

West Lothian College

24 February 2021

Learning and Teaching Committee

Minute of the Meeting of the **Learning and Teaching Committee** of the Board of Governors held on **Wednesday 18 November 2020 at 10.30am** via Zoom online.

Present: Iain McIntosh (Chair)
Jackie Galbraith (Principal and Chief Executive)
Tom Bates (Committee Member)
Alex Linkston (Chair of the Board of Governors)
Neil Sinclair (Academic Staff Board Member)
Jeanette Dobson (President, Student Association)

In attendance: Simon Earp (Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement)
Sarah-Jane Linton (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment)
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance and Corporate Services)
Beth Brownlee (Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources)
Kirsti Clark (Vice President, Student Association)
Scott Anderson (Education Scotland)
Seamus Spencer (Scottish Funding Council)
Graham Clark (Director, Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment)
Hazel Brady (Director, Business, Creative and Enterprise faculty)
Carol McLaughlan (Executive Secretary)
Moirra Niven (Finance and General Purposes Chair)
Julia Simpson (Finance and General Purposes Staff Member)

1 **Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the online Zoom meeting, including two faculty directors, Graham Clark and Hazel Brady, and two members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Moira Niven and Julia Simpson, in attendance as observers.

Apologies were noted from Elaine Cook and Emma Marriott. It was also noted that Jackie Galbraith, Sarah-Jane Linton and Tom Bates would need to leave the meeting at 12.00pm.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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3 Minutes of Meeting of 9 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 9 September were approved as a correct record.

4 Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 9 September 2020

Regarding Action 1, Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources confirmed that a presentation on QMS4VET would take place at a future meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

Action 1: Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources

Regarding Action 2, Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement, advised that this would be addressed under agenda item 9.

The committee noted all other actions as duly completed.

5 Student Association Report

The Student Association President and Vice President presented Paper 3 which highlighted the work being undertaken and future plans. The SPARKLE survey for students is currently underway and the committee was advised that action is being taken on feedback as soon as it is received.

The committee thanked the Student Association for a full and detailed report, acknowledging the amount of work and effort involved in achieving so much in a short period of time and in difficult circumstances. The committee also formally acknowledged the high standard of work undertaken by Micole Cochrane, Student Association Development Officer.

6 Spotlight on Faculty – Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

Director of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment faculty gave an informative presentation, providing an overview of the faculty and a summary of performance in each area, noting areas of concern and positive outcomes. It was also noted that all deferred students within the faculty are now up to date.

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The vision for this new faculty is being worked on with the team and, although this includes the challenge of changing perspectives, work is progressing well.

An overview of the excellent opportunities and developments was shared with the committee. Work is being undertaken on several industry-led and supported projects, including masterclasses, and with universities on articulation agreements.

The committee acknowledged the positive work being undertaken and noted their appreciation of a refreshing and positive presentation and vision for the future of the faculty.

7 Digital Learning

Director of Business, Creative and Enterprise gave an informative presentation on behalf of the Learning Continuity Support team, sharing the group's vision statement of 'Learning Never Stops' and the ambitious aim of embedding digital learning and technology in everything across the college.

An overview of progress made by the group was shared with the committee, which included consultation with staff, provision of training in Moodle and setting up a Teams group to provide a digital community space for all staff to seek support and share techniques. Positive engagement has already been noted and plans are in place to ensure regular communication and ongoing staff consultation.

Discussion was held in relation to the challenges faced, the importance of consistency and quality for learners, and the collaborative work being undertaken and planned with West Lothian Council and Forth Valley College. One challenge highlighted was that staff have found an increase in their workload and the time involved in delivering their work from home. It was noted that this ties in with the issue of no course changes being made by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to assist in these being delivered from home.

The committee noted the quality and scope of the work being undertaken by this team. Seamus Spencer of Scottish Funding Council commended this work at a time when there is concern about the learner experience across the country. It was agreed that further details of this work would be forwarded to the Principal to share with the committee.

Action 2: Principal

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8 Curriculum Plan 2021-22

Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment, presented Paper 4, which outlined the plan for 2021-22 and the vision for curriculum planning to 2025.

A virtual workshop with 100 attendees was held in October 2020 and the responses from those discussions assisted in developing six key themes, priorities and targets. The curriculum plan will be monitored and evaluated regularly and will be adapted as necessary.

The committee was reassured that the curriculum plan would take the college forward for the next year and that this will be revisited for future years.

9 (i) KPI Analysis 2019-20

Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement, presented Paper 5, advising the committee that an analysis of the position of individual courses is currently taking place and that a full analysis would not be available until around Spring 2021.

It was noted that some areas have shown an improvement and that it was important to look at the reasons for this. It was also noted that part-time results in particular are excellent. Scott Anderson, Education Scotland, advised that the information currently held is sufficient for internal use in achieving equity and consistency of experience for learners.

The committee acknowledged that it was difficult to draw conclusions on performance and that a full analysis was not possible at this time. The work being undertaken by staff was also acknowledged and it was appreciated that this helps put the college in a strong position.

9 (ii) Credit Target Update 2019-20 and 2020-21

Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement, presented Paper 6, noting that the final position with credits was that the college was above target for 2019-20 and that this was reflected in the 2020-21 target.

The committee was reassured by the information presented, in particular that no credit adjustment was required.

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10 (i) Quality Update

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 7, giving the committee an overview of the range of work being undertaken in relation to quality assurance, improvement and enhancement and the associated concerns.

Some of the concerns noted included SQA's decision that graded units will not be required and that they did not authorise a holistic approach to quality assurance. The college will reintroduce the internal quality assurance process for 2020-21 and will continue to have graded units as required for articulation, using a holistic approach. A tool is also being devised internally to identify students at risk of not passing courses, which will be very helpful.

The committee noted the good evidence and analysis provided in the report and commended the approach being taken by the team.

10 (ii) Student Support and Learning Resources Update

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 8, giving the committee an overview of the work being undertaken to support students and develop learning resources, complementing the work of the Student Association. It was noted that prior to closure due to COVID19, the library team had also provided support to students, including IT support, and plans are in place to address this gap.

Work is now underway to ensure that the right level of support to students is in place both online and on campus while ensuring compliance with legislation as the college moves into Tier 4 restrictions.

The committee noted the content of the report and that this is an area of strength for the college. The importance of the library's role in providing informal support to students was also recognised.

11 Strategic Risk Register 2020-21

Vice Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, presented Paper 9, noting that this had been prepared in collaboration with Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment.

Discussion was held on the four risks presented and the plans that were in place to mitigate against these.

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The committee agreed that good risk mitigations were in place and were reassured that close monitoring would continue.

12 Any Other Business

None.

13 Review of Meeting, Development Plan and Supporting Papers

Following discussion, and feedback from the observers present, the Committee noted that the excellent presentations helped make the meeting feel 'live' and not just paper-based. It was also noted that attitudes are very positive, that everyone seems focused on moving in the same direction and that students are very firmly at the centre of all work being undertaken.

14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 24 February 2021 at 10.30am.

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