CITY OF GLASGOW COLLEGE

Board of Management

Learning and Teaching Committee

Date of Meeting	**Tuesday 11 May 2021**
Paper No.	LTC4-C
Agenda Item	4.2
Subject of Paper	**Academic Planning and Arrangements 21/22**
FOISA Status	**Disclosable**
Primary Contact	**Dr Claire Carney, Vice Principal Student Experience**
Date of production	**28/4/21**
Action	**For Discussion/Decision**

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Committee is asked to discuss key elements of Academic Planning arrangements for 2021/2022.

2. Purpose of Paper

2.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the broad planning elements for academic delivery 2021/22.

3. Context

3.1 City of Glasgow College has established through the new Student Academic Experience Strategy that we will continue to develop a Blended Model of Learning for Academic Year 21/22 and the years following.

3.2 The Strategy has 3 key elements: City Student; City Learning and Teaching and City Student Journey. Our City Learning and Teaching approach will be Active, Blended and Connected (see Figure 1) where students will be co-creators of their own learning, challenged with real-life problems and be able to identify benefits to themselves and others. This will ensure that City of Glasgow College is well positioned to take advantage of the Global Education revolution and to be a leading light in shaping Tertiary Education. The coming years will rely on key elements of

increased and improved digital provision and capabilities of staff and students and the need to offer an agile, flexible and responsive curriculum that will respond to economic needs (Cumberford-Little report 2020).

Active
- Learning focuses on the application of knowledge, skills and wider competencies where Project and problem based learning strategies are utilised.

Blended
- All Learning and assessment opportunities are 'digital first' and supported by blended opportunities.
- Systems, technologies and processes are optimised for digital environments.
- Learning experiences are accessible, customisable and personalised.

Connected
- Opportunities to work on collaborative activities across disciplines are commonplace.
- Contributors from, and engagement with external stakeholders are embedded in curriculum ensuring courses are fit-for-purpose and reflective of industry standards.
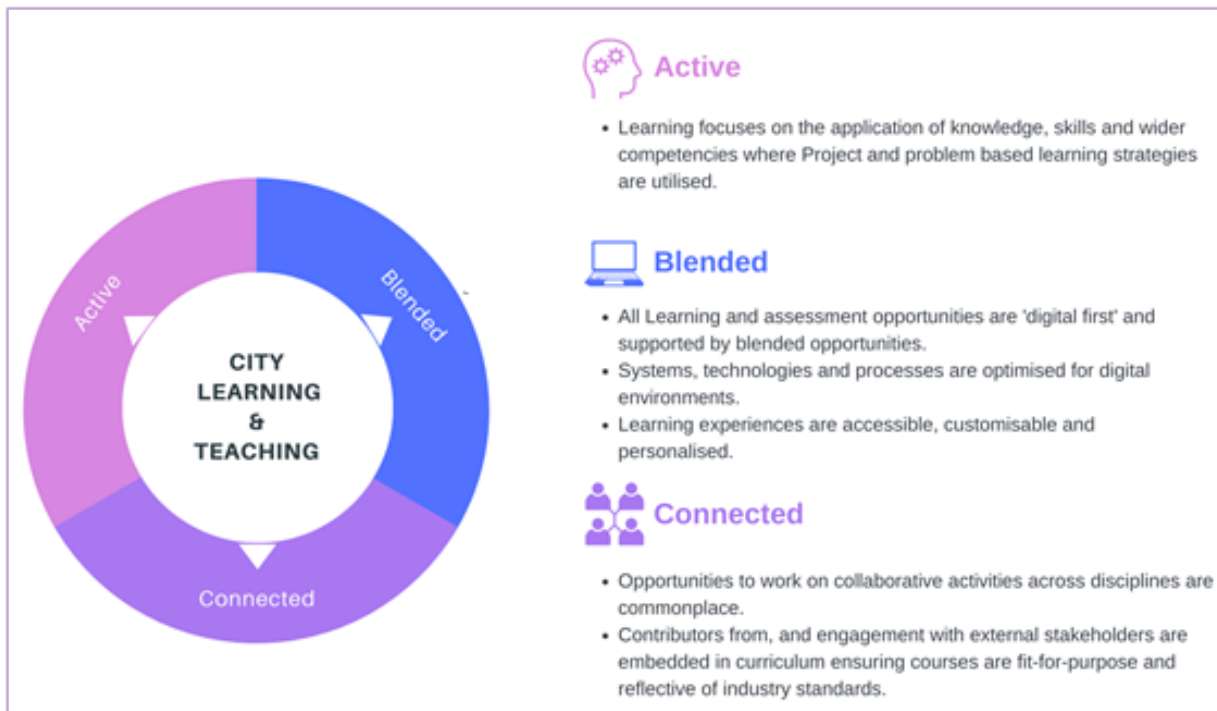
Figure 1: City Learning and Teaching

