		1				

## Regional Plan 2017 – 2020

### 11 Maintain Financial sustainability

157k



157K



£157k surplus

### 12 Reduce Carbon Footprint by tonnes

£363k



£50k



£200k Investment  
Another 56 tonnes

Baseline 2014-15 – 1443 tonnes

29 tonnes



### Key

Red	This target remains challenging and significant actions will be required for achievement
Amber	With some additional action planning there is confidence in achievement
Green	There is a very high degree of confidence in achievement of this target

# Regional Outcome Agreement

- Reflect the realisation of the Scottish Economic Strategy at a local level.
- Be informed by local and national labour market information.
- Set stretch targets in relation to **recruitment** and **attainment** within priority groups.

# Priority Outcomes

Recruitment

Retention

Attainment

Progression (employment/study)

# Priority Groups

- 10% most deprived postcodes
- Learners with protected characteristics
- Care experienced learners
- Senior Phase pupils
- STEM Provision
- +Address Gender Segregation

# Priority Activity

- Attainment
- Articulation
- Advanced Standing

## **Learning & Teaching Committee**

### **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Report**

This report provides an overview of activity in Quality and Learner Services in the period November 2017 to January 2018.

Significant action has been undertaken to address exam preparation and to promote effective quality arrangements.

An update is provided on teaching observations and approvals work.

Additional information is provided on actions underway to improve retention and attainment of current learners, this is in response to discussion at the Learner Attainment Group.

### **Action**

The Learning and Teaching Committee is asked to note and comment on the report.

**George Hotchkiss**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning

28 February 2018



# Quality Assurance and Enhancement Report

**February 2018**

**George Hotchkiss**  
Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning

**Claire Glen**  
Quality Manager

## **Introduction**

This report provides an overview of the activity of Quality and Learner Services in the period November 2017 to February 2018.

A key feature in this reporting period was the College's development year Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan being independently scrutinised by Education Scotland and Scottish Funding Council and both being formally endorsed in December 2017.

## **College Evaluative Report 2016/17 and College Enhancement Plan 2017/18**

The development year Evaluative Report 2016/17 feedback was described as an accurate and honest reflection of the College, with a significant number of areas of positive practice identified across all Quality Indicators. Feedback from the Scottish Funding Council has been very positive.

The resulting actions contained within the Enhancement Plan 2017/18 were noted as being clear and appropriate to address the areas for development that had been identified. As an evidence based framework, all areas of positive practice were directly linked back to their source within the College.

Since endorsement, progress has been closely monitored through the self-evaluation process and through the new committee meeting structure.

### **Curriculum Review 2018/19**

A Curriculum Portfolio Review took place in November 2017 (with a focus on full-time and schools provision) across all subject areas. As part of this review, we have made a commitment to introducing a wider range of work placement and practically assessed units to support the drive to improve retention and attainment, for example, introducing work placements for all Computing learners in 2018/19.

We have established rigorous team discussion and data analysis as the basis for curriculum review has ensured that our portfolio planning is an ongoing process as opposed to an occasional event.

Planning has included approval of the following new courses:

Foundation Apprenticeship (SCQF Level 6) in:

- Accountancy
- Information Technology
- Scientific Technologies: Laboratory Skills
- Food and Drink Operations
- \* Fabrication & Welding (shorter version)
- \* SVQ in Interior Systems (Construction): Dry Lining – Fixing (SCQF level 5)
- \* SVQ in Interior Systems (Construction): Dry Lining – Finishing (SCQF level 5)

(The above will be progressed in partnership with employers)  
Travel and Tourism (SCQF level 5)

SVQ in Driving Goods Vehicles (SVQ Level 3)  
PDA Laboratory Science (SCQF Level 7)  
HNC Digital Design and Web Development (SCQF Level 7)  
HND Accounting (SCQF Level 8)

As an extension of the review course content, delivery and assessment is being revised in Construction.

Part-time provision was agreed in January and concluded the first stage of the 2018/19 planning process. This will be completed during the course of February subject to confirmation of funding from Scottish Funding Council and feedback on our Regional Outcome Agreement.

\* These shortened courses are designed to promote employability quickly.

### **Self-Evaluation – Quality Improvement in Learning and Teaching services (QUILTs)**

College teams have continued to make good progress in self-evaluation activities, including uploading evidence of areas of strength to our MOODLE platform. This evidence forms the basis of the validated framework approach for both the team and College Evaluative Reports.

Our focus in team and College-wide actions is to drive forward consistency of practice, ensure that self-evaluation is target driven, ensure that SMART targets are consistent and ensure best fit of expectations of Education Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council.

The new mixed model of delivery of Essential Skills (Communication and Information Technology) being piloted this session through workshop delivery and by vocational staff has been positively received by both staff and students and early indications are that this model, with some refinement, is an effective model of delivery.

All Curriculum Centres have undertaken Course Risk Assessments and have planned to retain those learners at risk in Block 1 to continue and put in place support mechanisms wherever possible to maximise retention and attainment. Remediation planning is being undertaken with learners with work outstanding from block 1.

