

**West Lothian College**23 November 2022

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**Learning and Teaching Committee****Meeting of 7 September 2022**

A pre-meeting was held between Iain McIntosh (Chair), Simon Earp (Vice Principal (Performance and Improvement)) Sarah-Jane Linton (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment) and Jenny Stalker (Board Secretary and Governance Advisor). The pre-meeting reviewed papers and confirmed that both Student Association Presidents could attend the formal meeting. The Chair requested an update to Paper 8: Recruitment Update 2022-23, to be tabled at the meeting by the Vice Principal (Performance and Improvement).

**Present:**

- Iain McIntosh (Chair)
- Elaine Cook
- Tom Bates
- Abel Aboh
- Blair Stewart (Student President)
- Jackie Galbraith (Principal)
- Neil Sinclair (Staff Member)
- Rehela Hussain (Shadow 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)
- Karine Bourdarias (Student President)
- Jenny Stalker (Board Secretary)

**1 Committee Administration****1.1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first formal meeting of AY2022-23, noting that Blair Stewart (Student President for 2022-24) was present and that Karine Bourdarias (Student President for 2022-24) was in attendance.

Apologies were noted from Alex Linkston (Chair of the Board of Governors), Hannah Wilson (Scottish Funding Council) and Barbara Nelson (Education Scotland).

**1.2 Presentation: Learning Champions**

The Chair welcomed Sarah-Jane Linton (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment), Hazel Brady (Faculty Director Business, Creative and Enterprise) and Sharon Meek (Lecturer Business, Creative and Enterprise) who gave a presentation on the Learning Champions project.

Sarah-Jane Linton (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment) introduced the concept of Learning Champions and outlined links to college goals and continuous improvements in learning and teaching practice. The committee was taken through actions outlined in the Education Scotland Progress Review and noted how the work of Learning Champions is clearly meeting the Education Scotland identified actions.

The committee noted the process map which outlined a new approach to Professional Discussion, linked to the GTCS (General Teaching Council for Scotland) professional standards. Sharon Meek (Lecturer Business, Creative and Enterprise) discussed how the revised process meets the needs of lecturers adopting a post-Covid, hybrid teaching approach and emphasized the focus on shared best practices. The main aims are to grow and share knowledge across the lecturer community; support new lecturers as they develop their teaching practice; support all lecturers to develop digital learning and teaching skills; improve lecturer confidence and improve student success performance indicators.

The question was asked if Professional Discussions were taking a targeted approach with regard to improving performance indicators. The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment confirmed that this may be the case if there was a concern about low performance indicators in a specific subject or curriculum area. The committee discussed the peer review approach being used and whether this, rather than a managerial approach, would sufficiently address areas of low performance. The Principal stated that care should be taken about using the word “managerial” and queried the process when observed practice is not good. The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment reported that poor practice is fed back to Learning and Skills Managers and addressed through a formal route and confirmed the difference between the managerial role and the role of the Learning Champion.

The committee discussed the impact of the process on staff morale and staff retention. Sharon Meek (Lecturer Business, Creative and Enterprise) confirmed, as a Learning Champion, that her confidence has been raised and that feedback she had received confirmed that observed staff have found the process supportive and developmental. The Principal also

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confirmed the process is an important part of the college approach to retaining staff and raising standards of learning and teaching.

The committee praised the presentation and asked if the presentation will be shared with students. The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment confirmed that she will work with the Student Association to explore how the message can be shared with students and students, knowing their views are being heard, can be further encouraged to give feedback to support learning and teaching improvements.

**Action 1:** Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment to meet with the Student Association to agree roll out to students.

**1.2 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

**1.3 Minutes of Meeting of 15 June 2022**

The minutes of the 15 June 2022 meeting were approved as accurate.

**1.4 Matters Arising**

The committee noted that Action 1 had been duly completed through the presentation from Learning Champions. The Committee noted that Action 2: Report on Equality Outcomes is ongoing subject to a date for reporting being agreed and that Action 3: Report on enrolments of students from SIMD10/20 locations will be presented to the committee at the next meeting on 23 November 2022.