3.3 The parallel context is we are mindful of and adhere to Scottish Government Covid guidance. At this current point in time whilst we are beginning to slowly move out of a very restrictive lockdown, even at the lowest Covid restriction levels (0-2), Colleges will be required to implement a Blended Learning Model:

Levels 0 – 2: blended learning
Colleges and universities will implement a blended learning model. Staff and students may spend time on campus, albeit not in the numbers or as frequently as before the virus… The learning environment will be different from 'normal.' Large scale teaching events indoors must continue to be avoided. The expectation is that most face-to-face engagement will be in much smaller groups. Physical distancing measures should be in place in all situations.

Levels 3 – 4: restricted blended learning
Learning and teaching will be predominantly online, with in-person provision only where it is judged necessary to fulfil learning outcomes, such as for subjects which require clinical, practical or a vocational/professional learning element, and to support student welfare and retention

https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-universities-colleges-and-student-accommodation-providers/pages/health-and-safety/

3.3 It is recognised that planning for next academic year has further complications as we will have upwards of 4 parallel streams of activity: potential deferral students from 19/20; deferral students from 20/21; new entrants 21/22 and an increasing number of short courses to meet upskilling and reskilling demands. As a result of disruption to learning, the College has developed a series of options available to provide support

for current students to progress their learning. This was developed in consultation with staff and students and it is important to note that it is in DRAFT format (see appendix 1).

3.4   Therefore, the purpose of this paper is not to be prescriptive, but to provide broad parameters around which curriculum teams can work/adjust according to local and disciplinary differences. We are aiming to provide a workable model for the longer term that takes account of the positive aspects of online learning and the pedagogical shift proposed through the Student Academic Experience Strategy. However, as the last 15 months has taught us, the ability to provide absolute certainty in a very complex, turbulent and ever-changing environment is difficult and the continued need to be flexible (where possible) will be an ongoing feature for the coming months.

3.5   Academic Planning/Arrangements:

3.5.1   Whilst **Physical distancing** measures will still be in place, all teaching areas on site will continue to have restricted numbers. Therefore, planning for 21/22 is broadly similar to 20/21, with marked increased flexibility to have groups of students onsite for activity beyond learning tasks and assessment which require the use of practical equipment for example small class presentations/tutorials/seminar and collaborative learning tasks, closed book, invigilated assessment which cannot be conducted online and community-building tasks.

3.5.2   The importance of **engaging students** is paramount for students, the 'physical' College experience is so much richer than their college studies per se. It is as much about the social interactivity and engagement with other students, lecturers and the many development opportunities available. Therefore, all students will have timetabled access to the college for essential practical activities, but also active, participative and collaborative experiences in small groups and student support activities.

3.5.3   It is expected that course teams will work together drawing together 'learnings' and best practice from the last 15 months to devise what works best for their curriculum and Faculty area. The Dean of Faculty will ultimately have oversight of and responsibility for the curriculum within their Faculty. This will be supplemented by further guidance being developed by Dean, Gus Grubb who is leading a working group on repurposing the Learning and Teaching guidance from last year. The first aspect is capturing key learnings from and shaping into a wider holistic document which will be shared across College. In addition, every Faculty should see benefits from the Blended Learning Fund in the development of online Learning, Teaching and Assessment projects. Course delivery will continue to comprise a balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning, assessment and support (online and, where applicable, on campus). In addition, it will include opportunities for students to work collaboratively. It is imperative that course teams review assessment models adopting learnings from last year and have full oversight of assessment to minimise assessment burden.