Specific examples of progress so far include:

Theme 1 – Leadership and Quality Culture:

Action:

‘Whilst good practice is shared it is not consistent across all curriculum teams’

Update:

Centre Heads are driving forward Best Practice Plans and teams are now working more closely and disseminating expertise. Examples include Childhood Practice working with Hairdressing on integration of teaching and assessment and Sport and Fitness working with Computing and Engineering on improving Performance Indicators at FE level.

Theme 2 – Delivery of learning and services to support learning

Action:

'Facilitation of guidance and support is not consistently applied across all subject areas'

Update:

Centre Heads and Access and Support Service Leader have worked collaboratively to support 18 groups of learners across Computing, Engineering, Business, Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy and Hospitality and provided first line guidance and additional in-class support for these learners.

Theme 3 – Outcomes and Impact

Action:

'Full-time FE success rates are not consistently high across SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6'

Update:

The curriculum review identified courses where outcomes had been consistently low and these were either removed or revised. In addition, course risk assessments have monitored learner performance on these levels and strategies have been put in place to maximise successful outcomes.

### **Internal Audit and Business Improvement**

A Short Life Working Group 'Making Registers Work' has been established in alignment with the Curriculum Review process to ensure that all internal processes fully support effective administrative delivery of the curriculum plan. An Improvement Plan has been created and involves Management Information Systems (MIS), Quality, Curriculum Centres working together in:

- Verification of Curriculum Plan
- Development of Curriculum Frameworks
- Production of standardised timetables for the academic year

This plan supports the timeline for detailed planning for 2019/20 and indicative plans for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

As identified in the previous report, Quality and Learner Services responded to unsatisfactory audit outcomes of Prior Verification (and resulting Control Files) and subsequent consistent negative feedback from curriculum centres regarding the paperwork and associated process.

Centre Heads, Deputes and the Quality Team worked together over this period to visit staff teams, gather qualitative feedback and set about revising the paperwork associated with prior verification, standardisation and the recording of course and unit control files. The purpose of the revision was to support staff in utilising their time to focus on making improvements in learning and teaching and to remove unnecessary repetition and duplication within administrative processes.

As a result of positive feedback from staff, these forms have been updated, piloted across all teams, finalised and issued for use. Progressing in alignment with this is the migration of all course and unit course files (the volume of which at present is around 1257 files) to Microsoft 365 SharePoint. This is a major development and will facilitate future web based desk top Quality Assurance by Centre Heads and Quality. This is an excellent opportunity to clarify audit expectations and an important component in ensuring consistency of practice. The Sport and Fitness team will begin this pilot transfer in February.

A recent audit of Course Team Meetings was very positive, with 70% of documents being sampled meeting 4 or all 5 of the required criteria:

Template used  
Students invited/included  
Professional discussions  
Use of PIs  
Actions logged

Internal verification has been taking place in line with set dates within the operating calendar.

There have been 13 SQA External Verification events this academic session and all have been successful and reported 'High Confidence'.

### **Staff Learning and Development**

A significant learning and development target for this academic year was for all lecturers to be provided with feedback following a formal observation of learning and teaching. The following progress has been made:

153 observations to be carried out (including those in PDA and TQFE):

123 to be undertaken by Centre Heads/Deputes (48 completed)  
19 to be undertaken by CPD and Quality Officer (7 completed)  
7 to be undertaken by Education Scotland (2 completed)  
4 to be undertaken by Quality Manager (1 completed)

75 observations have been scheduled to take place during block 2/3 and 20 observations still to be scheduled

The main development themes identified in this process so far are:

Obtaining student feedback  
The use of Promethean boards  
Questioning techniques

### **PDA and TQFE**

There are 8 members of staff enrolled for the PDA and 6 for the TQFE. All are at various stages within the process and no significant concerns of non-completion at this stage.

### **College Wide Training Activity**

Almost all Personal Learning Plans have been completed with only 12 outstanding and all have a schedule for completion.

Outcomes from Personal Learning Plans 2016/17 have informed the college wide training plan for 2017/18 activities that have been organised so far include:

Minibus Training  
First Aid Training

Fire Awareness  
Lone Worker Awareness  
Quality Processes  
GDPR  
Promethean Training  
MOODLE  
IOSH Managing Safely  
Induction Training

#### Targeted Curriculum Support

As a result of feedback from teams for a more bespoke approach to development, the Quality Team have supported individuals and smaller teams within Curriculum Centres with specific requests that have covered topics including:

Understanding SQA terminology  
How standardisation supports formative decision making  
Approaching integrated assessment

This support has been very well received and actions arising from these sessions have given teams the opportunity to take forward opportunities that are likely to have a positive impact on their future curriculum delivery.

