

**Minute of the Learning & Teaching
Committee Meeting
Held via Video Conference using Zoom,
On Thursday 12 November 2020**



Present: Fiona McQueen (Chair)
Elaine Anderson
Beth Clelland
Steven Fegan
Steve Graham
Lauren Howieson
Mary McClung
Janette Moore
Hazel Murphy
Mike Stewart
Alison Sutherland
Carol Turnbull
Steven Wallace
Matthew Wilson

In attendance: Brendan Ferguson (Board Secretary)
Yvonne Melvin (Board Administrative Officer)
Michael Breen (Vice Principal – Finance)
Anne Campbell (Vice Principal – Curriculum)
Jane McKie (Vice Principal – People)
Elaine Hutton (Director of Curriculum)
Julie Maxwell (Director of Curriculum)
Gavin Murray (Director of Curriculum)

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and in particular welcomed new Board members Beth Clelland, Steven Fegan, Janette Moore and Matthew Wilson to the first meeting of the Learning & Teaching Committee.

There were no declarations of Interest.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Committee members Sathish Srinivasan and from SLT member James Thomson.

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

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

Proposed: S Wallace **Seconded:** M McClung

There were no matters arising.

Action Tracker (Paper 1a)

The Chair introduced Paper 1a.

All outstanding actions had been completed to November 2020.

4 **Student Association Report (Paper 2) (P)**

L Howieson experienced technical difficulties and was unable to take the Committee through Paper 2. Members confirmed they had read through the report and commended the comprehensive information contained therein.

The Committee recognised the work undertaken by the Student Association so far this academic year and offered their congratulations on the success of this year's Wear It On Your Sleeve campaign and the virtual Fresher's Event.

In response to a query, the Committee was reassured that student feedback received so far suggested that students were coping well with the College's blended learning approach and no issues in relation to learning had been raised. However, some student feedback had also highlighted a frustration among the student body at the lack of socialisation due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

The Committee noted and welcomed the above report. The Committee also regretted the impact that Covid-19 restrictions was having on the ability of individual students to interact with the rest of the student body.

5 **Addressing Digital Poverty (Paper 3) (P)**

E Hutton introduced Paper 3, advising the Committee that the College had successfully secured funding from the Scottish Funding Council to help tackle the issue of digital poverty in the local community. It was noted that a Digital Poverty Panel had been established to process the applications received and to administer the funds appropriately. The Committee was pleased to further note that 800 devices and 80 data packages had been issued to date and that the College would be providing bookable access to its Learning Resource Centres across all campuses, in line with public health requirements, for students who do not have an appropriate space conducive to studying at home.

In response to a query regarding demand versus supply, E Hutton reassured members that the College was in a fortunate position in respect of devices available and remained on track to provide assistance to students who meet the criteria.

The Committee noted and welcomed the content of Paper 3, and commended the work of the College and the commitment of staff to the students who require additional assistance during this difficult time.

6 **College Leaver Destination Survey 2018-19 (Paper 4) (P)**

A Campbell introduced Paper 4 and highlighted to members that the College achieved a return rate of 88.4%, confirming the destinations of 3,830 College leavers out of a target total of 4,333. This exceeded the SFC survey completion target of 80%.

A Campbell also noted that 95.3% of Ayrshire College confirmed leavers were in a positive destination six months after completing their course of study, a slight decrease of 0.5% on the previous year. It was highlighted that the majority of leavers had chosen to undertake further study. In response to a question, A

Campbell advised that the “other” category was defined as one where the leaver noted that they were unavailable for employment or further study.

A Campbell also confirmed that benchmark comparisons with other colleges is not yet available as a result of the lag in the publication of this information. However, it was the intention that this information would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee

The Committee noted the content of Paper 4 and welcomed the high return rate of the survey.

7 2019-20 Performance Indicator Report (Paper 5) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 5, advising on the interim position of the College as at September 2020. The Committee noted that the figures for FE full-time and FE part-time students had slightly decreased on previous years. A Campbell advised the Committee that the FE part-time figures presented included those students and school pupils who were unable to complete their course due to the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions implemented by government at the end of March 2020. A Campbell also noted that, despite a challenging end to AY2019-20, the figure for HE full-time students had increased on previous years, but that HE part-time figures had also decreased.

The Committee discussed Paper 5. A number of questions of clarification were asked by members and satisfactory answers received.

The Committee noted the interim position as at September 2020 and looked forward to future updates, including benchmarking for the College sector, at its meeting in March 2021.

8 2021-22 Draft Curriculum Delivery Plan (CDP) (Paper 6) (R)

A Campbell introduced Paper 6, as presented, advising the Committee that there was a big emphasis on collaborating with Skills Development Scotland going forward and emphasising the importance of the Ayrshire Growth Deal in the College’s forward planning.

The Committee was also aware that a key strategic objective of the College was to meet the annual credit activity target set by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and agreed as part of the Regional Outcome Agreement process. A Campbell advised that the process for 2021-22 had been subject to delay as guidance had yet to be provided by SFC on the requirements for the new National Outcome and Impact Framework, to be used by the sector going forward.

The Committee noted that A Campbell was involved in a shortlife working group with SFC to develop the new National Outcome and Impact Framework. The draft CDP would be based on the intended key areas of focus and an assumed SFC credit activity target using 2020-21 as a guideline.

