

Board of Management

Meeting of the Students, Staffing & Equalities Committee

MINUTE OF 3rd MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 MAY 2020 AT 1500 HRS (SSEC3)

Present	
Alisdair Barron (AB) (Convener)	Paul Hillard (PH)
David Cullen (DC)	Paul Little (PL)
Dylan Duff (DD)	May Miller (MM)
George Galloway (GG)	Audrey Sullivan (AS)
In attendance	
Paul Clark (PC)	Gillian Plunkett (GP)
John Gribben (JG)	Ann Butcher (Minute)
Apologies for absence	
None	

Item SSEC3-1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	No apologies received. EC was not in attendance.	

Item SSEC3-2	Declarations of Interest	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	There were no declarations of interest.	

Item SSEC3-3	Identification of Items to be Discussed Privately	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	None notified.	

Item SSEC3-4.1	Minute of the Students, Staffing & Equalities held on 15 January 2020	
Paper No: SSEC3-A	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Approve
Decision/Noted	That the minute be approved subject to one addition.	
	<p>Matters Arising Dashboard A new lockdown Dashboard has been developed which includes data on Staff and Student Engagement, and Absence and Wellbeing of Staff.</p> <p>Facility Time</p>	

Facility Time arrangements, for staff undertaking Trade Union activity, are currently subject to national dispute. PL added that the College continues to fully support TU Representative requests for participation in union activities including involvement with TCS Registration Working Groups.

Item SSEC3-4.2	CitySA (Students' Association) Impact Report 2019-20	
Paper No: SSEC3-B	Lead: D Duff	Action requested: Approve
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>DD presented the CitySA Impact Report for 2019-20 and indicated that the format and content had been updated to provide a more student focussed report. The report acknowledges all SA achievements, including key partnerships developed, over 2019-20. He thanked the College for the support offered throughout the year, recognising that many of the achievements made would not be realised without their continued dedication. The key highlights and list of campaigns were noted. DD further advised on CitySA's success in winning the NUS Award for 'College Students' Association of the Year', which recognises the excellent work undertaken by the SA.</p> <p>Committee members agreed that the new format of the Report was impressive and considered the content to be extremely informative. They commended DD on his overall leadership, and congratulated the Executive Team on their hard work over the past year. PL added that their recent award should be featured within the Report. This would further promote the outstanding work of the SA. DD informed the Committee that an Impact Report promotion video is currently being developed, and will be circulated via social media channels during June.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To approve the CitySA Impact Report 2019-20.	

Item SSEC3-5.1	Remote Delivery of Student Support and Well-being	
Paper No: SSEC3-C	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>The Committee asked for an update on the current needs of students emerging from the current Covid 19 crisis. DD advised that initially issues of uncertainty, particularly in terms of assessment completion, exams, placements, delivery of practical classes, etc were being communicated by students. However the College has continued to support students, providing relevant information via FAQs on the website (which are continually updated) and through direct guidance issued to students directly from lecturers. He raised the significant issue of student hardship which is also a national challenge. The NUS are currently pushing for additional resources from the Scottish Government for both the FE and HE sectors.</p> <p>AB was mindful that this was an exceptional crisis and recognised that at some stage bursary funding will end, causing anxiety and hardship. He informed that the Glasgow College Chairs are also seeking funding from the Scottish Minister for HE and FE. PL reported that the issue of student poverty is continually raised at different forums with the Scottish Government. Student Services continue to make every effort to support students. GP confirmed that a high numbers of hardship applications</p>	

continue to be received and are quickly being processed through new remote working arrangements.

AB raised some concern with regard to the students currently residing in the Halls of Residence and those at sea (numbering 50 and 247 at the time of the meeting). A daily network of support is currently in place. Members were made aware that a distinct group of overseas students have recently been repatriated.

GP updated the Committee on the range of remote services and activities in place to allow students to continue to engage with learning and teaching and offers of support. The following points were particularly highlighted:

Student Recruitment and Admissions

- Evening and weekend classes have now been cancelled with full or part refunds provided.
- All applications are still being assessed with offers and acceptances being processed remotely. To date, 8 800 offers have been made for over 7 200 places, though final enrolment numbers remain uncertain. Telephone and Skype interviews are now being undertaken.
- Remote 'Get Ready for College' and transitions communications are being planned. 'Postcard' placement offers will be circulated next week.