**2 Student Association Update****2.1 (i) Student Association Report**

Blair Stewart (Student President) presented the first report from the Student Association and gave an overview of training both he and Karine Bourdarias (Student Association President) have completed since taking up their new posts in July 2022. Both Student Association Presidents agreed that the SPARQS (Student Participation in Quality Scotland) conference and NUS (National Union of Students) conference were very good and have helped them to build a sound understanding of the role of the Student Association in supporting our students.

Both Student Presidents reported good early engagement with students and hoped the Freshers Fair to be held on 15 September 2022 will enhance

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engagement further. The focus for September and October is on recruiting and training Executive Officers and Ambassadors.

The committee suggested the Student Association might consider implementing a system utilized in airports whereby students can give quick feedback on a real time basis that can be used meaningfully to support improvement. The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment reinforced the course tutor role has a responsibility to lead on surveys and student feedback.

**Action 2:** The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment to explore, with the Student Association, the feasibility of using an airport survey button system to gather student feedback.

The committee acknowledged the commitment of the Student Association Presidents and noted plans in place to work towards achievement of Strategic Aims in 2022-23. The committee noted early support being provided by the Student Association to students in hardship situations and the positive impact this was having on helping students to remain on course.

The Chair praised both Student Association Presidents for the quality of training completed and for their efforts on behalf of students to date.

**2.1 (ii) Student Presidents: personal reflections June – August 2022**

The Committee noted the papers submitted by both Student Presidents and thanked both for their input on their experience to date.

**3. Matters for Attention****3.1 Student Success****3.1 (i) Predicted Student Success 2021-22**

The committee discussed the paper presented by the Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment, the main area of concern being the low performance indicator results for HEFT courses.

The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment discussed the paper, giving an overview of student success and highlighting areas where success is low. The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment noted the positive picture around the number of deferrals which were significantly down from 2020-21 and highlighted the good work that had been done to bring students back onto campus to complete vocational subjects.

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The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment, reported that HEFT courses had low student success, despite a reduced number of deferrals, caused by the negative impact of almost complete on-line delivery.

The Principal cautioned on fully attributing low success to on-line delivery as some courses were delivered on campus but still have low success. The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement discussed a possible correlation between demographics and PI results and analysis that could be done to explore this. The Principal stated that last year's results should have been better and that we should focus on what is being done in this academic year to improve results.

The Committee discussed the schools' approach to grading pupil groups and determining the best progression routes for pupils. The Committee confirmed the college and schools are working together to improve predictions on student success.

The Principal discussed how the course risk register is being used by course tutors to proactively engage with students to improve success.

**Action 3:** The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement to set up a meeting between the college and West Lothian Council to discuss opportunities for further collaboration and data sharing.

### 3.1 (ii) **School Pupil Success 2021-22**

The committee discussed the paper presented by the Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement and noted the figures presented. The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement discussed the uptake on applications from schools but disappointing performance indicators. The committee asked for a report to be brought to the next meeting in November to include all school pupils, rather than a snapshot of exam results.

**Action 4:** The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement to prepare a report on all school pupils for the 23 November 2022 meeting.

## 3.2 **Regular Monitoring**

### 3.2 (i) **Credit Update 2021-22**

The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement presented Paper 6, advising the committee that the college is on target to exceed the credit target and that the Scottish Funding Council has increased the core credit target for 2022-23.

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The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement discussed the balance between meeting our credit target and over-delivering on target with potential negative consequences for the budget. The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement also confirmed the college has still to receive Scottish Funding Council funding for YPG/NTTF credits delivered.

The committee noted this paper.

**3.2 (ii) Curriculum Planning 2023-24**

The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment presented Paper 7 for information, noting the plan to reduce the number of credits to 16 for core, full-time, non-advanced courses in 2022-23 and the change to the timeline to launch the 2022-23 Curriculum for recruitment in January rather than December.

The committee noted the content of the paper and were happy with the revised timeline.