#### Whole College Staff Development Activity

The December Professional Update Event was cancelled due to ongoing ICT security issues. A new approach has been planned for the February Authorised Learner Study week based on staff feedback that. There are 11 sessions on offer across the week:

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)  
Using MS Outlook more effectively  
Basic Introduction to Moodle for staff who only require basic Moodle access  
Managing Workload/Time Management  
Social Media – to raise awareness of the potential risks of inappropriate social media use  
Promethean Board – to deliver an overview to staff who have a very basic knowledge of the full functionality that is available  
Suicide Prevention – an informal session which will provide staff with some techniques to support students who may have suicidal thoughts, specifically targeted towards male students  
Quality Q&A Session – to have an informal discussion regarding any quality concerns staff may have in relation to IV, EV or other quality processes  
A Teaching Observation focus groups to gather feedback on the teaching observation process to date and a To provide the briefing to staff that require any further clarification or missed sessions delivered at team level for the teaching observation process.  
Health & Safety Videos – an opportunity for staff to engage in the suite of health and safety videos.

## External Exams

### Progress update from last meeting

For Maths, two meetings have been held with the maths team, prelim dates have been agreed and an Action Plan is in place. It has been problematic to agree time to spend in schools, however, delivering lecturers are in regular contact with schools and have shared current information. Information from SQA has also been shared with the team.

There is a Maths Support Group (drop in) available to all students twice weekly, offering 5 hours of additional support funded by the STEM Advisory Group.

For Biology, an experienced lecturer is supporting a new lecturer as both are delivering the Higher.

For Psychology, support and development has been provided for the Higher Research Project (40% of final mark) ensuring a clearer understanding of the project this time around. Delivery has been well planned with set deadlines to ensure higher scores are obtained for this research project which in turn will impact on final overall success.

For Care, a development visit by SQA took place and there is now a clearer understanding of expectations and facilitation.

### External Exams 2018

For the SQA Exam Diet 2018, there are 624 learners being presented across National 5 and Higher the following subject areas:

Care  
Childcare and Development  
English  
English for Speakers of Other Languages  
Hospitality: Practical Cake Craft  
Human Biology  
Maths  
Photography  
Physical Education  
Psychology



## **Learning & Teaching – Students Association Report February 2018**

### **Sparkle**

On the date of submitting this report analysis of October and Novembers Sparkle Responses have been fully completed and Decembers has been completed to first draft. The December Sparkle reports, due in after the Christmas break, are not yet complete due to:

- Winter illnesses
- Disruptions through poor weather conditions
- IT Issues
- Class representatives being out on placement

Some departments have a greater completion rate than others due to the above and also due to varying levels of staff engagement with Sparkle. Where staff are engaged in the process, the right support has been made available for students to participate effectively.

The Student Association currently has limited resources to fill in gaps where class representatives are not able to complete work. We have carried out an evaluation of the effectiveness of the current structure and have plans to increase sustainability for academic year 2018-19.

Despite the many barriers to completing Sparkle we have still received a record number of responses. The updated total for students engaged in the Sparkle process is 929 for October, 779 for November and 536 for December. The December total is expected to increase as Class Representatives are continuing to complete this work. We are very pleased with the response rate given that this is the first year of implementation and we are only four months into the process.

### **Sparkle Themes**

While each Centre receives their own specific Sparkle report, there are some college wide themes which have emerged from Sparkle:

- Lack of computer access both in and out of classes including a lack of charge in mobile classrooms. This is having a negative impact on students completing coursework and assessments.

- More printers are needed as a lot of class time is spent trying to print reports or homework which is reducing teaching time significantly. Also the cost of printing is concerning for low income students. Some have to print three submissions of the same portfolio in colour to pass one assessment. Can this be done using online submissions?
- Poor WIFI connection is preventing students from being able to access the internet to work from their own personal computers and also causing lecturers to abandon power point presentations during class as videos and links cannot be accessed.
- Pod 1 & 2 are exceptionally noisy spaces which makes it difficult to hear the lecturer and concentrate on coursework.
- Students do not have college email addresses and are requesting that they are given one.
- The IT issues before Christmas break had a negative impact on learning, teaching and assessment putting many classes behind schedule.
- The lecture style chairs are causing students to report back pain and when using mobile classrooms. Students are having to use the floor as the small table cannot hold the laptop and the textbook or worksheets.
- Moodle is not consistently working from outside the college which prevents whole classes from accessing work from lecturers.
- Some errors in attendance reporting due to lecturer absence or self-directed study are leading to bursaries and childcare payments being blocked for the week. This has been very stressful for students who have already limited funds and has created a lot of additional work for the Bursaries team who are dealing with distressed students.

It should be noted that most of the negative feedback was accompanied by constructive student suggestions on how to make the issue more positive. Students feel ownership of their learning space and loyalty to the staff who support them. Students have named specific lecturers and other staff, including library and student support staff, as being exceptional in their work.

A Class Rep Lunch was held in January to allow Class Reps to feedback on the role of Class Rep, completion of Sparkle documents, barriers faced and general thoughts on the work of the Student Association. This was planned on the days when the snow was at its worst so attendance was lower than expected although Class Reps also contributed by email and phone to give a better idea of their experiences. This was a very positive process with Class Reps reporting that they found value in the position, saw the potential for value to the college in the Sparkle process, had witnessed positive changes based on their feedback and suggestions were made to improve the process including reviewing the language used to make it easier to understand. The Sparkle Toolkit is being reviewed for the next academic year. We will use student feedback and engagement with other key stakeholders to evaluate and refine the process.

