

Learning and Teaching Committee

Minute of Meeting of 4 September 2024

Present:

Sue Cook (Chair of the Board of Governors)
Tom Bates (Chair of Learning and Teaching Committee and Non-executive member)
Gavin Hamilton (Vice-Chair of Learning and Teaching Committee and Non-executive member)
Elaine Cook (Non-executive member)
Michael Greenhalgh (Non-executive member)
Laura Murray (Teaching Staff member)
Joanna Trybura (Student member)
Jackie Galbraith (Principal)

In attendance:

Hannah Wilson (Scottish Funding Council)
Hazel Brady (Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment)
Simon Earp (Vice Principal, People, Performance and Improvement)
Jennifer McLaren (Vice Principal, Finance and Estates)
Beth Brownlee (Head of Student Experience and Improvement)
Todd Lumsden (Director Care, Health and Sport Faculty)
Margaret Forisky (Director Access, Employability and Schools Faculty)
Steven Morrison (Director Computing, Engineering and Built Environment Faculty)
Lynn Bain (Director Business, Creative and Enterprise Faculty)
Tom Thomson (Information Systems Manager)
CJ Airlie (Student Member)
Jenny Stalker (Board Secretary and Governance Advisor)

College Development Network: Board Member Training

The committee benefited from a development session from Gordon Hunt, College Development Network, to bring members up to date with governance responsibilities for board members and charitable trust status. Relevant guidance and codes of good governance were discussed and made available to members.

1 Committee Administration

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The committee welcomed Joanna Trybura and CJ Airlie, the newly elected Student Association Presidents for 2024-26. Joanna Trybura will be the student member for the Learning and Teaching Committee.

There were no apologies for this meeting.

1.2 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest noted.

1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 5 June 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting of 5 June 2024 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

1.4 Matters Arising

Action 1: was noted as complete.

Action 2: was covered in the credit update paper presented to this meeting.

2 Faculty Directors Update

Faculty Directors gave updates on their individual faculties, covering work completed over the summer break to improve the campus for new and returning students.

The committee noted the project to enclose the motor vehicle workshop area, improving the working environment for year-round study as well as the purchase of industry standard equipment for the construction area.

The committee noted that robust curriculum planning and a strong recruitment campaign have resulted in good recruitment across all faculties for 2024-25. Work continues to recruit to courses with currently low numbers. The committee noted that school courses are recruiting well.

Industry partnerships and collaborations have resulted in 55 new Modern Apprentices commencing study in construction and dry walling. Care, Health and Sports have established good links with NHS Lothian which has informed curriculum planning and is providing student job opportunities. The Pure Spa partnership continues to work well for beauty students and we continue to progress work with the local authority and school/college partnership.

The Active Campus Co-ordinator has been busy over the summer break supporting West Lothian Pride, the African Women's Network and student inductions. A new fitness and wellbeing timetable is in place for staff and students.

The committee noted that a number of staff across faculties have been nominated for College Development Network awards in 2024-25 and that the college won the Outstanding Educational Practice award for the TRUST project at the Corporate Parenting Awards.

The committee noted the new initiative to introduce and support student counsellor placements with the aim of screening referrals before these are progressed to qualified student counsellors.

The committee congratulated faculty teams on their excellent work and reiterated the committee's commitment to supporting faculty work.

Student Association Report

The Student President introduced the student association report informing the committee that 98 students have come to the Student Association for support to date and have been signposted to appropriate services. The committee noted there has been good interest in students wishing to be Ambassadors and Executive Officers and that elections will take place at the end of September.

The committee also noted early initiatives being put in place, such as new information boards to improve communications. Freshers Fayre will take place on 19 September and this is being widely communicated to students. The committee asked, where possible, to be included in any communication to enable members to keep up to date with student activities.

The Principal highlighted how impressed she was with Joanna Trybura and CJ Airlie's performance when they addressed large groups of students at Student Induction.

The committee thanked the Student Association for their report and wished them well as they take up their new roles.

4 Matters for Committee Attention

4.1 Student Experience and Improvement

(i) Presentation on Tertiary Quality and Enhancement Framework (TQEF)

The Vice Principal, People, Performance and Improvement gave an overview of the new TQEF framework which will bring quality assurance systems from college and universities together.

The committee noted the new framework, commissioned through the Quality Assurance Agency, will come into being in 2024-25. The committee noted key features of the new framework will include improved use of data and evidence-based reporting as well as external benchmarking and cross referencing. The review period will cover framework criteria over a 6-year period and will remove the need for the Outcome Agreement as it currently stands. The committee noted that peer reviewers have still to be appointed and agreed the peer review approach embedded in this new framework has the potential to bring learning and best practice back to the college.

