

**Minute of the Learning & Teaching
Committee Meeting
Held at the Kilwinning Campus,
On Thursday 5 March 2020**



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

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)
Julie Maxwell (Director of Curriculum – Health & Social Care, Early Years, Essential Skills, Supported Learning and ESOL)
Gavin Murray (Director of Curriculum – ACES, Computing, Games Development & Business Inc. Travel and Tourism)
Ian Beach (HMI, Education Scotland)
Louise Lauchlan – Scottish Funding Council (Outcome Agreement Manager)

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members offered introductions to external attendees, Ian Beach and Louise Lauchlan.

There were no declarations of Interest.

2 Invited Input

Education Scotland – Progress Visit

Ian Beach, Education Scotland, provided the Committee with a brief update on the College's recent Progress Visit. Apologies were submitted on behalf of Dr John Laird, HMI, Education Scotland, who was unable to attend for health reasons. While Mr Beach was not permitted to discuss the detailed outcome of the Progress Visit on Dr Laird's behalf, the rationale for the visits was explained and information on the format undertaken during the visit was outlined. The Committee was also advised that the visit report was positive. It was noted that Dr Laird would formally present the findings to the Committee at a later date.

The Committee thanked Ian Beach for the update and looked forward to receiving a formal presentation of the findings in due course.

SFC – Draft Regional Outcome Agreement 2020-23

Louise Lauchlan, SFC Outcome Agreement Manager, provided the Committee with an update on the draft Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) to date. SFC Guidelines, which had been updated from previous years, were published in October 2019 and the “well-developed draft” had been submitted by the College by the deadline date in December 2019. Positive feedback on the draft was subsequently provided by SFC. The Committee was advised that SFC had asked for the final version of the ROA to be submitted at the end of April 2020, with a view to it being signed off by the Board Chair, the Chair of SFC and published in June 2020.

In response to a question, A Campbell advised that despite a dip in national PI figures nationally, the targets for Ayrshire College remained ambitious. It was noted, however, that there had been no formal announcement to date on any realignment of national ambitions target. However, it was the intention that this would be discussed at a seminar in April 2020 at which realistic targets going forward would be considered. C Turnbull provided an update from discussions at a recent College Principals’ Group and advised members that there had been significant change in the construct of the sector wide student cohort. A lot of traditional HN students had been lost to the university sector as that sector relaxed its entry requirements in response to the demographic downturn, while the College sector had seen a very significant increase in the number of care experienced students being registered. L Lauchlan noted that this would be on the agenda for discussion at the April 2020 Seminar.

Further discussion took place with a number questions raised and answered satisfactorily.

The Committee thanked Louise Lauchlan for the above update and looked forward to receiving the final version of the Regional Outcome Agreement in due course.

3 Apologies

Apologies were received from Committee member Alison Sutherland and from ELT member Jane McKie.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 14 November 2019 (Paper 1) (C/P)

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Mike Stewart
Seconded: Steven Wallace

There were no matters arising.

Action Tracker (Paper 1a)

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

- Action 14 - Completed.
- Action 18 - Completed.
- Action 19 - Completed.

5 Student Association Report (Paper 2) (P)

J McCrindle introduced Paper 2 and took the Committee through it as presented. It was noted that the first round of the Your Voice Matters focus group took place in December 2019, with the second phase scheduled to take place from 16 March 2020 and that the Student Association had been working closely with the College's Estates team to secure new vendor contracts for free sanitary products.

J McCrindle highlighted that the Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions handed out goody bags to c400 students on the Kilmarnock Campus to help them when the College closed for the winter break. Also noted was the work being undertaken by "Working with Communities" student placement, Rebecca Staff, who had organised, as part of her graded unit, an event which would take place on the 9th March at the Kilmarnock Campus. Rebecca had been working with the Student Association advisor to invite practitioners from the organisation 'The Bright Path' to deliver two taster meditation workshops to students and staff.

J McCrindle also updated the Committee on the upcoming Student President Elections, commencing on 18 March 2020, and advised that his current tenure as Student President would end on 30 June 2020. Current Student Vice President, L Howieson, was standing for re-election. The outcome would be decided by the number of votes received as per the ACSA Constitution, with the candidate recording the largest share of the vote being appointed as President, and the candidate with the second highest share being appointed as Vice President.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report.

6 2018-19 Sector KPIs Report (Paper 4) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 4, advising that the Report illustrated the performance of the College relative to the College sector as a whole. The Committee noted that the College remained above the sector average for FE full-time students for the third consecutive year, while the College remained below the sector average for HE full-time students. A Campbell confirmed that the overall performance of the College was improving year on year with the gap in HE attainment narrowing. Actions for further improving attainment, particularly in HE full-time, would be a central focus of the College's refreshed Evaluative Report and Enhancement plan.