3.5.4   **Zoom and MS Teams**: The College will continue to support Enterprise Zoom with full functionality for Academic Year 21/22. Zoom will be primarily used for academic teaching delivery with staff collaboration and meetings through Microsoft Teams. At the same time, we are working on consolidating Office

365 (Teams) tenancies to allow staff and students to collaborate more seamlessly, further details to follow.

3.5.5 **Learning Spaces:** In order to allow increased onsite teaching and facilitate streaming of classes, the College will progressively develop general teaching rooms to have a minimum digital 'kit-out' including cameras and desktops in rooms. At the very least this will allow 'live' streaming of classes where some disciplines may find this of benefit to students. In addition, Deans are currently working with their teams on how best to re-purpose practical spaces to enhance learning and make use of potential curriculum development opportunities. Because of the logistics involved, the Vice Principal Corporate Services will work with the Vice Principal Student Experience and establish a group to agree a process, and approval mechanisms for a more comprehensive plan for learning spaces.

3.5.6 **Virtual Learning Environment**: To support increased collaborative and online learning, the College is in now in a great position going forward in procuring a new integrated, intuitive, easy to use, mobile friendly VLE. This is a significant financial and human resource investment with the aim of transforming our online digital learning environment. We will adopt a phased approach, but would emphasise that we will STRONGLY ENCOURAGE as many as possible to adopt the new system from August and certainly to near full adoption by end of Block 1. MYconnect has all project related documents and will be updated on a regular basis.. Your Faculty Learning Technologist will be a key contact and Joe Wilson as Project Manager can provide any detail or answer any questions you might have. We are keen to have as much activity and consultation across Faculties.

3.5.7 **Digital Access and Student Connectivity:** A continued priority for the College is ensuring that all learners have access to hardware they can use to access the internet and the Virtual Learning Environment. Last year, the College invested almost £1.3m on a laptop loan scheme, purchasing 2000 laptops. Every student who requested a college laptop, booked a slot and turned up on the day, received a laptop. The College will continue the laptop scheme again this academic year. In addition, some curriculum areas had particular software requirements for home access and further investigative work with those areas with IT will be required to devise an early plan and or resolution.

3.5.8 **Student Digital Access: I**n addition to offering laptops and generic support via a 'bring your own' device/apps/services approach, students will also need clear guidance and support with 'on boarding' to College systems. Learning from last year would indicate that the College tends to over-estimate the digital skills of our students or generalise all as digital natives then this is not the case. Development work on a student digital 'on boarding' guide has already started through the 'Get Ready for College' Pre-Entry Programme.

3.5.9 **Induction and Transition:** Early work has also begun (with support from the Blended Learning Fund (BLF) on developing transition materials for 'Getting Ready for College' through an open access platform and the new Faculty Microsites which will introduce curriculum specific platforms and software for students who have accepted a place at the College. In addition to last year's induction activity, we would aim to have an extended open induction activity

(possibly beginning early August) where small groups of students would be invited onsite to see the campus and the services available. This would ensure that every new (and some continuing) student would be familiar with the campus and be given that supported welcome to the College.

3.5.10 **Staff Support for Digital Delivery**: The Learning and Teaching Academy will continue to provide a comprehensive range of developmental activities and resources to support individual staff and curriculum teams, including use of the [Learning Standard.](#) A schedule of activity is available on [webpages.](#) It is imperative that teaching staff and teams avail themselves of these opportunities and ensure online learning is accessible for all and complies with equalities legislation.

3.5.11 **Library Services:** The Library has been a key resource throughout the covid restrictions offering access to physical and digital resources, services and physical spaces for staff and students at City of Glasgow College. Going forward, we will aim to build on these developments and progress the SAES plans to create a Library of the Future.