**Sustainability of the Student Association**

With the launch of the new Sparkle process and rapid growth of the Student Association, we have recently completed an evaluation to identify key areas for improvement and continued sustainability. We have assessed all aspects of the work that we do, the value and impact this work has on campus and how we can drive this work forward in a constructive manner.

The new Sparkle process has been challenging to get started and refinements have been made as we have progressed. We have sought feedback from Students, the Learning & Teaching Committee and Senior Management to help steer the direction we are taking to ensure the information gathered is useful, effective and not gathered to just tick a box. The potential wealth of information Sparkle could provide should be fully exploited and we aim to add value to the college through this work.

For the Student Association to provide work of a high quality we needed to assess the new structure and processes so all of the work we do is appropriately supported and resourced. We invited NUS Scotland, SPARQS and key stakeholders in the college to participate in this evaluation to give us a more rounded view of where we are and where we need to be.

We are submitting a proposal to Senior Management Team based on our findings which we believe will address a variety of concerns identified during this process and will help plan our future work on the changes that occur.

**Student Association work on Campus**

Poverty is becoming a more noticeable issue on campus. The Student Support Review highlighted that student funding was not suitable to support a students' basic living costs. The poorest students are forced to take the greatest debt, while further education students have no guarantee that they'll be entitled to any financial support. The NUS Budget for Better Campaign is working to encourage students to contact their local MSPs asking for their support with the campaign to ensure serious government investment in bursary support for all students. Other key points include raising the student loan repayment threshold to £25,000 from £17,775, in line with England and Wales as well as dedicate a specific budget to provide a universal level of mental health provision at all colleges and universities. The NUS have been on campus raising awareness of this campaign and the Students Association will continue to campaign nationally for better student funding.

In addition to the Budget for Better Campaign, West Lothian College students participated in the Fair Attendance Survey, highlighting the problems with the 100% attendance requirement to access funding. Initial feedback from the data gatherers suggests that West Lothian College students have been more disadvantaged by this system than many other colleges. This is very concerning and I have requested

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as much information as they can share as well as volunteering for the working group to address these concerns nationally.

On campus our poverty assistance through the Breakfast Club and Period Poverty Provision continues.

We are participating in the Gender Action Plan Pilot to investigate how student engagement can positively impact the college's GAP goals at an operational and strategic level. This work is being led by Sparqs with input from NUS and Equate and will be ongoing for the next 4 months.

The 'Coz you're Worth It' respect campaign has been delayed but we hope to launch the campaign in the near future. The campaign will be aimed at encouraging students to show respect and consideration to themselves and their fellow campus users regarding appropriate and safe car parking, following the clean air campus ethos and general respect when speaking to staff and students.

Healthy Body Healthy Mind was launched during the wellbeing Fair in November, promoting healthier lifestyle choices to improve the student's mental, physical and general health. As we achieved a 4 star award last year we hope to achieve a 5 star this year by building on the key points like the Clean Air Campus ethos, the many innovative mental health resources on campus and encouraging more physical activity in those who do not currently participate. The Student Association Team are working closely with Mel Curle as part of Scottish Student Sport and our fitness facilities, Calum Cook the Campus Cycling Officer, Staff and Students from HSCSSS, Estates and many other staff and student groups. This is a cross centre campaign and we look forward to the fun and activities which will occur.

As part of Healthy Body Mind and various other campaigns there are workshops available to provide our students with additional skills and knowledge to keep safe and offer lifestyle advice for health benefits.

- Over 400 students attended the workshops on Internet Safety during Cyber Safety Week which were provided by PC Cochrane.
- The Smoking Cessation workshops were offered by WLDAS and had 243 Students in attendance.
- On the 22 February 24 people will have completed Scottish Mental Health First Aid Training. This invaluable training prepares the individual to recognise the signs of poor mental health, provide initial help and comfort to the person in distress and then guide the person towards appropriate professional help. The key aim of this training is to preserve life and prevent a mental health crisis worsening. Class Reps have been selected for this training along with key student facing staff and SA Officers.
- Better than Zero in association with Unite Trade Union hosted workshops for 60 students on the 27<sup>th</sup> November. The training covered employment law with

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regards to zero hours and short term contracts. We will offer more students this training as demand was high.

- We have successfully booked a visit from Therapets this April. The regional representative Bill brought his beautiful four legged side kick Veda to meet with college and SA staff to discuss the sessions and practical aspects. Six therapy dogs of various sizes and breeds will be on campus with their owners to provide a mentally relaxing session for around 60 students. The physiological and psychological benefits of human-animal bonding have long been recognised. Recent research has also demonstrated that the mere act of stroking a dog or cat has exceptional benefits, including slowing heart rate, reducing blood pressure, calming nerves, regulating breathing and elevating mood – perfect for around exam time when stress can seem overwhelming. This will be the first event of its kind at West Lothian College and we hope it will become a recurring feature during exam season.

