

Board of Management Meeting of the Students, Staffing & Equalities Committee

MINUTE OF 2nd MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 02 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 1500 HRS
(SSEC2)

Present	
Alisdair Barron (AB) (Convener)	May Miller (MM)
David Cullen (DC)	Audrey Sullivan (AS)
Paul Hillard (PH)	
In attendance	
Paul Clark (PC)	Derek Robertson
Naira Dar	Lori Templeton (LT)
John Gribben (JFG)	Lucy Treasure (LTr)
Sheila Lodge (SL)	Sharon Ritchie (Minute)
Gillian Plunkett (GP)	
Apologies for absence	
Paul Little (PL)	Ann Butcher (ABu)
Bernie Savage (BS)	

Item SSEC2-1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	Apologies were received from PL, BS and AB. SL attended in PL's absence.	

Item SSEC2-2	Declarations of Interest	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	There were no declarations of interest.	

Item SSEC2-3	Identification of Items to be Discussed Privately	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	None notified.	

Item SSEC2-4.1	Minute of the Students, Staffing & Equalities held on 27 October 2021	
Paper No: SSEC2-A	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Approve
Decision/Noted	That subject to one minor amendment, the minute was approved.	

Item SSEC2-4.2		Committee Terms of Reference Review	
Paper No: SSEC2-B	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Approve	
Discussion/ Matters Arising	There were no recommended changes to the Terms of Reference, however they will be kept under review.		
Decision/Noted	The Terms of Reference were approved without amendment.		

Item SSEC2-5.1		Students Association Update – Student Volunteering	
Paper No: SSEC2-C	Lead: L Treasure	Action requested: Discuss	
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>LT provided an update on the progress of the newly developed SA Volunteering Projects for the current academic year, following the awarding of additional funds from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).</p> <p>The Volunteering Hub was noted as an online platform, which hosts all of the volunteering services (situated on the CitySA website). It launched at the start of the new academic year and has since seen 91 students registered. 45 different volunteering roles were advertised internally. In terms of page use, it was noted as the second most popular page on the City SA website.</p> <p>At the start of the Academic year, 25 charities have registered as partners, with a few more within the registration process. Once a charity has registered, volunteering roles can then be advertised on their behalf to the students.</p> <p>Skills Development also forms part of an important role in terms of the volunteering programme. A feature built into the volunteering hub allows for students to create their own volunteering record and profile (logging hours, skills and training courses attended). This automatically allows the student to be put forward as a nomination for the volunteering award, which is accredited by CitySA.</p> <p>There are also a series of volunteering employability workshops that have been scheduled to take place, and they will be delivered in partnership with a contact from Skills Development Scotland.</p> <p>The Student Media Team comprises of 6 members, who are students at the College studying Media related courses. They produce videos, photography and news articles for the CitySA platforms. There has been an immense increase in engagement pertaining to the news articles on the CitySA website.</p> <p>Volunteers have advised that they use their work in job and in internship applications. It is a very valuable role for the student in terms of work experience.</p> <p>LT went on to say that food volunteering was another project that the team have been working on. It was noted that on a recent day out with the City Works class (done in partnership with the charity Recycle), students were tasked with sorting out a storage container filled with donations.</p>		

Further initiatives will continue throughout the academic year; and will comprise of the ESOL Peer Mentoring programme, which will be due to launch towards the end of February 2022.

The Digital Buddies programme will work in conjunction with partner Blackwood Homes and Care. It is an evidenced based programme addressing digital loneliness.

In future, the team would like to embed volunteering further by placing volunteering information into pre-entry material, and by having volunteering induction integrated into all class rep and convener training. Further initiatives will include the running of additional peer support and work experience programmes. LT provided other updates and future developments relating to volunteering support. It was noted that the class representatives and conveners can benefit from the volunteering service.

The Student Experience Director (GP) asked the Committee to note that LT's work was funded by a one-off grant from the Funding Council, and that LT was engaging with the Careers team. She went on to say that the SDS contact works at the College campus 1 day per week. There are a number of ambitions to increase the student and staff activity around the volunteering platform and engage with the ESOL group in terms of mentoring.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager (ND) queried as to whether there was scope for SDS Programme to link into the Saltire Programme. LT confirmed that that programme continues to be signposted to students, however the boundaries around age restrictions have prompted the team to have their own awards which was built into their own platform.

