

West Lothian College

30 November 2016

Learning & Teaching Committee

Minute of the Meeting of the **Learning and Teaching Committee** of the Board of Governors held on **Wednesday 7 September 2016** at 9.15 am in Pavilion B Barbour Suite in the College.

Present: Sue Cook (Chair)
Michael Allan
Mhairi Harrington
Iain McIntosh
Colin Miller
Alan Morton
Jarmila Slodyczka

In attendance: Joanna Paterson (Board Secretary)
George Hotchkiss (Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Innovation)
Lindsay Seywright (Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Planning)
Jenny Stalker (Head of Quality and Learner Services)
Colin Miller (Head of Essential Skills and Progression)

16.26 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the Committee meeting, in particular Michael Allan, Student Vice-President who had been nominated as the second student Board member. Members congratulated Dr Iain McIntosh on the recent achievement of his doctorate.

16.27 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

16.28 Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meeting of 7 June 2016 were approved as a true record.

16.29 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

Members noted the paper detailing actions duly completed following the last meeting.

In relation to Action 1, the National Student Survey, it was noted that national results had not yet been issued but would be circulated to members of the Committee once available.

In relation to Action 3, to explore some reported concerns about students not receiving information about their application interviews in good time, the Committee noted that this had been looked into but that no clear pattern had emerged as to why information in particular instances had not been received. It was noted that the systems would be reviewed ahead of next summer and that standards and expectations would be set, possibly reducing the number of channels of information used but making it clear what information could be expected when, and in what form.

There were no other matters arising.

16.30 Quality and Learner Services Report

The Head of Quality and Learner Services presented a report on work carried out within Quality and Learner Services for the period June to September 2016.

It was noted that the arrangements for enrolment and matriculation had been streamlined this year, leading to a significant reduction in reported problems with students receiving their matriculation cards. The process would be reviewed again with a view to building in further improvements for next year.

The Committee noted that enrolment against targets was being closely monitored. A few classes that were not proving viable had had to be cancelled. In some areas there was still a recruitment drive to bring in sufficient numbers to achieve viability. In other areas options were being explored to bring classes together.

It was too early to give clear information on numbers for part-time classes as many did not start until later in the term.

The Committee noted that the main area of concern was the lower than expected numbers in Schools Courses. This was in part affected by shifts in what schools were offering and there was some evidence that this was a sector wide issue this year. Discussions with the Education Service were on-going to explore what could be done to support and improve take-up and ensure that schools, parents and students were fully aware of the opportunities that were available to them at the College.

16.31 Quality Improvement and Learner Engagement Strategy

The Head of Quality and Learner Services presented the Quality Improvement and Learner Engagement Strategy, highlighting variations in the version previously considered by the Committee.

In relation to performance indicator analysis it was noted that there was a need to get more detailed information on the outcomes for students who were recorded as a partial success, recognising that there may be positive outcomes for individual students masked within the headline figure.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the strategy to the Board.

16.32 Student Association Update

The Student Association President presented the report on the work of the Student Association in the period from June to September 2016.

The work of the new team had got underway in mid August. It was noted that although all of the seven Vice Presidents posts had been filled before the summer, three vacancies had now arisen as a result of the post-holders moving on to other studies or employment.

There was however a great deal of interest from the student body in how to get involved with the Student Association including these vacancies and the Class Representative system and the Vice President positions should be filled (following elections) by mid September.

The Association had been heavily involved in the induction events for new students and had spoken to a large number of people. This had helped with building early engagement with new students and generating interest in the work of the Association.

It was noted that there might be opportunities for the Association to help with reinforcing messages to students about safe arrangements for parking and how to access the additional parking at the football stadium. This would be explored further in conjunction with the Marketing Team.

Members noted the plans for the Freshers' Fair on 14th and 15th September and the large number of events and stalls that had been organised.

It was noted that there might be opportunities to pilot support and training in public speaking perhaps for the President, Vice President and Class Representatives in the first instance. It was agreed that this should be explored further.

Action 1: Head of Quality and Learner Services

The Committee thanked Jarmila and Michael for a very positive report.

16.33 Student Association Constitution

The Head of Quality and Learner Services introduced the Student Association Constitution which had been revised to reflect the changes to the structure of the Association.

It was agreed that it was useful to see the Constitution at this stage and that it was important to get the detail of the wording right to avoid potential problems in the future. Members highlighted a number of areas where the wording needed to be clarified and agreed to pass on any more detailed comments through the Board Secretary. Comments would be passed on to the Student Association Development Officer and a revised version brought back to a future meeting for ratification.

Action 2: Head of Quality and Learner Services**16.34 Key Performance Indicators**

Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Planning introduced the Key Performance Indicators for 2015-16. It was noted that these now covered both financial and learner performance indicators, as recommended by a recent internal audit. The same report had been taken to each of the Board's Committees.

Members noted that in relation to learner attainment the actual figures were not yet available for 2015-16. It was noted that some further explanation needed to be made to the presentation of the baseline figures to allow meaningful comparison.

In relation to the financial indicators, it was noted that the negative figures were not a cause for concern and primarily flowed from new requirements in the presentation of the accounts.

16.35 Any Other Competent Business

The Principal reported that there had been a day of industrial action the previous day. There had however been minimal impact on or disruption to the student body.

The Chair advised the Committee that this was the last meeting Lindsay Seywright would be attending. She thanked Lindsay on behalf of the Committee for her contribution and support.

There were no other items of business.

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16.36 Review of Meeting and Training Needs

No additional training or development needs were identified.

16.37 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 30 November 2016 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