

## West Lothian College

1 March 2017

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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 30 November 2016** at 9.15 am in Pavilion B Barbour Suite in the College.

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

**In attendance:** Alex Linkston (Board Chair)  
Joanna Paterson (Board Secretary)  
George Hotchkiss (Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Innovation)  
Jenny Stalker (Head of Quality and Learner Services)  
Colin Miller (Head of Essential Skills and Progression)  
Lorna Jenkins (Access & Support Service Leader) (Item 16.45)

#### 16.38 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the Committee meeting, in particular Lorna Jenkins, and also Alex Linkston who was attending as Board Chair.

Apologies were noted from Michael Allan who was in Germany on a College trip.

#### 16.39 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 16.40 Minutes of Previous Meetings

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

#### 16.41 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

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

In relation to Action 2, Student Association Constitution, it was noted that this was expected to come back to the Committee at its March meeting.

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

#### **16.42 Scottish Funding Council Self-Evaluation Report**

The Head of Quality and Learner Services presented the annual Self Evaluation Report on the previous year's Regional Outcome Agreement outputs.

There was some discussion around issues that might be affecting schools programmes and action that was being taken to address these. It was noted that there were timetabling improvements that were being considered including moving to a full day attendance and finishing courses before the onset of the main exam period. Communication routes were also being explored to find ways to reach parents directly including the possibility of open days for parents.

It was noted that new opportunities for partnership working might flow from the transfer of funding direct to head teachers as part of the Government priority to reduce the attainment gap.

There was a discussion of some of the issues affecting students at HN level in Construction and Automotive Industries, including both the transition to a significantly different level of study and the need to study part-time in the evenings. If the courses were to continue then further thought would need to be given to the best ways to support students in these areas.

Members noted the package of support that was available for students who were care-experienced learners, whilst recognising that many individuals did not want to self-identify as such when first applying to or enrolling at the College. Support was however available when this was shared by the student, usually through guidance.

It was agreed that the focus given by the College to the inclusion agenda would make it more likely for care-experienced youngsters both to consider coming to the College and to sharing information about their background at the point that was appropriate to them.

The Committee agreed to recommend the report to the Board.

#### **16.43 Draft Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2017- 18**

Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Innovation presented a report on the work that was underway to prepare the Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) for 2017-18.

The Committee noted that this work was being set within the context of the Regional Plan and that a consultation exercise was currently underway to gather views and evidence to inform that.

Members noted the draft national priority outputs for 2017/18. It was agreed that it would be important when finalising the detail of these to ensure both that outputs matched locally identified priorities and also were set at a level that was stretching but achievable. It was noted that gendered subject choice targets for example would be challenging. It was also important to recognise that delivery could only be achieved in partnership with others.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

#### **16.44 Marketing & Communications Strategy 2016-18**

The Head of Quality and Learner Services presented the draft Marketing and Communications Strategy for the period 2016-18.

In relation to marketing activities and the reference to targeting of under-recruiting courses, there was some discussion about the tension here with the need to be responsive to demand and to be willing to let go of courses that were not recruiting at sufficiently high numbers.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to include an explicit reference to the market testing of materials in the strategy, and to amend the wording around attracting sufficient numbers to refer to the suitability and quality of applications.

#### **Action 1: Head of Quality and Learner Services**

The Committee agreed to recommend the strategy to the Board.

#### **16.45 UCAS and Articulation Report for 2016 entry**

Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Innovation introduced the UCAS and Articulation Report for 2016 entry with further explanation provided by Lorna Jenkins, Access and Support Service Leader.

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.

Although the figures were very positive it was agreed that it would be useful to gather comparable figures from other providers or on a sector wide basis.

It would also be useful to explore how best to gather additional information about the destinations for those students who were not placed. This would help to inform future practice and the types of support provided.

**Action 2: Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Innovation****16.46 Quality and Learner Services Report**

The Head of Quality and Learner Services presented a report on the work carried out across the Quality and Learner Services function in the period September to November 2016.

Members noted the performance indicators for completion at FE and HE level on full and part time courses and the further analysis provided in areas where further improvement was required.

The Committee noted the update on curriculum planning for 2017-18 and agreed to approve the Foundation Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care course.

There was some discussion of the findings from the national Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey. It was accepted that it was hard to draw meaningful conclusions from the information given the relatively low response rate, the quality of some of the questions, and the lack of direct read-across to the College's evaluation system (SOCE).

It was recognised that evaluation fatigue could affect student participation rates and that there was an on-going challenge to look for ways to streamline and timetable the requests for feedback. It would however be important to encourage participation in the national survey in future years.

The relatively low ratings were noted regarding the impact of the Student Association. It was hoped this would improve in future years given the increased engagement, activity and profile of the Association. It would also be useful to think about how positive change was communicated and to consider ways to highlight the role of the Association in securing those improvements for the student body.

**16.47 Student Association Update**

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

The Committee noted in particular the improvements that were being made to better support and develop the Class Rep role, including the use of structured feedback sheets, a new enquiry box system, and an increase in the number of surgeries run by the Vice Presidents.

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The Committee thanked Jarmila and the Student Association team for a very positive report.

### **16.48 Key Performance Indicators**

Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Planning introduced the Key Performance Indicators for 2015-16. The Committee noted the learner performance indicators which had been covered in discussion in other agenda items.

In relation to the financial KPIs, it was noted that the impact of the new accounting standard FRS102 was creating presentational challenges across both the FE and HE sector.

### **16.49 Children's Hearings Scotland Annual Report**

Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Planning introduced the Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) Annual Report which was shared with the Committee for information.

The Committee noted the high quality of the service that was being delivered and asked for their appreciation to be conveyed to the team.

#### **Action 3: Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Innovation**

It was agreed that it would in addition be useful to encourage feedback from the commissioners of the service.

Members commented that the work of the Unit represented a very positive news story and that opportunities should be explored to make more of what had been achieved.

It was also noted that the annual report might provide a useful model for self-evaluation reporting by other parts of the College.

### **16.50 Any Other Competent Business**

Members noted that the College's Morocco project had won the award for Creating Positive Change for Young People at the British Council's annual International Skills Partnership seminar, which had just taken place in Jordan.

The Committee passed on congratulations to everyone involved with the project.

There were no other items of business.

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### 16.51 Review of Meeting and Training Needs

No additional training or development needs were identified and members were content with the quality of papers provided.

### 16.52 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 1 March 2017 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 .....