

West Lothian College

16 June 2021

Learning and Teaching Committee

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

Present: Iain McIntosh (Chair)
Tom Bates (Committee Member)
Elaine Cook (Committee Member)
Jeanette Dobson (President, Student Association)
Jackie Galbraith (Principal and Chief Executive)
Alex Linkston (Chair of the Board of Governors)
Neil Sinclair (Academic Staff Board 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)
Kirsti Clark (Vice President, Student Association)
Scott Anderson (Education Scotland)
Claire Glen (Director, Care, Health and Sport faculty)
Carol McLaughlan (Executive Secretary)

1 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the online Zoom meeting and thanked Claire Glen for attending to present Item 6 on the agenda.

No apologies were noted.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of Meeting of 18 November 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 18 November were approved as a correct record.

4 Matters Arising from Minute of Meeting of 18 November 2020

Regarding Action 1, Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources confirmed that an update on the completed QMS4VET project would be provided as part of the Quality Update report for the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

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

Regarding Action 2, the Principal confirmed that updates from the Learning Continuity Team will be provided regularly at future Learning and Teaching Committee meetings.

5 Student Association Report

The Student Association President and Vice President presented Paper 3 which highlighted the work being undertaken and future plans. It was noted that a new Microsoft Teams site is being launched today for students to engage with each other and access assistance in an informal and social way. No areas of concern were noted other than the need to try and bring students together as a student community again.

The committee thanked the Student Association for a very positive report and noted the importance of the work being undertaken. The committee also formally acknowledged the work of the President and Vice President in the run up to Christmas 2020 in working effectively with partners and providing extensive support for students.

6 Spotlight on Faculty – Care, Health and Sport

Director of Care, Health and Sport faculty gave an informative presentation that highlighted short and long-term plans for each area within the faculty and gave examples of positive performance, areas of concern and the robust plans for continuous improvement.

A faculty review is currently being undertaken, involving the whole team and feedback received from students. New measures have been put in place in the gym in response to ongoing COVID19 requirements. Discussions are underway on adapting other outdoor areas for use by students across all faculties.

A summary of the key partnerships was shared with the committee, including details of an exciting opportunity that has arisen to work with NHS Lothian which involves looking at adapting the curriculum to enable students to undertake placements at St John's Hospital in Livingston.

The committee was assured that robust planning has been in place for some time to meet the increasing demands of early years providers and, more recently, in relation to the effects of the pandemic on the industry.

The committee noted the exciting and positive work being undertaken, acknowledging the efforts of staff in working together across the faculty and the value of positive external partnership working. The committee also recognised the faculty's models of good practice and the value in sharing these both internally and externally.

7 Performance

(i) Outcome Agreement

The Principal presented Paper 4, noting that the 2020-21 Outcome Agreement had been revised at the request of the Scottish Funding Council, with three new outcomes.

It was clarified that the number of students reported as entering higher education is a total number and does not differentiate between those attending university or college.

The committee requested a change to the wording of the Outcome Agreement 2020-21 to say 'match funding' instead of 'matching' in relation to West Lothian Council.

Action 2: Principal

It was agreed that the Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment will present the next draft of the Outcome Agreement at the June 2021 committee meeting and the committee noted that both the Outcome Agreement 2019-20 Self-Evaluation Report and the 2020-21 Outcome Agreement demonstrate innovation and creativity in the college.

8 Regular Monitoring

(i) Curriculum Plan and Applications 2021-22

Vice Principals, Learning & Attainment and Performance & Improvement, presented Paper 5, which provided an update on the agreed curriculum plan for 2021-22, changes to the current curriculum plan 2020-21, new articulation pathways and progress on admissions targets for 2021-22.

It was noted that a partnership with Edinburgh Napier University had been secured and thanks were given to both Hazel Brady, faculty director, and to the Student Association for their work in relation to this.

The committee approved amendments to the curriculum plan and noted the positive outcome in relation to securing the partnership with Edinburgh Napier University.

(ii) Credits and Early Withdrawals 2020-21

Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement, presented Paper 6, noting that the college is on target to meet credit targets and exceed the credit allocation. The committee was reassured that the Scottish Funding Council has given verbal confirmation of funding to match the gap and that, for governance, this would be reported when formal confirmation was received.

The committee noted the improvement in the number of early withdrawals, and acknowledged the work undertaken to achieve this.

(iii) Student Funds 2020-21

Vice Principal, Finance and Corporate Services, presented Paper 7 and advised the committee of some updates since the paper was produced.

The underspend position is now £447k. Two additional funds have been made available to assist students with poverty (FE discretionary fund and HE discretionary fund) and the committee was reassured that this welcome funding would be spent by the end of March 2021.

The committee noted the position with regard to student funds for 2020-21.

9 Continuous Improvement**(i) Quality Update**

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources, presented Paper 8, advising the committee that the college had moved to a holistic process of assessment and that staff were undertaking very good work. It was noted, however, that SQA had been slow in issuing guidance and that some information had still not been received.

Scott Anderson, Education Scotland, acknowledged the good work being undertaken across the college, including the schools/college partnership, and advised that there would be an upcoming Education Scotland engagement visit looking at digital learning and student wellbeing. The importance of continuing with the self-evaluation process was also noted as this would assist in providing a sector position on challenges and achievements at this time.

The committee noted their appreciation of the work being undertaken by the team and noted the issue with SQA in issuing timely guidance.

(ii) Student Support and Learning Resources Update

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 9, giving the committee an overview of the range of work being undertaken, noting increased involvement in joined-up working initiatives.

The committee noted the excellent work of the team in supporting students and highlighted the work initiated by individual team members, for example, in recognising mental health concerns in young men and initiating 'the Man Cave' as a way of providing support, an initiative developed jointly by a lecturer and a member of the team.

(iii) College Response to SPARKLE Report

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 10, noting that this should be looked at in conjunction with the Student Association Report (Paper 3) presented to the committee today.

It has been agreed that SPARKLE 2 will not take place this year although alternatives are being considered, such as utilising the Learning Continuity

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Group and the new Student Association Teams channel to ask questions as they arise, get live responses and generate engagement with students.

The committee acknowledged that while there was a requirement to formally structure the college's response, the paper did not fully convey the richness of how the college responded. It was noted that this was conveyed by other methods, such as the Outcome Agreement Evaluative Report and the weekly Principal's Updates, but that the Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources will look at ways to capture the richness of the college response in future papers.

10 Strategic Risk Register 2020-21

Vice Principal Learning and Attainment presented Paper 11 noting that, having undertaken important, responsive work and creating different pathways for learners, more risk has been created, which has resulted in scores remaining unchanged.

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

The committee acknowledged that by having this item at the end of the meeting, most of the risks had been covered satisfactorily in previous agenda items. The committee agreed that good risk mitigations were in place and were reassured that close monitoring would continue.

11 Any Other Business

None.

12 Review of Meeting, Development Plan and Supporting Papers

Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment, formally thanked the Chair for supporting the faculty director and team in Care, Health and Sport with the Queen's Anniversary Prize planning.

The committee will carry out an in-depth review at the next meeting.

Action 3: Board Secretary

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13 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 16 June 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