Student Funding

- Student funding continues to be paid directly to students.
- Over 1 400 laptops have been provided to staff and students to facilitate remote working. A preferential owner scheme is currently being investigated.

PL informed that a request to repurpose underspend of capital funding to digital support for students has been submitted. A bid to the Arm's Length Foundation may also be considered. AB suggested that applications for funding of digital access could be also made to appropriate charity organisations. It was recognised that a combination of solutions would be required.

DC advised that feedback is being provided to Colleges Scotland on Digital Poverty. He also suggested that provision of free data packages should be investigated with telecommunication companies. AS added that requests for donations could also be progressed. A Board relief appeal will be considered.

Student Support and Well Being

- Telephone counselling is being offered where necessary.
- Students and staff have access to 'The Big White Wall' digital platform which offers help via an anonymous health and well-being community.
- The College continues to offer help and advice on accommodation, finances, etc to care experienced/carers and estranged students via email, text and telephone.

Student Engagement

- Online workshops will be delivered to students where possible.
- College messages are communicated to students via the website and social media.
- Interactive campus tours and funding workshops will be provided.

- Access to the VLE platform for new students is being progressed.

Learning Support Team

The Learning Support Team are supporting students on completion of assessments. An Assessment Guide is being developed including an appeals procedure.

The Committee was further informed that scenario planning for the safe reopening of College campuses, allowing for the safe delivery of learning and teaching and general College operations, are being considered by SMT. The purchase of PPE supplies is also being investigated and progressed.

Decision/Noted

To note the update report.

Item SSEC3-5.2

Student Experience Annual Review 2019-20

Paper No:
SSEC3-D

Lead: G Plunkett

Action requested: Discuss

Discussion/
Matters Arising

GP provided an overview of the main service and performance achievements for students and staff in 2019/20. The Report will be matched by the development of a refreshed Student Experience Strategy. DC indicated that the report reflects the excellent work of the SE team, allowing Faculties to analyse the profile of students in preparation of future learning.

AS requested an explanation for the rise in applications from pupils on Senior Phase programmes which has increased by 31%. GP informed that management and networking has now been centralised under the Student Experience directorate. This has provided a more consistent approach and engagement with school pupils which has improved the transition and progression of pupils onto FT courses.

The Committee commended the Report.

Decision/Noted

To note the report.

Item SSEC3-5.3

Update – Post 17 March Activity

Paper No:
SSEC3-E

Lead: J Gribben

Action requested: Discuss

Discussion/
Matters Arising

JG provided a summary of activity made following the cessation of face-to-face teaching on 17 March. A staff resource hub has been created to provide advice and guidance on health and well-being to staff. Staff are now engaged in home/remote working with technical and access queries being quickly resolved. Staff continue to communicate with each other and line managers via the rollout of Microsoft Teams. The headline activities from Faculties were noted.

Members were also advised that both informal and formal engagement with recognised Trade Unions continue on a weekly basis.

A staff survey aligned to staff mental health and wellbeing and competence for working remotely will be undertaken shortly.

Decision/Noted To note the update report.

Item SSEC3-5.4 Strategic Risk Review	
Paper No: SSEC3-F	Lead: P Clark Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>Reflecting on the current COVID-19 crisis, proposed increases to risk scores on the following Risks, were considered:</p> <p>Risk 1 - <i>Failure to support successful student outcomes</i>. Reference was made to previous discussion and the preparations made to continue the delivery of learning and teaching. The current risk score 10/AMBER remained unchanged.</p> <p>Risk 9 – <i>Failure to attract, engage and retain suitable staff</i>. The steps taken to continue communications and engagement with staff was noted. The current risk score 4/GREEN remained unchanged.</p> <p>Risk 14 – <i>Negative impact of Industrial Action</i>. Members were informed on the recent support staff agreement to carry forward 5 days annual leave. The current risk score 12/AMBER remained unchanged.</p> <p>Risk 21 – <i>Failure of the College’s Duty of Care to Students</i>. During the COVID-19 lockdown, the College continues to be vigilant of the needs and support for students including vulnerable groups. The current risk score 5/GREEN remained unchanged.</p>
Decision/Noted	To endorse the Risk Management Action Plans including Risk Scores with no changes being required.