**Sarah Kerr, President Student Association**

28 February 2018

## **Learning & Teaching Committee**

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2017-2018**

The attached paper shows the College's Key Financial and Non-Financial Performance Indicators for the period 2014-2015 to 2017-2018. The Key Financial Performance Indicators provide a forecast for the year ended 31 July 2018 and for the 6 month period ended 31 January 2018.

Following discussion with the Scottish Funding Council the HE full time success PI for 2014-2015 has been reduced by 2.4% to 68.7% and the 2015-2016 PI reduced by 3.4% to 66.3%. This issue was previously discussed with the Committee at the November 2017 meeting.

Early withdrawal percentages are generally below target, however there are vocational areas above target. Additional resources are being used to support student retention and attainment.

The Committee is reminded that the 2014-2015 Financial KPIs cover a 16 month period.

In addition, and for benchmarking purposes, Financial KPIs have been obtained from Borders College, Dumfries & Galloway College and Forth Valley College for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. Benchmarking data for 2016-2017 will be provided for the June 2018 meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

### **Action**

For information

**George Hotchkiss**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning  
28 February 2018

West Lothian College -Key Financial Performance Indicators 2017-18

	Target 2017-18	Forecast outturn For the year ended 31 July 2018	Forecast For the 6 months ended 31 January 2018	Actual For the year ended 31 July 2017**	Actual For the year ended 31 July 2016	Actual 16 month period ended 31 July 2015
College Surplus (£'000)	61	7	609	453	41	492
Operating Surplus (£'000)	(699)	(910)	609	647	(1,891)	76
Non SFC Income as % of total income	30%	28%	30%	30%	31%	29%
Trading Surplus on commercial activities as % of income from commercial activities***	27%	26%	27%	35.0%	28.0%	29.0%
Staff costs as % of total income (excludes exceptional costs)	67%	64%	61%	65%	67%	61%*
Ratio of Current Assets to Current Liabilities*	0.8 :1	0.7:1	1.0:1.04	0.8:1	0.5 :1	0.7: 1
Days Cash to Total Expenditure*	17	14	69	35	14	8

Comments	Actions
Lower than budget as a result of increased Investment spend relating to two bids which overran from 2016-17 and which will be funded from the 2016-17 surplus.	None
Lower than budget largely as a result of an increase in depreciation charge not matched by deferred capital grant following an interim revaluation of assets and revised pension forecasts following the actuarial report for the 2016-17 financial statements. These additional costs are mostly covered by a release from the Revaluation and Pension Reserves.	None
SFC Income has increased as a result of receiving additional childcare funds and the grant for the Carbon Efficiency Energy Pathfinder Project (CEEP)	None
On target to achieve budgeted trading surplus	Monitor Targets through the Corporate Engagement Committee
Although Staff costs are slightly above budget total income has increased as a result of the receipt of additional SFC Income.	Monthly monitoring
	Continue to monitor through Management Accounts and SFC monthly cash flow requests
	Continue to monitor through

	2014-15 (16 months)			
	Borders	Forth Valley	West Lothian	Dumfries & Galloway
Non SFC Income as % of total income	27%	27%	29%	24%
Staff costs as % of total income (excludes exceptional costs)	64%	67%	61%	58%
Ratio of Current Assets to Current Liabilities	2.35: 1	01:01	0.7: 1	1.31: 1
Days Cash to Total Expenditure	90	14	8	60

	2015-16			
	Borders	Forth Valley	West Lothian	Dumfries & Galloway
Non SFC Income as % of total income	26%	31%	31%	20%
Staff costs as % of total income (excludes exceptional costs)	68%	70%	67%	64%
Ratio of Current Assets to Current Liabilities	1.5:1	0.65:1	0.5:1	0.82:1
Days Cash to Total Expenditure	76	11	14	59

\*as per Financial Strategy 2015-2018

\*\*Total income excludes £1.9m release of Deferred Grant on revaluation and total expenditure excludes exceptional impairment loss of £1.9m