3.5.12 **College Calendar:** The College Calendar for 21/22 has been approved and there are no plans to alter the agreed dates. (See APPENDIX 2). However, local decisions can be made to 'delay' the start of teaching to allow completion of deferral students BUT this has to be agreed with Dean and VPSE.

3.5.13 **Staff Working Practices:** It is evident that clear parameters around staff working practices (both teaching and support staff) in this new proposed hybrid working environment are developed and a parallel stream of work will be conducted by Human Resources.

4   Impact and Implications

4.1 Covid restrictions will continue to impact on learning, teaching, assessment and student support services for the foreseeable future. The impact of physical distancing will limit numbers of students for on-site activities. Early planning and timetabling is imperative to ensure staff and students are aware of and are part of planning for new modes of learning.

4.2 There will be implications for our physical and digital learning spaces requiring space planning and investment to create a more sustainable and effective environment.

4.3 Continued investment in staff development and supporting student digital skills to navigate and progress in this new environment is imperative and will form part of plans for the coming year.

APPENDIX 1: Options paper for students for completion of studies

    1. Complete Your Qualification

Courses that are mainly theory based have progressed well online. Although students in this category have had little or no on campus experience, many or most have still been able to progress with their studies and will be due to complete their course and gain a qualification in line with the requirements and adjustments made by awarding bodies. If this applies to you, you need take no further action and your curriculum team will continue to support you to complete.

    2. Extend (defer) Some Elements of Your Course Until Academic Year 2021/22

Similar to the above, some students have progressed well with a mainly online experience however some students may have been personally affected to a greater extent than others on their course this year and require to extend (defer) the completion of some units to the next academic session. If this applies to you please ensure you communicate your circumstances to your academic advisor and the curriculum team will advise you of the arrangements in due course.
In addition, elements of courses related to placement or some practical aspects will be delayed until the next academic year when students will return in short blocks between 2-8 weeks to complete. If this applies to you, your curriculum team will advise you in due course what to expect in Academic year 2021/22.

    3. Restart Your Course in AY2021/22

The delivery of some courses has been significantly affected by both COVID-19 and now ongoing strike action. Students on these courses are unlikely to have acquired the appropriate skills to progress to employment or further study. In addition, some students in categories 1 and 2 above may have been personally affected to a greater extent than others on their course due to a range of factors.

If your course and/or you personally have been affected you have the option to repeat the year on a full-time basis and your funding situation should remain the same. Further information will be available on this soon. If you wish to restart/repeat your course next year, please advise your curriculum head. If you wish to apply for a different course next year, please apply via the college application process.

    4. Exams and Assessments

Where national diet graded unit or NQ exams fall on strike days, these will proceed as planned and we will also maintain the dates for any externally set exams.

    5. Progression and/or Articulation (within our college or to university)

If you are due to progress from first year to your second year of a HN course or from NC to the next level of study, we will REVIEW our internal progression requirements to consider possible impacts of COVID-19 or the strike action may have had on your studies and make changes if required.

We are also in discussion with our university partners and have asked them to consider extending the offer of conditional places to allow for late results. Some have already agreed to do so and we anticipate general agreement. We will of course communicate the outcome of these discussions.

6. Professional Qualifications

If you are studying for professional qualifications including commercial short courses, cadetships, apprenticeships etc. the college has worked to ensure that these are either covered or, we have made adjustments to your programme to ensure that elements need are covered later within your programme of study. We have also been in communication with your employer or sponsoring company as applicable. In addition, we have worked with regulators and/or professional training bodies to ensure these adjustments are compliant with their requirements.

7. Refund of Fees

For those of you worried about money or refunds for evening classes which have not taken place, our finance team will make contact with you. Where it is a certificated program, we will offer you a further opportunity to complete the course and if you are taking an evening course which has been affected and has yet to finish, we will assess the refund of fees at the course end date.

We do not anticipate refunds for full-time programmes where there will be an opportunity to complete the course as per paragraph 1 above. Where you fall in to paragraph 3 or 4 you will not be charged a further fee to extend or restart your course in Academic Year 2021/22.