The Committee discussed Paper 4. A number of questions of clarification were asked by members and satisfactory answers received.

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 4 and agreed that it demonstrated an overall positive trend. The Committee looked forward to future updates on actions for improving attainment.

7 2019-20 Credit Position Report (position at 18 February 2020) (Paper 5) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 5, confirming that the College is expected to exceed its credit target by 355 credits. The Committee noted this as a very positive position. A number of questions were asked and satisfactory responses received.

The Committee noted Paper 5 and the positive 2019-20 credit position of the College.

8 2019-20 Semester 1 Student Satisfaction Survey (Paper 6) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 6 and took the Committee through it as written. In response to a question, A Campbell advised that the survey was completed by a comparatively small number of students and lacked in-depth coverage. The survey indicated an improvement in satisfaction to 5 statements and a decrease in satisfaction to 7 statements, with no change in 2, and the inclusion of seven additional questions. The College saw the newly appointed Student Ambassadors as integral to the encouragement of student feedback going forward. In addition, the Quality Team would also take a lead role in the future and this would be a part of a discussion to be held later in this meeting.

The Committee was informed that the process was currently under review for Semester 2 and appropriate measures were under consideration.

The Committee noted Paper 6 and the disappointingly low response rate. The Committee also noted the disappointing figures in some of the areas surveyed but was pleased that mitigating actions were being designed to improve the response rate in the future.

The Committee looked forward to receiving Semester 2 feedback in due course.

9 2019-20 Early Withdrawals at November 2019 (Paper 7) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 7, advising that the figures presented were the most up to date for the College as a whole. It was noted that, despite early indications suggesting an improvement in early withdrawals, there had been a slight increase in the first semester. A Campbell continued that curricula teams would be analysing data for their own respective curriculum areas, with actions and intervention being discussed at the Curriculum Area Review meeting in late February/early March 2020.

A Campbell also advised that staff would be focused, for the remainder of the academic year, on reducing overall withdrawals and on improving outcomes for all students.

During discussion, a number of questions were asked and satisfactory responses received.

The Committee noted Paper 7 and the interventions as listed.

10 2019-20 Student Support Funds at 12 February 2020 (Paper 8) (P)

M Breen took the Committee through Paper 8 and pointed to the caveat on page 1 that advised the Committee on the agreement recently reached with SFC to provide a re-profiling payment of £1.5m to the College on 1 April 2020.

The Committee noted that the College applied for, and was awarded, £178,000 of additional student support funding from SFC as part of the 2019-20 in-year redistribution and that the total 2019-20 SFC provided student support funds included circa £1.7m in relation to 203 care-experienced students. The Committee was aware of the work undertaken by the College to actively promote the additional support available to care-experienced students.

The Committee noted Paper 8 and thanked M Breen and the Finance Team for the work that had gone into providing the very useful information contained in the paper.

11 Apprenticeship and Work Based Learning Report (Paper 9) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 9. The Committee noted that the College was increasing its engagement annually and that the College expected to achieve its Modern Apprenticeship and Commercial SVQ targets. In addition, the College expected to exceed the Sub-Contracted Modern Apprenticeships target. A Campbell highlighted the activities listed that would be taking place during Scottish Apprenticeship Week commencing 2 March 2020.

The Committee noted and welcomed the contents of Paper 9 and commended the ongoing work being undertaken by the College.

12 Risk Register – LTC Extract at March 2020 (Paper 10) (R)

A Campbell introduced Paper 10 and a discussion followed. In particular, a query was raised in respect of the potential impact of the Coronavirus on the College, its students and staff. C Turnbull responded that the College Business Continuity Plan had recently been updated and approved by the Board and, in line with the content of that document, the College was monitoring the situation and the required actions on a daily basis.

M Breen advised members that the Risk Register being presented to the Board at its meeting in March 2020 would incorporate the new themes agreed at the Risk Workshop held on 31 January 2020.

The Committee noted Paper 10 and agreed all Risks would be maintained at their current levels.

Received for Information

13 Education Scotland Progress Visit Report (Paper 11) (P)

14 SFC – Draft Regional Outcome Agreement 2020-23 (Paper 12) (P)

15 SFC – iGAP Guidance (Paper 13) (P)

16 SFC – National Ambition for Care Experienced Students (Paper 14) (P)

17 Complaints Report (Q1) (Paper 15) (P)

A Campbell proposed that the Quarterly Complaints Report be removed from the L&T Committee agenda and, instead, be a standing item on future Business, Resources & Infrastructure Committee (BRIC) agendas.

S Wallace, in his capacity as chair of BRIC, supported this proposal.

The Committee agreed and approved that the quarterly Complaints Report be removed from the agenda of this Committee and be transferred to the agenda of BRIC.

18 Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 28 May 2020 at 4.00pm, Kilmarnock Campus.

(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

Reserved Items on Next Page