\*\*\*Target as per Regional Plan & Outcome Agreement

**Key Performance Indicators 2014-2018**  
**Learner Performance**

West Lothian College	2014-15 Actual		2015-16 Actual	Sector Averages 15-16	2016-17 Target	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Target	2017-18 Actual
<b>Activity WSUMS</b>	<b>53,665</b>	<b>Activity Credits</b>	<b>44,390</b>		<b>43,499</b>	<b>44,085</b>	<b>43,988</b>	<b>42,615</b>
<b>Full Time FE Programmes</b>		<b>Full Time FE Programmes</b>						
Early Withdrawal	8%	Early Withdrawal	8%	9%	below 8%	9%	<8%	10%
Further Withdrawal	18%	Further Withdrawal	19%	17%	below 18%	17%	below 10%	7% to-date
Partial Success	10%	Partial Success	9%	9%	below 10%	12%	below 10%	N/A
Completed Successfully	64%	Completed Successfully	64%	66%	68%	62%	66%	N/A
<b>Full Time HE Programmes</b>		<b>Full Time HE Programmes</b>						
Early Withdrawal	8%	Early Withdrawal	5%	5%	below 8%	5%	<8%	6%
Further Withdrawal	10%	Further Withdrawal	12%	13%	below 10%	11%		6% to-date
Partial Success	11%	Partial Success	14%	11%	below 11%	11%	below 11%	N/A
Completed Successfully	69%	Completed Successfully	66%	72%	75%	73%	73%	N/A
<b>Part Time FE Programmes</b>		<b>Part Time FE Programmes</b>						
Early Withdrawal	1%	Early Withdrawal	2%	3%	below 1%	2%	<5%	2%
Further Withdrawal	3%	Further Withdrawal	4%	6%	below 4%	6%	N/A	3% to-date
Partial Success	22%	Partial Success	24%	16%	below 20%	15%	N/A	N/A
Completed Successfully	75%	Completed Successfully	71%	74%	78%	77%	75%	N/A
<b>Part Time HE Programmes</b>		<b>Part Time HE Programmes</b>						
Early Withdrawal	4%	Early Withdrawal	2%	3%	below 3%	1%	<5%	2%
Further Withdrawal	2%	Further Withdrawal	4%	6%	below 2%	10%	below 2%	3% to-date
Partial Success	21%	Partial Success	28%	12%	below 21%	11%	below 2%	N/A
Completed Successfully	74%	Completed Successfully	66%	79%	78%	79%	75%	N/A

## **Learner Attainment Sub-Group**

**Draft** minute of the Meeting of the **Learner Attainment Sub-Group** of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on **Monday 22 January 2018** at 9.30am in Pavilion B Barbour Suite in the College.

**Present:** Sue Cook (Chair)  
Alex Linkston  
Graham Hope  
Moira Niven  
Norman Ross  
Sarah Kerr  
Mhairi Harrington

**In attendance:** George Hotchkiss (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning)  
Karine McNair (Board Secretary)

### **18.01 Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Sub-Group.

There were no apologies.

### **18.02 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **18.03 Minute of Meeting of 12 October 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of 12 October 2017 were accepted as a true record.

### **18.04 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

It was noted that the Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services would attend the meeting on 10 May 2018.

There were no other matters arising not otherwise on the agenda.

### **18.05 Enhancement Plan**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning presented the West Lothian College Enhancement Plan 2017-18, which had been produced in conjunction with and endorsed by The Scottish Funding Council and Education Scotland.

It was acknowledged that the Enhancement Plan is a higher level document which sits above the Quality Improvement Plans for each Centre. There is also a Quality & Compliance Committee which reports to the Curriculum Committee where Centre results are scrutinised.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning expressed a desire to achieve a more consistent approach to learner attainment across the College as a number of improvements in the Enhancement Plan identified the need to standardise good practice across Centres.

It was noted that an exercise should take place to extract information about candidates whose courses span academic years. Currently such students are shown as a “partial success” when in reality their studies are incomplete. It was agreed that data in respect of incomplete courses should only be recorded once all units of the course have finished or a better prediction of expected completed units to the academic year end should be used as a marker to measure success.

#### **Action 1: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

The Sub Group also recommended that it would be interesting to see how many leavers for employment were currently included in the “partial success” and “withdrawal” figures.

#### **Action 2: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

Staff observations have become universal and approximately half of all observations have taken place. It is hoped that the culture of observation and feedback will improve the learner experience. There is also an intention to involve placement providers and workplace assessors in the observation process to provide an external viewpoint.

The Sub Group expressed some concern that addressing partial success and early withdrawal figures was not being dealt with urgently. In particular, post-Christmas can see an increase in withdrawals and any difficulties experienced in Block 1 work should be targeted for remediation work now before Block 2 work overloads the student.

The Sub Group queried who was accountable for improving the partial success and withdrawal figures. The Sub Group felt it was important that each lecturer had named responsibility for their course targets since the lecturers are the people closest to students who should be able to have the greatest impact and ability to help the individual student. Targets should also be monitored in order to recognise trends early on in case a change of action is needed to achieve targets.

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Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning confirmed that targets are set at centre level and monitored through Course Team Meetings which report to Risk Planning. At this stage, remediation plans are formulated to help Block 1 fails catch up in Block 2.

The Sub Group sought a comparison with the top quartile of comparable colleges to see what they are doing that is different to the College and if there are any actions the College could adopt to improve learner attainment.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning stated that colleges with the highest performance indicators generally had good links with employers. West Lothian College are currently looking into better engagement with local employers and as an example, all students in Motor Vehicle will have interviews with Arnold Clark at the end of their courses. It was also recognised that the top performing colleges enrol higher numbers of employed students following courses as part of their employment. This is a demographic West Lothian College is exploring.

The Sub Group queried the process for providing visible changes and feedback to students as a result of concerns they have raised.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning acknowledged that sometimes changes in response to feedback from current students are implemented to future course design so the students concerned do not actually benefit.