**3.2 (iii) Recruitment Update 2022-23**

The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement presented an updated paper showing revised figures for Table 2 – Applications/Offers to Target and Table 3 – Full-time Applications/Offers to Target by Level. The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement discussed work being done to ensure recruitment to all courses and remedial action being taken where recruitment is low. The Principal emphasized the importance of robust curriculum planning.

The Chair asked where areas of low recruitment are currently. The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement reported that main areas of concern are within Computing and Engineering areas but stated that concern is more at individual course level than subject area and gave examples of HNC Civil Engineering, HNC Fabrication and Welding, HNC Social Sciences and HNC/NC Beauty Therapy. The Vice Principal, Performance and Improvement discussed analysis being done to aid recruitment and the Committee noted the potential impact of universities recruiting school pupils from HN courses and how data should be analysed to take account of this.

The committee noted the report.

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### 3.2 (iv) **Student Funds Update 2021-22**

The Vice Principal, Finance and Corporate Services presented Paper 9, noting the work the college has done to distribute financial support to students over the summer period and into the new academic year.

The committee noted the content of the report.

### 3.3 **Continuous Improvement**

#### 3.3 (i) **Quality Enhancement Report**

The Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented the Quality Enhancement Report.

The Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources discussed the challenges presented by the nine quality “holds” imposed as sanctions by SQA and actions being taken to ensure improvement in 2022-23. The Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources is confident there is an appetite in the curriculum areas to build a culture of quality improvement and that this situation can be rectified in 2022-23.

As part of the action plan, a new role of Quality Champion and an enhanced internal audit process is planned.

The Principal noted that the high number of holds was unacceptable and requested that the Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment ensures that quality processes are robustly reinforced in every curriculum area.

The Committee discussed whether staff behaviours needed to be addressed now that we are in a post-Covid situation and asked if the college has cascaded a quality charter to all staff. The Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources confirmed that behavioural standards are part of the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) professional update scheme and all lecturers are registered to complete professional update. The Committee noted that behaviours can take a long time to change and that a quality charter is important. The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment noted that the Learning and Teaching Strategy also embeds behavioural principles for lecturers.

The Chair noted that behaviors may have been wrong for some time and asked why the internal verification process had not picked up on problems prior to external verification. The Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources agreed there was a weakness here.

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**Action 5:** The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment to implement a process of quality reinforcement for all curriculum staff.

### 3.3 (ii) **Student Support Services Update**

Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources presented Paper 11, highlighting the Student Mental Health Agreement and the work taking place in relation to this.

The committee noted the Student Support Policy and agreed support being provided for students is extensive. The committee noted this paper.

## 4. **Matters for Information**

### 4.1 (i) **Scottish Government Purpose and Principles**

The chair asked the committee to note the paper for information.

### 4.1 (ii) **Outcome Agreement 2021-22 Publication**

The chair asked the committee to note that the college Outcome Agreement for 2021-22 has been published by the Scottish Funding Council.

## 5. **Any Other Business (AOB)**

The Principal informed the committee that automotive student, Tori Leigh Adams, has been asked to speak to Scottish Government about her experience as a woman setting up her own business in a male dominated environment.

The Committee asked if board members were able to attend the CDN awards ceremony. The Principal informed the committee that members could attend and requested the date be circulated for information to board members and the Student Association.

**Action 6:** Board Secretary and Governance Advisor to circulate information to board members and Student Association.

## 6. **Review of Committee and Supporting Papers**

The Chair noted that the meeting had gone well but had run over time due to the need to discuss a number of important matters in detail. The committee agreed that the presentation from Learning Champions was important and warranted the additional time taken to discuss this as was the discussion on quality arrangements.

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The committee agreed that papers presented were informative and well presented and thanked staff for their input to the meeting.

### 7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is on 23 November 2022 at 10.30am.

**Note:** There were no matters discussed during the meeting, during which Members declared any conflict of interest, or the Board Secretary and Governance Advisor was aware from the Register of Interests that discussion could give rise to such a conflict.

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

Date .....