It was noted that ND and GP would discuss bidding for the Scottish Qualities fund offline.

GP referred to the SA Strategic Plan, highlighting that peer mentoring and volunteering have been in the plan for a number of years. Other areas for funding will be explored.

The Chair thanked LT for the update and congratulated the team on their achievements and the work being undertaken, particularly during the present time.

Decision/Noted

To note the updated report.

Item SSEC2-5.2

Learning & Teaching Academy Update

**Paper No:
SSEC2-D**

Lead: D Robertson

Action requested: Discuss

**Discussion/
Matters Arising**

Derek Robertson, Associate Director, introduced his paper and advised that the report covered work undertaken by the academy since inception (February/March 2020) into year 2021.

Since formation, the team have been heavily guided by the need to support a rapid and flexible response to the challenges to learning and teaching

posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the Library invested in digital resources by being available as a physical study space for students.

DR highlighted the major areas of work for 2020-21: Lecturer Development continued their accredited programme by supporting 19 lecturers through the TQFE programme, 36 PDA in Teaching Practice.

In addition, the College’s Learning and Teaching Conference was held online in September 2021, comprising of 378 internal and external delegates. DR indicated that a repeat of the conference would possibly take place in June 2022.

Learning Technology has worked in conjunction with Lecturer Development to support online learning. There was also the procurement of Canvas as a replacement for MyCity, which will be available from Autumn 2022. There are now two Faculty champions to support the implementation

Two new learning blended spaces have been setup within the Library for staff and students – the Fujitsu hub and the Virtual Learning Lab (VLL).

DR reported that based on the feedback he has received from the Student Association; his team was looking at how the implementation of Canvas might support assessment in a different and more supportive way. He noted that at present he did not have an actual plan in place but confirmed that Canvas did have various tools that might be useful in addressing the concerns raised.

The Chair and the Committee commended the work undertaken by the Learning and Teaching Academy.

Decision/Noted

To note the report.

Item SSEC2-5.3	ED&I Current Priorities Update	
Paper No: SSEC2-E	Lead: P Clark/N Dar	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>ND provided an update on the College’s progress to date on Equality Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.</p> <p>ND reported that the branding of ED&I was first undertaken some years ago and is now due a refresh in order to re-engage with staff and students to highlight the purpose of ED&I, and to share ownership of these initiatives across the College. A number of EDI initiatives are undertaken college-wide, and the branding of ED&I ensures due reporting of these initiatives.</p> <p>Members noted the branding colour palette, whereby the orange and purple resembled the College’s colours and may cause misperception around identity. ND to liaise with Marketing to ensure that the ED&I branding does not overlap with City SA colours.</p> <p>ND advised that there was also a refresh around the Spiritual Care team, which would include a similar design element. Members of the Spiritual Care</p>	

have been invited to the webinar to speak to all communities. The format of the event will showcase a short film, followed by a brief discussion around experiences.

ND further reported that towards the end of 2021, the Government launched consultation on the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) now extended until April 2022. The consultation will be widespread, touching on all elements of work undertaken by the College. The actual changes in the legislation are in line for the next reporting period which will be in 2025 covering 12 key areas. It was suggested that the College will be required to submit a report every four years, rather than the current 2-year reporting cycle. There will be implications for HR in terms of the data required to report on. The response will be a collective one, representing Universities and Colleges across Scotland.

The Committee agreed a sectoral as well as a College contribution.

The Chair thanked ND for the update and advised that the branding must represent the College in its totality and be inclusive. He welcomed the idea of the Webinar and looked forward to the Board receiving an invitation to the event.

Decision/Noted

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The Committee agreed a sectoral as well as a College contribution.

The Chair thanked ND for the update and advised that the branding must represent the College in its totality and be inclusive. He welcomed the idea of the Webinar and looked forward to the Board receiving an invitation to the event.

- To note the update report.
- Webinar invitation to be extended to Board members.

