

**Minute of the Learning & Teaching
Committee Meeting
Held at the Ayr Campus,
On Thursday 5 September 2019**



Present: Fiona McQueen (Chair)
Fiona Blain
Margarette Bryan
Steve Graham
Christopher Hall
Lauren Howieson
Gordon James
Mary McClung
Jack McCrindle
Mike Stewart
Carol Turnbull
Steven Wallace
Alan Walker

In attendance: Brendan Ferguson (Board Secretary)
Yvonne Melvin (Executive Assistant)
Anne Campbell (Vice Principal – Curriculum)
Michael Breen (Vice Principal – Finance)
James Thomson (Director of Finance, Student Funding & Estates)
Elaine Hutton (Director of Curriculum – Creative, Social Science, Sport and Fitness & Hospitality)
Gavin Murray (Director of Curriculum – ACES, Computing, Games Development & Business Inc. Travel and Tourism)
David Davidson (Director of HD & OD)

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and, in particular, new members Fiona Blain, Steve Graham, Lauren Howieson, Mary McClung and Mike Stewart.

There were no declarations of Interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Committee members Elaine Anderson and Alison Sutherland, from ELT member Jane McKie, and from SLT member Julie Maxwell.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 30 May 2019 (Paper 1) (C/P)

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Gordon James
Seconded: Margarette Bryan

Matters Arising and Action Tracker (Paper 1a)

There were no matters arising not included in the agenda.

The Chair introduced Paper 1a and members agreed the following:

Action 2 - Completed.

Action 11 - Completed.

4 Student Association Report (Paper 2) (P)

J McCrindle, as newly elected President of the Student Association, introduced Paper 2 and took the Committee through the content as presented. J McCrindle advised members that the details of the Student Mental Health Agreement were currently being considered and a further update would be provided to the Committee when the Agreement had been approved. Members were also advised that Fresher's Events had now been carried out on the three main campuses and had been very successful.

L Howieson, as newly elected Student Association Vice President, updated members on the Free Sanitary Products Promotion and advised that a meeting had been organised with a potential supplier. A further update would be provided to the Committee at its next scheduled meeting in November 2019.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report.

5 Terms of Reference and 2019-20 Work Plan (Paper 3) (P)

The Chair and the Board Secretary took the Committee through Paper 3 as presented.

The Committee noted and approved the Terms of Reference and the 2019/20 Workplan.

6 2018-19 Performance Indicators (Paper 4) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 4 and noted that the figures would not be finalised until the audit process and FES return to SFC were completed. The finalised figures for 2018-19 would be provided to members at the Committee meeting in March 2020 when the team evaluations were complete and the national PIs for the sector had been published.

An additional paper providing members with a yearly comparison of FE and HE Full Time Outcomes in graphical form was tabled at the meeting. A Campbell noted areas where improvement had been achieved and areas that required further consideration and strategies to be put in place. A Campbell advised that Team Evaluations, to look at strategies for improvement, were currently under way.

Further discussions took place on the tabled paper with various questions raised and answered satisfactorily. The Committee agreed that the information provided would be useful on a per campus basis and A Campbell stated that a further summary to this effect would be provided.

M Stewart enquired about a possible comparison of the College to other similar colleges. A Campbell confirmed that benchmarking this type of comparison is normally undertaken upon national publication of PIs in March of each year and a future update would be provided to members.

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 4 and appendices, agreed that it demonstrated an overall positive trend and looked forward to receiving further updates as they become available.

Action: The Committee to receive a summary of the FE and HE Full Time Outcomes per campus and in comparison to similar Colleges by March 2020 meeting.

7 Information for College Quality Arrangements 2019-20 (Paper 5) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 5 as written and advised that Ayrshire College's progress visit is scheduled to take place week commencing Monday 13 January 2020. The next full Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan is to be published in October 2020.

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 5.

8 Impact of Universal Credit (Verbal)

J Thomson advised members of the difficult situation faced by some students following the introduction of Universal Credit. In addition, the associated legislation meant that discretionary support funding, provided by SFC and administered by the College to support students in difficult circumstances, might well now act to their detriment in terms of their Universal Credit entitlement. J Thomson confirmed that this was now a complex area and that both he and Student Funding were working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions on the provision of assistance based on individual circumstances.

The Committee noted the verbal update and regretted the impact that the roll out of this benefit legislation was having on some of the most vulnerable students registered with the College. The Committee looked forward to receiving further updates on the progress being made in the future.

9 2018-19 External Verification Report (Paper 6)

A Campbell introduced Paper 6 and noted that the College had participated in 92 external verification activities in 2018-19 (compared to 76 in 2017-18) as follows:

- 62 SQA visits (57 in 2017-18)
- 14 SQA postal/central verifications (6 in 2017-18)

- 16 visits from other Awarding Bodies (13 in 2017-18)

Members were advised that 90 external verification visits were successful, with two requiring further actions, which were resolved quickly. The Committee was asked to note the positive feedback received.

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 6 and welcomed the positive feedback received.

10 2018-19 Credit position Report – Final Position for Audit (Paper 7) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 7, confirming that the College was approximately 700 credits over its 2018-19 credit position target and was in a comfortable position for the FES Audit.

The Committee noted Paper 5 and the Chair on behalf of the Committee offered thanks and congratulations to all the staff teams involved for their hard work in achieving this outcome.

11 2018-19 Student Support Funds – Final Position at July 2019 (Paper 8) (P)

J Thomson took the Committee through Paper 8 as presented and various questions were raised and answered satisfactorily. J Thomson noted that the College seeks to ensure that students are fully aware of their position in relation to student support funds, in particular discretionary funding, and how to maximise the opportunities available to them. Nevertheless, the College did not utilise its full FE Discretionary Budget in 2018-19. This was mainly due to the impact the Universal Credit (UC) roll out was having on some of the more vulnerable students as discussed under Item 8 above.