Further discussion took place, with a number of questions raised and answered satisfactorily. In response to a query from M Stewart on the lack of any specific mention of digital/ICT in the draft, A Campbell advised that the necessity for

digital/ICT provision was recognised as fundamental, and was embedded as a metaskill in all areas of College learning.

The Committee noted and approved the 2021-22 Draft CDP.

9 Outcome and Impact Framework (Verbal) (P)

A Campbell provided a verbal update, advising that this years' Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) had been subject to delay as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions and was expected to be replaced by a new streamlined Outcome and Impact Framework. The Committee noted that a draft ROA would be provided to the Committee for consideration at its March 2021 meeting.

The Committee thanked A Campbell for the update and looked forward to receiving the draft ROA in March 2021.

10 2020-21 Credit Position Report (position as at 4 November) (Paper 7) (P)

A Campbell introduced Paper 7, confirming that the College is expected to exceed its credit target by 327 credits. The Committee noted this as a positive position.

Members were reminded that, ordinarily, SFC reserves the right to clawback funding should the College not meet the agreed activity target. The Committee noted that confirmation had been received from SFC that it will not seek to recover funds for AY2020-21 for shortfalls against Outcome Agreement targets where related to Covid-19.

The Committee noted Paper 7 and the overall positive 2020-21 credit position of the College.

11 2020-21 Student Support Funds (position as at 4 November) (Paper 8) (P)

M Breen took the Committee through Paper 8. The caveat on page 1 advising members on the significant number of variables still to be factored in to the projected expenditure was noted. M Breen reminded members that the allocation of these funds was demand-led and was not predictable in advance. A clearer picture would emerge by the time of the 3rd quarter meeting.

The Committee noted that the total 2020-21 SFC provided student support funds included circa £1.7m in relation to 276 care-experienced students. The Committee was aware that the College actively promoted the additional support available to care-experienced students, with the number of identified care experienced students potentially increasing during AY2020-21. M Breen highlighted to the Committee a projected underspend in the College's Education Maintenance Allowance allocation for AY2020-21 and noted that the figure included January 2021 starts.

Further discussions took place with a number of questions raised and answered satisfactorily. In response to a query, M Breen advised the Committee that the College Curriculum Teams continued to monitor student attendance and engagement, supported by robust data recording systems.

The Committee noted Paper 8 and the position of the College as at 4 November 2020.

12 Evaluation Activities 2020-21 (Verbal) (P)

A Campbell provided a verbal update, advising that the College was not required to provide an Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan for AY2020-21. It had been indicated by SFC that an evaluation of the College's Regional Outcome Agreement outputs for AY 2019-20 would be required, however, guidance had yet to be provided. The Committee noted that a paper on evaluation activities would be provided to its meeting in March 2021.

A Campbell advised the Committee that the College's evaluation activities for AY 2020-21 were underway and active engagement with Education Scotland was ongoing. It was also noted that Student Ambassador Training was underway and further feedback would be provided in March 2021.

The Committee thanked A Campbell for the verbal update and looked forward to receiving further updates at the next meeting.

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

G Murray introduced Paper 8 and took the Committee through it in detail, advising that the content of the report described the current position, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on the College's Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning provision.

The Committee noted that the pace of recruitment for Modern Apprentices for 2020-21 had been impacted by Covid-19, however, there were signs of recovery in most sectors. G Murray advised that, despite the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the College had received a positive level of enquiries in Engineering, which it hoped would translate into new starts at a level close to the contracted volume. The Committee also noted that SDS and SQA had recognised that work placements for Foundation Apprentices were likely to be impacted by the ongoing pandemic situation in 2020-21, but alternative solutions were being explored.

In addition, it was noted that the College would continue to work with employers and partners to promote apprenticeships to industry and young people, to maximise recruitment in 2020-21 and minimise the impact of COVID-19 to the skills pipeline.

A discussion followed during which a number of questions were asked and satisfactory responses received

The Committee noted the contents of Paper 8, commended the ongoing work in the area of Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning, whilst recognising that this work was being undertaken by the College in difficult circumstances

14 Risk Register – Learning and Teaching Extract at November 2020 (Paper 9) (R)

M Breen introduced Paper 9 and reminded members that in returning to the pre-Covid Corporate Risk Register, the elements identified in the overarching risk had

been incorporated into the individual Committee based Risk Register extracts as agreed at the Board Meeting in September 2020. A total of 5 Risks had been identified for discussion.

M Breen took the Committee through each Risk as outlined in Paper 9.

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

- **L&T1 – Risk Assessment to remain outwith the Risk Appetite at 15 to reflect the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **L&T3 - Risk Assessment to remain outwith the Risk Appetite at 16 to reflect the uncertainty of the start of the new academic year.**
- **L&T5 - Risk Assessment to remain outwith the Risk Appetite at 15 to reflect the uncertainty of the of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The remaining Risks were within the Risk Appetite of the Committee and were maintained at the same levels.

The Committee approved the Risk Register – Learning and Teaching Extract at November 2020.

Received for Information

15 Rapid Review National Qualifications Experience-2020 (Paper 11) (P)

16 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 4 March 2021 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