Item SSEC3-6.1 ED&I Current Priorities: Update	
Paper No: SSEC3-G	Lead: P Clark Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>PC provided a summary update on various ED&I priorities. Work will now commence in preparation for the Public Sector Equality Duty Reporting process which is expected for publication by April 2021.</p> <p>It was noted that ED&I Manager Naira Dar has been elected as Chair of the multi-agency Scottish Equality Network. Which reports to the Equalities Minister.</p> <p>The wide range of activities undertaken by the ED&I team was reported, including support for various college teams, such as the Modern Apprenticeships and Student Support teams, in developing Equalities Action Plans. These plans are required for funding applications, and by SFC/SG respectively. ED&I staff are also providing support for Equalities Impact Assessments as required. PC indicated that the ED&I team would also support the creation of a statement and action plan for accessibility for digital platforms. DC offered his assistance as required.</p>
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.

Item SSEC3-6.2 HR Metrics Report	
Paper No: SSEC3-H	Lead: J Gribben Action requested: Note

Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>JG presented a high level summary of new key HR management PIs which will provide a meaningful platform to help inform future strategic and workforce planning decisions.</p> <p>Members raised concern with regard to the high overtime costs. JG advised that management responsibility for payroll has now moved to the HR Directorate which has provided more reliable and accurate data. Overtime costs are currently under review by SMT and will be reduced.</p> <p>The Committee commended the new informative reporting format.</p>
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.

Item SSEC3-6.3	Update on Organisational Development Activity	
Paper No: SSEC3-I	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>JG advised that the College has now received GTCS (General Teaching Council (Scotland)) validation which ensures that staff registered with GTCS can maintain five yearly professional update requirements.</p> <p>The ongoing success of the Leadership Development Programme was particularly highlighted. The current primary focus for the OD Team is to coordinate and support the health and wellbeing of staff as they adjust to remote working.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.	

Item SSEC3-7	Disclosability of Papers	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Agree
Decision/Noted	It was agreed that the disclosability status of papers as described on respective cover sheets be retained at present.	

Item SSEC3-8	Any Other Notified Business	
Item SSEC3-8.1	Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)	
Paper No: SSEC3-J	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Discussion/Decision
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>JG detailed the broad principles of the CJRS which will enable the College to put some employees on temporary leave (furlough) due to Coronavirus. Notwithstanding the value of all employees, SMT are currently identifying staff members who may potentially be placed on furlough.</p> <p>PL added that there had been some delay in implementing the CJRS in the hope that a Barnett formula might be applied, however this has not been forthcoming. AB agreed that it was a statutory obligation to mitigate financial losses where possible.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To agree in principle, that the College take reasonable and proportionate steps in accessing the CJRS.	

Item SSEC3-8.2	Dashboard	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Little	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	PL referred to earlier discussion in relation to a repurposed College Dashboard arising from the ongoing Covid crisis.	

Item SSEC3-8.3	Board Tenures	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	An allied application for re-appointment of the College Board Chair was currently in due process and would be considered by an Appointment Sub-Committee of the GCRB on 20 May.	

Item SSEC3-9	Date of Next Meeting	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	Wednesday 28 October 2020	

The meeting closed at 1650 hours.

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
	NONE		

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
SSEC4-9	Corporate Caring Duties 2018-19: Highlight Committee's concerns regarding additional funding support with the SFC.	SL/GP	ASAP
SSEC4-10	SE Annual Review 2018-19: Consider student brief and reference documents.	GP	Ongoing
SSEC4-13	Staff HR Metrics Report: Provide CPD uptake data.	JG	15 01 20
SSEC4-13	Staff HR Metrics Report: Consider update of College Values and Behaviours.	JG	Ongoing
SSEC2-11	Admissions Update & Review – August Intake: Progress integrated mobile app.	SL/ST/GP/BA	Ongoing
SSEC2-12	Staff Sick Absence Report: Put appropriate initiatives in place to reduce current absence levels and provide update reports.	ST	Ongoing