Members noted C Turnbull's comment that there had been a rise in figures for young people in poverty in Ayrshire and that the College was looking at ways of assisting those students affected. The College provided soup free to all students at lunchtime and E Hutton advised members that another option currently being considered was a supplier-sponsored Breakfast Initiative. Further supplier meetings had been organised and it was hopeful that this initiative might start during the first term.

J Thomson confirmed that he was also working with the Student Funding Team and the funding sector regarding this issue and the utilisation of remaining student support funds, noting that it was a requirement that all unused student support funds be returned to SFC and could not be used e.g. in support of any food related initiatives. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to see a comparison on student support funding with other colleges.

J McCrindle and L Howieson confirmed that the Student Association would wish to offer their assistance in supporting poverty related initiatives.

The Committee noted Paper 8 and its content, and commended the work of the College in seeking to mitigate the impact of young person poverty within the student body.

12 2019-20 Enrolment Position Update Report (Verbal)

A Campbell advised members that the College was currently 83% to target. It was 94% to target on full time courses, which was ahead of the 2018-19 position.

Members were advised that a paper outlining the College's position in more detail would be provided at the next Committee meeting in November 2019.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above update.

13 Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan 2018-21 - Progress Report (Paper 9) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 8 and took the Committee through it as written, reminding members that this was the current Enhancement Plan covering the 3-year period 2018-21. The Committee's attention was drawn to the appendices provided, and in particular Appendix 2 containing commentary on the specific actions due for completion by the end of the cycle.

The Committee noted the urgency of the position in relation to the Nethermains Campus and the need to work with partners to identify options for the improvement of facilities for STEM delivery in North Ayrshire. In response to a question, G Murray updated members on the ongoing discussions taking place between the College and a fund dispensing authority regarding funding and options. Members were advised that an application had been submitted and was currently being reviewed.

The Chair enquired about other possible sources of funding. C Turnbull advised on a number of options currently being considered and confirmed that the Nethermains Campus remained serviceable at the current time.

The Committee noted the content of Paper 9 and appendices, and commended the progress made to date.

14 Industry Programmes 2018-19 Progress Report (Paper 10) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 10 and advised members that progress on the Business Growth area would be reported to future BRIC committees, while progress on the modern apprenticeships and work based learning areas continue to be reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

The Committee was asked to note an amendment to section 3 of the paper. The College had approached SFC on the possibility of re-allocating approximately £133,000 of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund to another college, or to roll this forward to next year.

Members welcomed Paper 10 and a discussion followed. A number of questions of clarification were asked and satisfactory responses received. In relation to Modern Apprenticeships, the Committee noted in particular

- The significant increase made in the 2018-19 award.
- Ayrshire College was currently the 3rd biggest provider of Modern Apprenticeships in the college sector,
- Ayrshire College was the second largest provider of engineering apprenticeships in the sector,
- Recruitment for 2019-20 remained strong.
- A modern apprenticeship in food and drink had been added in 2019-20, reflecting the region's ambitions and the opportunities expected to arise as a result of the Ayrshire Growth Deal.
- Confidence is high that the number of new starts in 2019-20 would equal or exceed those for 2018-19

The Committee welcomed Paper 10 and commended the ongoing work being undertaken by the College.

Action: The Industry Programmes Progress Report to be split in two with a Business Growth report to be brought as a standing paper to the Business, Resources and Infrastructure Committee and the Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning report to be brought as a standing paper to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

15 Ayrshire Growth Deal (Verbal) (P)

A Campbell provided an update and advised members of the progress being made within those areas in which the College had been involved, in particular within aerospace and STEM.

G Murray advised members that the College was working closely with South Ayrshire Council and Strathclyde University on the creation of an Augmented Reality Learning Space. This would be split into two phases, with Phase1 being hosted at the Aeronautical building at the Ayr Campus and Phase 2 at a site near Prestwick Airport. The bid was currently being worked on and would shortly be ready for submission.

A Campbell advised members on an Innovation Fund bid from the College which would focus on the digital agenda. The bid would be submitted to SFC by Thursday 19 September 2019 and would be accompanied by a letter of comfort in support from Barclays.

The Committee noted the above verbal update.

16 Risk Register – LTC Extract at September 2019 (Paper 11) (R)

J Thomson introduced Paper 11 and highlighted to members that V1 of the 2019-20 Risk Register was a continuation from V4 of the 2018-19 Risk Register. The draft was discussed and a number of questions asked and satisfactorily answered.

The Committee agreed the following in relation to the Risks contained within the extract:

- **L&T1 – Increased to 9 to reflect the uncertainty at the start of a new academic year.**

The remaining Risks to be maintained at the same levels.

The Committee agreed the changed L&T1 and that all remaining Risks remain as recorded.

Received for Information

17 Student Services Annual Report 2018-19 (Paper 12) (P)

Action: A smaller and high-level version of the Student Services Annual Report be provided on a regular basis at future meetings.

Action: A summary of the Student Services Annual Report be provided at the College Terminology Workshop in October 2019.

18 Complaints Report 2018-19 (Q3 Feb-Apr) (Paper 13) (P)

19 Access and Inclusion Strategy (Paper 14) (P)

20 Published 2019-20 Regional Outcome Agreement (Paper 15) (P)

21 Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 14 November 2019 at 4.00 pm, Kilmarnock Campus, Boardroom.

(C/P) Confirmed minutes will be published

(P) Papers will be published on the College website

(R) Papers will not be published for reasons of commercial sensitivity or for reasons of personal data confidentiality