

## West Lothian College

4 March 2020

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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 27 November at 9.30am** in Barbour Room, Pavilion B of the College.

**Present:** Iain McIntosh (Chair)  
Jackie Galbraith (Principal & Chief Executive)  
Neil Sinclair  
Michelle Low  
Gemma Reynolds

**In attendance:** Alex Linkston (Chair of the Board of Governors)  
Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise)  
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services)  
Jenny Stalker (Head of Quality & Learner Services)  
Scott Anderson (Education Scotland)  
Craig Reoch (Student Association Executive)  
Hazel Brady (Head of Business & Creative) item 19.40(v) only  
Margaret Forisky (Head of Hospitality & Communities) item 19.40(v) only  
Graham Clark (Head of Construction & Motor Vehicle) item 19.40(v) only  
Gordon Weir (Head of Computing & Engineering) item 19.40(v) only  
Karine McNair (Board Secretary)

#### 19.35 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Scott Anderson and Craig Reoch. Apologies were received from Elaine Cook and Tom Bates.

#### 19.36 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 19.37 Minutes of Meeting of 4 September 2019

It was requested that the mention of STEM applying in many curriculum areas be noted in the minute.

#### Action 1 – Board Secretary

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The minutes of the meeting of 4 September 2019 were otherwise approved as a correct record.

### **19.38 Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 4 September 2019**

Regarding Action 1, Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise confirmed that it would be possible to track data on the success rate of late matriculating full time students and this would be provided at the next meeting.

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

All other actions were noted as duly complete.

### **19.39 Student Association Report**

The Student Association President presented Paper 3 noting that Sparkle had recently been completed and Craig Reoch had helped redesign some questions based on his experience as a Class Ambassador last year. The Sparkle process had been managed through a booking system and the Student Association had covered all 64 full time and 29 part time courses booked onto the system.

It was confirmed that the Student Association are supporting many students with recharge packs and winter clothing. They thanked staff for their generous donations to both appeals.

The Committee thanked the Student Association for a full report and for the work that they do for the welfare of Students. The work of the Student Association Executives and Class Ambassadors was also recognised since they volunteer in addition to their college studies. The Committee commended the Student Association on the alignment of their work to the aims of the college.

### **19.40 Performance and Planning**

#### **i) KPI Analysis 2018-19**

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, presented Paper 4 noting that the figures were now finalised having been submitted to SFC.

The Committee acknowledged the good work undertaken by college staff to achieve improvements in all areas and encouraged the college

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to continue to improve, especially where there is variation in success in some college areas.

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services, confirmed that the targets had been set by the Centre Heads after discussion with their team and the Senior Team will be monitoring progress against targets throughout the year. The targets were encouraged to be challenging but equally the teams had to be conscious of their starting position and be realistic.

The Committee recognised that each academic year brings a different student population to the college so no single strategy will apply to everyone. It was also acknowledged that the KPIs are not the only measure on which to judge the college however it was discussed that each KPI represents an individual student and the college can use the KPIs to identify vulnerable students and employ initiatives to help them.

It was noted that most staff adapt courses to suit individual needs of students where possible and a challenge will be to ensure that good practice is consistent across the college.

### ii) Outcome Agreement 2018-19 Report

The Principal presented Paper 5 commenting that the paper contained a summary of the college's year adding more information than the KPIs. The college was succeeding in most areas although figures for progression to university for 2018-19 students will not be available until spring 2020. Centre Heads are being encouraged to visit more universities to develop new articulation agreements and also to work on existing agreements to ensure that they are fulfilling their potential.

The Committee were curious to know whether students entering university with advanced standing succeed better or worse than their peers entering in year 1 of the course, however the data does not seem to be available.

### iii) Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2018-19

The Principal presented Paper 6 and highlighted that the college had succeeded in improving the response rate and satisfaction rates across all priorities. The Student Association concurred that the survey results were a fair reflection of the college and the Committee commended the extremely high satisfaction rates for the Student Association.

It was acknowledged that the questions assume regular attendance at college and although work based, school pupils and evening students

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are included in the survey, they have a different relationship with the college. The Committee still felt that all students should be encouraged to respond and the work based assessors, school lecturers and evening class lecturers should encourage participation in the survey.

### iv) College Leaver Destinations 2017-18

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise presented paper 7 noting that the college was above sector averages highlighting however the figures were for 2017-18.