The Student Association Sparkle documents seemed to be having a positive effect in more timely changes. Students appeared more willing to use the Student Association as an intermediary voice. It has been known for some Centre Heads to chase the Student Association for the Sparkle feedback so that they can react to changes as soon as possible. It was noted that some centres implement changes in response to Student feedback very quickly but there is inconsistency across the College.

The Sub Group acknowledged that college students are here voluntarily and there are many external factors which can influence their ability to stay in College. With this in mind, the Sub Group queried the provision of extra support for students who have financial or domestic issues affecting their ability to succeed.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning confirmed that extra non-lecturing staff support had been offered to students in Engineering which had resulted in an increase in retention levels on those courses. Students had been more willing to seek support themselves as a result of this greater engagement with Student Support Services.

The Sub Group felt that some of the data provided was too high level and they needed more visibility of individual courses especially where attainment was low. It was decided that at the next meeting the following information should be provided;

- An extra column in the Enhancement Plan showing the impact of actions that had been completed and the results of classroom observations with specific reference to Level 4,5 & 6 courses.
- Case studies for 2 struggling courses, 2 large courses and Full Time Further Education courses showing;
  - 3 year trend
  - Realistic attainment targets (“withdrawals”/“partial success”/“success”) with colour coded tracking throughout the year.
  - Explanation of action plan.
  - Prediction of 2018/19 attainment targets.

### **Action 3: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

#### **18.06 Performance Indicators & Withdrawal Date: Course & Centre**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning presented a paper showing data in relation to course withdrawals and course performance indicators (PIs).

It was noted that there is an inconsistency in how data is reported by MIS and the Learning Support Team. Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning is working with both teams to resolve the issue.

The Sub Group noted that the College has an Attendance Officer who will intervene if they are alerted to any intermittent absences or students who are falling back on assessments. It was commented that it is therefore important for lecturers to bring any absences to the attention of the Attendance Office as soon as possible.

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning agreed to investigate lowering the threshold for alerts being triggered on the absence checker to ensure that absences are investigated as soon as possible.

### **Action 4: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning discussed College initiatives to improve “partial success” data, which included structuring learning to enable students to pass as much of the course as possible. Some personalised remediation plans involved identifying units which could be taken at another time, possibly as an evening class. Another initiative was to timetable strategically so that heavy workload units were taught at the

same time as lighter workload units. Assessments on demand were also being used in some Centres to improve attainment.

Collaborative working has been implemented between Sports and Engineering where best practice in classroom practice and integrated learning is being used to raise levels of student engagement.

The Sub Group noted that there can be a delay in finalising early withdrawal figures since the withdrawal date is considered to be the last date of regular attendance of a student. Therefore, early withdrawal figures for the end of November are usually not able to be confirmed until January after intervention for intermittent absences have been resolved.

### **18.07 Front Facing System: Update**

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning provided a verbal update in respect of a Front Facing System. It was noted that the “Advantage System” will be piloted shortly and implemented across the College for the new 2018/19 academic year. The “Advantage System” will allow students to check their attendance and obtain information about when they can expect assessment results.

Where the “Advantage System” has been used in other colleges, there has been an early resolution of incorrect information which has led to accurate intervention of absence and also correct bursary payments. It is hoped that the “Advantage System” will replace the current “Columbus” system which is no longer fit for purpose.

The Sub Group raised a query about the limited nature of the “Advantage System’s” scope and it was confirmed that after visiting another college, West Lothian College will be looking to implement a more comprehensive programme, “Click View”, in the future and recruitment for a new MIS Co-ordinator with “Click View” experience is underway.

### **18.08 Key Events in College Timetable & Future Meeting Dates**

The Board Secretary presented the Sub Group with a table of key dates to inform the planning of future meetings. It was noted that the Learner Attainment Sub Group reports to the Learning & Teaching Committee and therefore the meeting dates for the Sub Group should allow time for the papers to be prepared for discussion at the Learning & Teaching Committee.

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The Sub Group requested the Board Secretary to organise another meeting for the week commencing 20 August 2018.

**Action 5: Board Secretary**

**18.09 Any Other Business**

The Sub Group requested a presentation and visit with a focus on attainment from Computing and Engineering for the next Learning & Teaching Committee on Wednesday 28 February 2018.

**Action 6: Vice Principal, Curriculum & Planning & Board Secretary**

**18.10 Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 10 May 2018 at 9.30am.

**Note:** There were no matters discussed during the meeting, during which Members declared any conflict of interest, or the Board Secretary was aware from the Register of Interests that discussion could give rise to such a conflict.

Signed .....  
Chair, Learner Attainment Sub-Group

Date .....

## **Learning & Teaching Committee**

### **Self-Evaluation of Committee**

#### **Background**

The annual self-evaluation of committees is due within this Committee cycle. Questions for the Committee to consider are included in the paper attached. These are the same questions as considered in 2017.

Action points will be taken forward as part of the Committee's forward agenda, and will also be fed into to the overall Committee development plan.

A note of the action points agreed last year, and action taken, is attached for information. A copy of the Committee's Terms of Reference is also included in the papers for ease of reference.

