

West Lothian College

23 February 2022

Learning and Teaching Committee

Minute of the Meeting of the **Learning and Teaching Committee** of the Board of Governors held on **Wednesday 24 November 2021 at 10.30am** via Zoom online.

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

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)
Lesley Aitkenhead (Board Governance Advisor)

1 **Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the online Zoom meeting.

Apologies were noted from Elaine Cook, Tom Bates, Kirstie Clark, and observers Seamus Spencer (Scottish Funding Council) and Barbara Nelson (Education Scotland).

2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3 **Minutes of Meeting of 8 September 2021**

The minutes of the 8 September 2021 meeting were approved as correct.

4 **Matters Arising**

The committee noted that all actions were either closed, included in the agenda or on track. The Vice Principal, Performance & Improvement (VP, P&I) gave a verbal update on action L7 and confirmed that further detail was included in the Quality & Enhancement Report under Agenda Item 4.3.

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5 Annual Curriculum Plan

The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment (VP, L&A) presented Paper 3 setting out the curriculum plan for 2022-23.

The committee was advised that the process for developing the Curriculum Plan has evolved and has led to a more responsive, flexible and adaptive plan. The VP, L&A advised that quality assurance is an integral part of the Curriculum Plan, which provides greater opportunity to respond to new threats or opportunities. The improvement to the estate was highlighted as a key factor, increasing the offer to students within the Construction and Engineering Faculty.

The committee commented on the quality of the approach and the final plan, commenting on the importance of keeping the curriculum fresh and relevant. The committee asked about a particular course, Woman's Football, that had been stopped and was advised that it was included in the scope of a wider course, enabling greater flexibility in the overall curriculum plan. The committee were reassured that Woman's Football remains important, and that links with Livingston Football Club continue to be strong.

The committee asked about the Curriculum Planning Event that was held in October 2021, and were advised that it was well supported, with an increase in engagement from students, staff, Board Members and the local community.

The committee recommended approval of the Curriculum Plan for 2022/23 to the Board on 7 December 2021, with no amends or comments.

6 Draft Outcome Agreement

The VP, L&A presented Paper 4 setting out the Draft Outcome Agreement for 2021-22 and requested the committee recommend approval by the Board. The committee were advised that the Outcome Agreement contains some small amends and was on track to be sent to the Scottish Funding Council, subject to Board approval.

The committee commented on the report as an authentic reflection of the work undertaken within the college and highlighted the strong reference to the college values and purpose, throughout the report.

The committee commented on the quality of the report and asked how the report could be more accessible to a wider audience, given the volume of information included. The Principle confirmed that the content of the report would be re-purposed for different audiences, including greater use of

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infographics, and sections of the report would be targeted at particular audiences.

The committee confirmed support for the report and recommended approval by the Board on 7 December 2021.

7 Student Association Update

The Student Association President presented Paper 5 which highlighted the creation of newly appointed Executive Team of 3, working with 22 new Student Ambassadors. The response to the Student Association Executive Team and Ambassadors has been positive, and the team continue to work closely with the Student Support Services and Trauma Responsive Teams.

The Student Association President highlighted the continued demand for support for students, including access to mental health services and commented on how well the Student Association team is working together.

The committee commented on how embedded the work of the Student Association is in college, and praised the work of the Student Association President, who has shown a passion and commitment to the role.

8 (i) Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2020-21

VP, P&I presented Paper 6, for noting. It shows as a comparison of Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey for 2021-21, across the sector. The committee noted the report and discussed the key points around how the college compared with the sector, and noted the overall positive scores. The Principal advised that the results would be shared with staff, and reflects the commitment of staff during a very difficult year.

8 (ii) College Leaver Destinations 2019-20

VP, P&I presented Paper 7 for noting. It reflected a very positive picture of College Leaver Destinations for 2019-20, compared to the sector. The committee noted the report and discussed the key points, reflecting on how well the college has performed at building pathways for students, and that this will continue to evolve.

8 (iii) Credit Target Update

VP, P&I presented Paper 8¹ noting two sections to the report, showing the final credit position for 2020-21, including and the positive audit review, with no adjustments, and an update on the current credit targets.

¹ Report including sector data is for internal benchmarking purposes and cannot be shared publicly.

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VP, P&I confirmed that the college was confident of meeting the SFC targets and the current variance did not include NTTF and YPG activity. The variance allowed some flexibility for future changes in the curriculum plan during the AY. The committee noted the paper and commented on the benefit of being able to adapt plans to meet targets.

8 (iv) Early Withdrawals

VP, P&I asked the committee to note Paper 9, comparing early withdrawals for 2020-21 and 2021-22 as at 4 November 2021. The committee noted the paper and discussed the overall figures and reasons for withdrawal. The committee noted the percentage of students reporting mental health as a reason for early withdrawal and discussed both the pro-active work undertaken within the college on mental health, recognising that this was not a unique issue for the college and was across society.

The committee noted the report and the difference between FT and PT withdrawals. The VP, P&I advised that the date for assessing early withdrawals was different for FT and PT, so a direct comparison was difficult. However, it was noted that many of the reasons for early withdrawal are interlinked and it was important to continue to monitor closely.

The Committee Chair noted the difference in early and late withdrawals and the importance of supporting students throughout college life.

8 (v) Student Funds Update

The Vice Principal, Finance & Corporate Services (VP, F&CS) presented Paper 10 for noting, highlighting the areas of underspend for Student Funds.

The committee welcomed the report and the plan for use of the underspend. The work of the Student Funds Team was particularly welcomed by the Student Association President, who highlighted the importance of early intervention with students who were struggling with cost of childcare, and winter fuel payments. The committee noted the report.

9 (i) Quality Report

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 10, the Quality and Enhancement Report for noting, highlighting plans to complete an audit of control folders and a cross college self-evaluation. The committee noted the report and commented on the quality and completeness of information that was reassuring to committee members.

The presenter highlighted a new section covering Equality and Widening Access, highlighting the approach to Equalities adopted last year.

The Committee Chair welcomed the External Verification in providing additional assurance on achieving key learning outcomes.

9 (ii) Student Support and Services Update

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 12, providing insight into the work of the learning resources team. The committee noted the paper and the focus on mental health and well-being, highlighted in other areas of the committee.

The committee were advised of the implementation of a new tool that enabled staff to log individual interactions with students, using a RAG rating which would better enable early interventions.

The committee noted that the resources available to support students with mental health issues have been funded by the Scottish Funding Council this year, given the impact of the pandemic, but may not be the case for future years. Plans will be considered to ensure this support continues, including lobbying the Scottish Funding Council by the College Sector.

10 Outcome Agreement Self Evaluation Report 2020-21

VP, P&I presented Paper 13 for information. The committee welcomed the report and commented that it was an authentic and fair reflection of the work completed by the college.

The committee thanked the presenter and commented on the quality of the report, providing a factual account of what has been achieved.

11 Any Other Business

No other business was noted.

12 Review of Meeting, Development Plan and Supporting Papers

The committee were asked for comments on the quality and completeness of the papers, and effectiveness of the committee in meeting its remit. Committee members felt the papers provided insight on the key areas of the college, enabling Committee Members to discharge their responsibilities.

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13 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is Wednesday 23 February 2022 at 10.30am.

Signed
Chair, Learning and Teaching Committee

Date