The Committee considered that students progressing to a study related job is equally as successful as students progressing to university since the end goal would generally be employment. Equally, the Committee acknowledged that employment is not necessarily the end of education as some employees continue with different studies alongside their duties or return to education.

### v) Curriculum Plan 2020-21

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Enterprise presented paper 8 and the Committee was joined by the four Heads of Centre most impacted by the proposals.

The curriculum planning had been a rigorous and robust exercise bringing all the Centre Heads together to plan strategically for a 3-5 year period. The key priorities that informed the plan were highlighted and the Committee endorsed these. The Committee was also informed that an initial meeting had taken place the previous day with Education Services and West Lothian Secondary schools to look at joint curriculum planning. The meeting has been very productive and work would progress on developing a more integrated learner journey.

NS suggested that the proposed cuts to photography courses could impact employment opportunities for those wishing to pursue a photography career. The Committee acknowledged that STEM, which was a key priority, was a component of many creative courses as well as those in motor vehicle and engineering. The Committee heard that staff affected by the changes in the 2020-21 Business and Creative curriculum plan felt inadequately consulted. NS raised concerns about not offering a diverse curriculum and focusing too much on certain subject areas.

The Committee discussed the importance of the college being able to evidence to the SFC that the curriculum offered met the needs of the local economy, and that employment growth in West Lothian was in construction, care and early years, engineering and digital sectors.

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Some courses were removed because the college was unable to offer the resources provided at other larger colleges which gave a superior student experience, and that recruitment had been a challenge in those subjects.

The Committee appreciated that decisions taken had been difficult but as the credit allocation was assumed to remain static, in order to meet local economic demands for certain skills, other courses would be unable to run.

The Committee voted in favour of approving the Curriculum Plan 2020-21. NS noted his dissent to the approval.

### 19.41 Regular Monitoring

#### i) Early Withdrawals Update

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services presented Paper 9 noting that the figures are constantly changing and represent a snapshot in time.

It was commented that there is more discussion by lecturers in staff meetings about early withdrawals and strategies to help individuals.

#### ii) Credits Update

Vice Principal, Finance & Curriculum Services presented Paper 10 noting that the figures were in a stronger position than this time last year.

The Committee noted that there no concerns at this stage.

### 19.42 Quality

#### i) Quality Assurance Report

Head of Quality & Learner Services presented paper 11 noting that there had been a number of development visits to support areas which had experienced challenges.

The Committee heard how Support for Learning changes were working well with staff embedded in classes and being more accessible to students.

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The Committee noted a positive report which demonstrated a great deal of activity in the college.

### ii) Education Scotland Progress Visit Report

Head of Quality & Learner Services presented paper 12 detailing that that there had been more than 12 meetings with staff, students and the Student Association. The focus of the review had been on the progress of the college against the Outcome Agreement and the impact that was having.

The report showed a very positive position and it was explained that the markers of 'satisfactory' and 'unsatisfactory' were the only 2 outcome options.

The Committee welcomed the proposal to invite Janet Campbell from Education Scotland to the next Learning & teaching Committee to give more detail on the paper.

### Action 3: Board Secretary

### iii) Learning and Teaching Innovation Fund

The Committee noted the paper and would be very interested to follow the progress of the investments later in the year.

### 19.43 Learner Attainment Sub Group Minutes

The Chair summarised the purpose of the Learner Attainment Sub Group and noted that at the last meeting it had been decided that the work of the Learner Attainment Sub Group could now be carried on by the Learning & Teaching Committee so the Sub Group could now be wound up.

Thanks was expressed to all Board Members and staff members who had worked on the Learner Attainment Sub Group.

### 19.44 Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

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

The Chair and Principal would discuss options for a visit at the next Committee meeting.

### Action 4: Chair / Principal

It was felt that the whole Board would benefit from hearing from Support for Learning so it was decided that the Support for Learning team should be invited to speak at a Board Meeting.

### Action 5: Board Secretary / Principal

The Committee were content with the information received.

## 19.46 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 4 March 2020 at 9.30am.

**Note:** There was a matter discussed during the meeting, during which Members declared a 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. Item 19.40(v) was a conflict of interest for Neil Sinclair and although not formally declared, it was felt that the interest was clear to all meeting attendees.

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

Date .....