#### **Karine McNair**

Secretary to the Board of Governors  
28 February 2018

# West Lothian College

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## Learning & Teaching Committee 28 February 2018

- 1 The Committee receives appropriate, timely and high quality information in a form that allows it to monitor and scrutinise the college's activities and to challenge performance when required.**

Yes / No

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

- 2 The Committee provides a constructive challenge to the principal and executive team and holds them to account.**

Yes / No

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

- 3 The Committee has the appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge of the college to enable them to discharge their respective duties and responsibilities effectively.**

Yes / No

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

## West Lothian College

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- 4 The Chair ensures that adequate time is available for discussion of all agenda items. The Chair promotes a culture of openness and debate by encouraging the effective contribution of all Board members and fostering constructive relations between Board members.**

Yes / No

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

- 5 There is effective reporting and two way communication between the Committee and the Board.**

Yes / No

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

- 6 The Committee has a clearly stated remit, which it keeps under regular review**

Yes / No

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

- 7 To what extent has the Committee fulfilled its remit over the last twelve months? What, if anything, should we do differently to ensure we fulfil this remit in the year ahead?**

*Comments / evidence in support of this:*

*Areas for action and improvement:*

## **West Lothian College**

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### **West Lothian College**

#### **Board of Governors**

#### **Learning and Teaching Committee**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Board will establish a Committee of the Board to be known as the Learning and Teaching Committee.
2. The Committee and its Chair will be appointed by the Board. There shall be not less than four members. A quorum shall be one half of the members entitled to vote on the question before the meeting.
3. At least one member should have a background in learning and teaching, but membership should not be drawn exclusively from Board members with such a background. The Committee may, if it considers it necessary or desirable, co-opt members with particular expertise.

#### **AUTHORITY**

4. The Committee is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees are directed to co-operate with any requests made by members.
5. The Committee is authorised by the Board to obtain independent professional advice, with any costs of such advice to be paid for by the College, and to secure the attendance of non-members with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary.

#### **PROCEEDINGS**

6. The Committee will normally meet at least four times per year.

#### **DUTIES**

7. The duties of the Committee shall include:
  - a. Reviewing and approving the College's strategy for learning and teaching;

- b. Approving new courses for the annual curriculum portfolio;
- c. Approving the annual institution led review of quality including self-evaluation;
- d. Recommending the Regional Outcome Agreement for approval to the Board;
- e. Approving the College Annual Equalities Mainstreaming Report and Action Plan;
- f. Monitoring the effectiveness of learning and teaching quality policies and procedures;
- g. Receiving reports and regular updates from the Student Association on the learner experience
- h. Receiving reports on benchmarking, best practice and curriculum design;
- i. Reviewing relevant recommendations from external monitoring and awarding bodies.

#### **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

- 8. The Committee shall provide the minutes of its meetings to the Board .
- 9. The Committee shall highlight any matter which it feels is of particular importance to the Board.

## **Learning and Teaching Committee**

Action update from the Learning and Teaching Committee's Self Evaluation of March 2017

**Action 1: Q1 - The Committee receives appropriate, timely and high quality information in a form that allows it to monitor and scrutinise the college's activities and to challenge performance when required.**

In addition to consideration of papers, it would be useful to have a structured discussion (or 'deep dive') into a key issue, at least once a year.

- There were opportunities for strategic discussion at the May away day including with external partners and members of the staff team.
- The Learner Attainment Sub Group has been established as a focus group to 'deep dive' into any attainment issues at the College.

**Action 2: Q1 - The Committee receives appropriate, timely and high quality information in a form that allows it to monitor and scrutinise the college's activities and to challenge performance when required.**

It would be useful to build into opportunities for visits to parts of the campus to see the learning environment first hand. This had worked well as part of a Committee meeting (during the day better than pre-Board when students had mainly left for the day, smaller group size was more friendly, does not make additional time demands for members). Other Committees should be encouraged to build this into their practice. There might also be opportunities to build a campus visit into the next Board away day.

- Visit to Engineering & Computing on 28 February 2018
- Finance & General Purposes Committee and Audit Committee have all either undertaken a campus visit or will do so at their next meeting.

## **Learning & Teaching Committee**

### **Learning and Teaching Committee Development Plan**

June 2017 – May 2018

#### **Membership**

No current issues

#### **Remit**

Annual review of remit – reviewed June 2017, next review June 18

#### **Visits to Parts of the Campus**

Campus visit (playroom) - March 2017

Campus visit including briefing on extended learning support: November 2017 (postponed)

Campus visit including presentation on learner attainment to Engineering & Computing: 28 February 2018

#### **Opportunities for Strategic Discussion**

Structure agenda for June meeting around 'deep dive' in relation to KPIs, possible improvements and interventions - completed

#### **Development Issues Identified in Meetings**

No current issues

#### **Self-Evaluation**

Annual self-evaluation of Committee – 28 February 2018

Include opportunity for reflection on new approaches (campus visits, deep dive)

Update 4: February 2018