Where you cannot extend (defer) or restart due to personal circumstances, we will consider a partial refund where you have not received your intended qualification. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and you may be required to evidence your circumstances.

Where courses are extended, we will offer additional childcare and hardship support money, travel assistance and an extension to bursaries to those who need it. Please also remember that our team of Student Advisors are always on hand to help.

Contn'd/

APPENDIX 2 College Calendar 2021/22

APPROVED COLLEGE CALENDAR & CURRICULUM PLANNER 2021-22

Academic Year Weeks	FT FE Block Teaching week	FT HE Block Teaching week	Evening HNC & Cert	Evening units/ leisure	Saturday classes	Holidays - 62	Holidays - 62.5	Holidays - 63	Holidays - 64	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	College Notes / Events / Comments
1										02-Aug	03-Aug	04-Aug	05-Aug	06-Aug	07-Aug	
2										09-Aug	10-Aug	11-Aug	12-Aug	13-Aug	14-Aug	
3										16-Aug	17-Aug	18-Aug	19-Aug	20-Aug	21-Aug	**Teaching staff holidays end**
4										23-Aug	24-Aug	25-Aug	26-Aug	27-Aug	28-Aug	**FT FE & HE Induction**
5	1	1	1	1	1					30-Aug	31-Aug	01-Sep	02-Sep	03-Sep	04-Sep	**FT FE & HE Teaching starts**
6	2	2	2	2	2					06-Sep	07-Sep	08-Sep	09-Sep	10-Sep	11-Sep	
7	3	3	3	3	3					13-Sep	14-Sep	15-Sep	16-Sep	17-Sep	18-Sep	
8	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	20-Sep	21-Sep	22-Sep	23-Sep	24-Sep	25-Sep	**September Weekend**
9	5	5	5	5		1	1	1	1	27-Sep	28-Sep	29-Sep	30-Sep	01-Oct	02-Oct	**September Weekend**
10	6	6	6	6	5					04-Oct	05-Oct	06-Oct	07-Oct	08-Oct	09-Oct	
11						5	5	5	5	11-Oct	12-Oct	13-Oct	14-Oct	15-Oct	16-Oct	**October Week**
12	7	7	7	7	6					18-Oct	19-Oct	20-Oct	21-Oct	22-Oct	23-Oct	
13	8	8	8	8	7					25-Oct	26-Oct	27-Oct	28-Oct	29-Oct	30-Oct	
14	9	9	9	9	8					01-Nov	02-Nov	03-Nov	04-Nov	05-Nov	06-Nov	**COP26 GLASGOW**
15	10	10	10	10	9					08-Nov	09-Nov	10-Nov	11-Nov	12-Nov	13-Nov	**COP26 GLASGOW**
16	11	11	11	11	10					15-Nov	16-Nov	17-Nov	18-Nov	19-Nov	20-Nov	
17	12	12	12	12	11					22-Nov	23-Nov	24-Nov	25-Nov	26-Nov	27-Nov	
18	1	1	13	1	1					29-Nov	30-Nov	01-Dec	02-Dec	03-Dec	04-Dec	
19	2	2	14	2	2					06-Dec	07-Dec	08-Dec	09-Dec	10-Dec	11-Dec	
20	3	3	15	3	3					13-Dec	14-Dec	15-Dec	16-Dec	17-Dec	18-Dec	
21	4	4	16	4		1	1	1	1	20-Dec	21-Dec	22-Dec	23-Dec	24-Dec	25-Dec	**Students finish 23rd**
22						5	5	5	5	27-Dec	28-Dec	29-Dec	30-Dec	31-Dec	01-Jan	**College closed**