The committee noted the presentation and will be pleased to receive an update on progress at a future meeting.

(ii) Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit Report

The Head of Student Experience and Improvement introduced the report, noting continuing high confidence in college leadership and management. There were no points for action for the second year in a row and only two recommendations for improvement, one of which was related to monitoring meta skills in courses and student understanding of the meta skills framework. The committee was also interested to understand more about meta skills and how this is used by students and employers.

The committee was pleased to discuss the excellent annual engagement report as well as the Thematic Review of Care report which was also very positive. The formal report for the Thematic Review of Care has still to be received.

Action 1: Head of Student Experience and Improvement

To circulate the Skills Development Scotland Meta Skills Framework to board members.

The committee noted the report.

(iii) SQA Exam Results 2023-24

The committee was introduced to the paper which highlights the positive results of students presented for external exams.

It was noted that only 15 students were entered for National 5 Maths. The committee discussed the potential relevance of National 5 Applied Maths in various subject areas.

The committee noted the paper.

(iv) Student Experience and Improvement Report

It was noted the format of this report has been changed to fit with the Leading and Learning Strategy.

The committee noted that 100% success in EV visits in 2023-24 has been achieved, evidencing the hard work done by staff and the success of the new Quality Champion role.

The committee noted the Head of Student Experience and Improvement will attend the launch event of the new Tertiary Quality and Enhancement Framework on 12 September.

It was noted that the revised format for Student Induction and the IT Basics induction for students have been successful.

The committee noted the report

(v) Student Support Update Report

The committee noted that good work had been done over the summer to proactively engage with students to provide pre-course information and support and that this has resulted in reduced queues at the start of term. Students have also been offered one-to-one meetings with support staff to discuss their individual needs.

The committee noted the work done on data sharing to further support learners and thanked the team for the proactive work carried out over the summer period to ensure students continued to receive the support they needed to stay motivated and to complete the academic year.

The committee noted the report and recognised the huge amount of proactive work carried out by the team.

4.2 Regular Monitoring

(i) Credit Update 2023-24

The Vice Principal, People, Performance and Improvement noted the current credit situation is positive and informed the committee there is no expectation of any problems arising from the Scottish Funding Council credit audit which has still to take place.

The committee discussed the college's very positive position in the sector with regard to performance improvement over time.

The committee noted the credit update.

(ii) Curriculum Plan Process 2025-26

It was noted that curriculum planning has already commenced for 2025-26 with a tightened process. The committee noted that collaboration with employers and partners continues to play an important role in the planning process.

The committee noted the paper.

(iii) Recruitment Update 2024-25

The committee positively noted the work being completed with students, pre-course, to examine "do not attends" and the keep warm campaign which is working towards ensuring full

recruitment. It was noted that recruitment numbers are currently comfortable against target.

The committee noted the paper.

(iv) Impact of EIS-FELA Industrial Action

The Vice Principal, Learning and Attainment gave a verbal update on industrial action. The committee noted the pay award has been accepted and there will be no impact from industrial action in this year. It was noted that student outcomes are improved across all areas despite 27 days of industrial action up to the end of June 2024.

The committee was pleased to note that proactive, personal communication with students who were not resulted before the summer ensured that all were able to progress and that the college worked closely with universities on predicted success which enabled universities to make offers of place. There were no student complaints as a result of this proactive work.

Deeming of pay was suspended and all outstanding results should be entered by 13 September 2024.

The executive team noted thanks to staff teams for the work done to mitigate the impact on students who were ending the academic year without results.

The committee also commended staff for the tremendous amount of work put in.

5 Matters for Attention

5.1 Student Funds Update 2023-24

The Vice Principal, Finance and Estates introduced the paper and commended the Student Funds Officer and the Student Funds Team for the work done to ensure students were so well supported.

The committee added their recognition and thanks to the whole team and noted the paper.

6 Any Other Business

The committee discussed the possibility of changing Learning and Teaching Committee dates to a Thursday to facilitate member attendance.

It was agreed to change the remainder of meeting dates for 2024-25 to Thursdays (excepting the first Thursday of each month).

Action 2: Board Secretary and Governance Advisor

To change the meeting schedule and recirculate to members.

7 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be Thursday 14 November 2024.

Note: There were no matters discussed during the meeting, during which Members declared a 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: