

**Minute of the Learning & Teaching
Committee Meeting
Held via Video Conference using Zoom,
On Thursday 28 May 2020**



Present: Fiona McQueen (Chair)
Elaine Anderson
Fiona Blain
Margarette Bryan
Steve Graham
Christopher Hall
Gordon James
Jack McCrindle
Mike Stewart
Alison Sutherland
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)
Jane McKie (Vice Principal – People)
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)

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. .

There were no declarations of Interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Committee members Mary McClung and Lauren Howieson and from SLT member James Thomson.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 5 March 2020 (Paper 1) (C/P)

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Mike Stewart
Seconded: Margarette Bryan

There were no matters arising.

Action Tracker (Paper 1a)

The Chair introduced Paper 1a.

There were no outstanding actions.

4 Student Association Report (Paper 2) (P)

J McCrindle introduced Paper 2 and took the Committee through it as presented. The Committee was reminded that the 2020 Student Association elections were due to take place on campus in March 2020 but were postponed following the campus closures resultant on the imposition of Covid-19 restrictions. It was noted that, following discussions with NUS, ACSA would now be conducting online student elections with campaigning and polling taking place from 1 to 5 June 2020. The successful candidates would officially take up post on 1 August 2020, with the current Student President and Student Vice President's terms extended to 31 July to ensure continuous student representation. As the current Student President officially took up post on the 31 July 2018 and would remain in post until 31 July 2020, this would allow the maximum two-year tenure as written into the legislation (section 22, Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013). The Student Vice President has served one year in office and, if re-elected, could serve a further one year, to 30 June 2021.

J McCrindle highlighted that the Periods R Pants initiative was moved online and students were able to apply for a free 3-month sanitary pack using a Survey Monkey Link. The College's sanitary provider, Hey!Girls, would then post the packs directly to the student's home address. The Committee was pleased to note that the initiative had received a very positive response and that, following the effective marketing of this scheme by the Student's Association, Ayrshire College had experienced the highest uptake of these products across the sector, with over 300 students requesting packs.

J McCrindle also updated the Committee on the recent NUS Scotland Conference, advising that the Conference took place, as planned, on 19 and 20 March 2020 as a virtual conference. The Committee was advised that a new NUS Scotland President was elected and Matt Crilly, former Strathclyde University Student President, was the successful candidate.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report.

5 Covid-19 Update (Paper 3) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 3 and took the Committee through it as presented. It was highlighted that the Scottish Funding Council had confirmed that colleges were not required to submit the mandatory Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey for 2019-20 due to the direct impact of Covid-19.

A Campbell also highlighted the various and extensive measures taken by the College to continue the support of students throughout the lockdown period, particularly the launch of a digital mental health and wellbeing service - The Big White Wall. The Committee was pleased to note the work undertaken by the College in supporting the student body during this very difficult period and was also pleased to note the support provided by the College to the Ayrshire Region.

The Committee was informed that the focus, going forward, would be planning for session 2020-21, with the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff at the forefront. A Campbell provided assurance that the College would strictly adhere to both UK and Scottish Government guidance and that scenario planning was taking place to ensure physical distancing was in place. It was noted that the

College was currently establishing working groups to ensure all aspects of re-opening were covered.

Further discussions took place, during which the additional costs and student access to ICT for digital learning was raised. The Committee was advised that ICT issues for students and the significant investment required by the college sector for digital learning was currently being discussed at a national level, with various options being considered. The Committee noted that College subject teams were looking at students' access to ICT at a detailed level and that a phased return to campus would allow contact to be made with individual students to confirm their position and needs.

The Committee noted the content of Paper 3 and commended the College and the students on the support they had provided to date during lockdown. The Committee also commended the dedication of the College curriculum staff in providing the maximum permissible support to students during this period.

6 2019-20 Credit Position Report (position at 15 May 2020) (Paper 4) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 4, confirming that the College is expected to exceed its credit target by 433 credits. The Committee noted this as a very positive position.

The Committee noted Paper 4 and the positive 2019-20 credit position reported.

7 2019-20 Student Support Funds at 15 May 2020 (Paper 5) (P)

M Breen took the Committee through Paper 5, advising of a small underspend in the 2019-20 Student Support Funds of c£32,000. It was noted that this would be used to continue to provide support to students adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The overspend in FE Discretionary Funds was also highlighted. The Committee was advised that this was due to the additional financial assistance provided to students during the current period.

The Committee noted Paper 5 and commended the College and its Finance Team for the support provided to students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

8 Apprenticeship and Work Based Learning Report (Paper 6) (P)

G Murray introduced Paper 6. The Committee noted that the impact of Covid-19 meant that the College was expected to fall short of its Modern Apprenticeship target, with the areas of Hairdressing and Hospitality receiving the highest impact. However, it was also noted that the College expected to achieve its Commercial SVQ target and exceed the Sub-Contracted Modern Apprenticeships target.

The Committee was pleased to note that, despite the ongoing Covid-19 situation, the College has continued engagement with local employers.

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 6 and commended the ongoing work being undertaken by the College.

9 2020-21 Student Recruitment Report (as at 15 May 2020) (Paper 7) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 7, advising that the total number of applications received by the College were broadly comparable to AY2019-20 but that the number of acceptances had increased by over 20%. It was noted that a like for like comparison on the previous year was not yet possible as school-college partnership applications were still to be included, but this was an overall positive report. A caveat was provided that the potential impact of Covid-19 on the Colleges 2020-21 enrolment was, as yet, unknown.

The Committee was advised that a recent survey of the college sector suggested a downward turn in applications. If that proved to be correct, then the position of Ayrshire College as at 15 May 2020 was very positive.

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 7 and commended the College on its positive position.

10 Risk Register – Learning and Teaching Extract at May 2020 (Verbal) (R)

M Breen provided a verbal update, advising that the approach to risk management within the College during the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent restrictions imposed had been discussed by the Executive Leadership Team. It was proposed that a paper be provided for consideration by the Audit Committee outlining the actions taken by the College to mitigate the risks which, if approved, would then be presented to the Board at their meeting in June 2020. As such, the normal committee extract from the Corporate Risk Register was, with the approval of the Committee, being suspended pending discussion at the Audit Committee and the Board of Management.

Discussion followed during which it was agreed that the above proposal represented an appropriate way to proceed and agreeing the suspension of the Committee's risk extract.

In response to a query, M Breen reassured the Committee that the risk to the College's infrastructure was being managed as essential work to the campuses continued to be undertaken by Estates staff.

The Committee thanked M Breen for the update and approved the proposal. The Committee also agreed that it would be appropriate to suspend receipt of the Learning and Teaching Committee Corporate Risk Extract pending discussion at the Audit Committee and the Board of Management.

Received for Information

11 Regional Outcome Agreement 2020-23 (Paper 8) (P)

12 SFC – Report on Widening Access (Paper 9) (P)

13 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 3 September 2020 at 4.00pm

(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