23						5	5	5	5	03-Jan	04-Jan	05-Jan	06-Jan	07-Jan	08-Jan	
24	5	5	17	5	4					10-Jan	11-Jan	12-Jan	13-Jan	14-Jan	15-Jan	**Students return 10th Jan**
25	6	6	18	6	5					17-Jan	18-Jan	19-Jan	20-Jan	21-Jan	22-Jan	
26	7	7	19	7	6					24-Jan	25-Jan	26-Jan	27-Jan	28-Jan	29-Jan	
27	8	8	20	8	7					31-Jan	01-Feb	02-Feb	03-Feb	04-Feb	05-Feb	
28	9	9	21	9	8	2	2	2	2	07-Feb	08-Feb	09-Feb	10-Feb	11-Feb	12-Feb	**Teaching staff mid term break**
29	10	10	22	10	9					14-Feb	15-Feb	16-Feb	17-Feb	18-Feb	19-Feb	
30	11	11	23	11	10					21-Feb	22-Feb	23-Feb	24-Feb	25-Feb	26-Feb	
31	12	12	24	12	11					28-Feb	01-Mar	02-Mar	03-Mar	04-Mar	05-Mar	
32										07-Mar	08-Mar	09-Mar	10-Mar	11-Mar	12-Mar	**Full time catch up**
33	1	1	25	1	1					14-Mar	15-Mar	16-Mar	17-Mar	18-Mar	19-Mar	
34	2	2	26	2	2					21-Mar	22-Mar	23-Mar	24-Mar	25-Mar	26-Mar	
35	3	3	27	3	3					28-Mar	29-Mar	30-Mar	31-Mar	01-Apr	02-Apr	
36						5	5	5	5	04-Apr	05-Apr	06-Apr	07-Apr	08-Apr	09-Apr	
37						5	5	5	5	11-Apr	12-Apr	13-Apr	14-Apr	15-Apr	16-Apr	**College closed 15th**
38	4	4	28	4		1	1	1	1	18-Apr	19-Apr	20-Apr	21-Apr	22-Apr	23-Apr	**College closed 18th**
39	5	5	29	5	4					25-Apr	26-Apr	27-Apr	28-Apr	29-Apr	30-Apr	
40	6	6	30	6	5	1	1	1	1	02-May	03-May	04-May	05-May	06-May	07-May	**College closed 2nd**
41	7	7	31	7	6					09-May	10-May	11-May	12-May	13-May	14-May	
42	8	8	32	8	7					16-May	17-May	18-May	19-May	20-May	21-May	
43	9	9	33	9	8	1	1	1	1	23-May	24-May	25-May	26-May	27-May	28-May	**College closed 27th**
44	10	10	34	10		1	1	1	1	30-May	31-May	01-Jun	02-Jun	03-Jun	04-Jun	**College closed 30th**
45	11	11	35	11	9					06-Jun	07-Jun	08-Jun	09-Jun	10-Jun	11-Jun	
46	12	12	36	12	10					13-Jun	14-Jun	15-Jun	16-Jun	17-Jun	18-Jun	**Full Time Courses End**
47										20-Jun	21-Jun	22-Jun	23-Jun	24-Jun	25-Jun	
48										27-Jun	28-Jun	29-Jun	30-Jun	01-Jul	02-Jul	**Teaching staff finish 1st**
49						5	5	5	5	04-Jul	05-Jul	06-Jul	07-Jul	08-Jul	09-Jul	
50						5	5	5	5	11-Jul	12-Jul	13-Jul	14-Jul	15-Jul	16-Jul	
51						5	5	5	5	18-Jul	19-Jul	20-Jul	21-Jul	22-Jul	23-Jul	
52						5	5	5	5	25-Jul	26-Jul	27-Jul	28-Jul	29-Jul	30-Jul	
1						5	5	5	5	01-Aug	02-Aug	03-Aug	04-Aug	05-Aug	06-Aug	
2						3	3.5	4	5	08-Aug	09-Aug	10-Aug	11-Aug	12-Aug	13-Aug	**Teaching staff return**
3										15-Aug	16-Aug	17-Aug	18-Aug	19-Aug	20-Aug	

No of Evenings / Saturdays available per block		Hols	62.0	62.5	63.0	64.0	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	
		1					11	12	12	12		11	
		2					10	10	12	12		11	
		3					9	12	12	12		10	
							30	34	36	36	0	32	