Item SSEC2-5.4	Student Mental Health and Well Being Update – January 2022	
Paper No: SSEC2-F	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>GP provided the Committee with a detailed overview on additional funding in relation to student mental health and well-being support in AY 2021/22.</p> <p>She highlighted the three main surveys from a variety of bodies (NUS, Student Mental Health foundation and Student Minds). A range of research was conducted; however, some remain inconclusive due to the pandemic. The research was being used as an evidence base for service development.</p> <p>Intersectionality has now become the embedded approach as mental health comes with a range of problems.</p> <p>Developments in Student Mental Health and Well Being Support AY2021/22 comprises student financial support. GP emphasised the importance of student funding in supporting students' good mental health within the College. An additional £2M was received which was spend on student living costs in 2021. That remains the target for 2022. Students are reminded via social media and staff that there funds are available to assist.</p> <p>Through a combination of College and SFC funding, the Counselling Team now comprises of three Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Student Counsellors and a Mental Health Coordinator. The counselling service through an external provider (Crossreach) offer support in a range of therapies.</p>	

Additional Mental Health funds received in AY 2021/22 have allowed educational institutions to develop services over and above counselling services. Six Mental Health Mentors were appointed, whereby each will have a caseload of between 20-30 students with complex needs.

Gender Based Violence training was introduced this year, working in conjunction with the organisation EmilyTest. Four sessions of successful training were conducted with the Maritime and Nautical students.

Transitions and Induction Support has been significantly enhanced for students. The CDN award was won in December 2021, however it needs to be built on and be continuous. The Student Experience Director has recognised this and has requested that each of the Faculties create their own Faculty Student Induction teams, in order to refresh and refocus their inductions programmes.

The development of a toolkit was highlighted at the Mental Health Conference in December 2021. The toolkit will be launched in April 2022. A Short Life Working Group comprising teaching and support staff was convened in October 2021 to help develop the toolkit to help embed mental health and wellbeing into the learning and teaching practice.

Work continues with Human Resources to develop a whole college approach to improve alignment of initiatives to support staff and student mental health and well-being across the college.

GP commented that she was very confident of additional funding from the SFC, which may not be the full amount this year, but together with the slippage plus additional provision, the support may be in place until July 2023.

The Chair stated that at the PNC meeting, the challenging financial situation had been discussed and it was stressed that aspects of the funding would be continued for mental health. He believed that there would be a will amongst the Board to try and provide as much funding in this area for both staff and students.

GP welcomed the Committees comments and advised that in relation to the toolkit, Dr Anna James was in a working group which comprises of College staff who aid to the development of the toolkit. The word resilience will replace mental health and the name of the toolkit will be 'building student resilience in the curriculum'. The ultimate focus will be on developing skills, resilience, and defining mental health.

Decision/Noted

To note the update report.

Item SSEC2-5.5

Staff HR Metrics Report

**Paper No:
SSEC2-G**

Lead: J Gribben

Action requested: Discuss

**Discussion/
Matters Arising**

JFG presented an update on Staff HR Metrics report and noted an increase in the headcount, absence rate, absence costs, vacancies, new starts and occupational health referrals.

There has been a decrease in overtime and turnover, however the report outlined an increase in agency staff.

JFG reported that the flu vaccine programme had been introduced at the end of 2021.

It was noted that the College would be undertaking a detailed review of the Colleges approach to Hybrid working and the Wellbeing intervention, supported by the Wellbeing Robertson Cooper Survey.

JFG asked the Committee to note the introduction of an Employee Benefits programme. Additional data on the uptake will be provided at the next meeting.

JFG noted that reasons for leaving clearly lacked sufficient detail and agreed to provide additional details in future.

The next report brought to the Committee will introduce Benchmarking data across the Public and Private sectors.

The Committee commented that reasons for staff leaving were sensitive and confidential. It was proposed that the discussion be taken offline. JFG commented that he was content to provide that level of information and welcomed any member of the Board to liaise directly with him or members of the Human Resources team to discuss any specific information.

Concerns were raised around recruitment, replacement of staff and the funding available. JFG pointed out that sometimes advertising does take place recurrently. Recruitment has posed a real challenge, whereby funds allocated to Colleges and Universities saw the sectors poaching for the same people.

JFG noted that he was actively looking into introducing a graduate recruitment programme to obtain graduates directly from Universities. AS pointed out that the Destination Data might prove useful in finding out which degrees programmes would fit the College needs.

It was noted that that the Executive Leadership team (ELT) have reached agreement for the recruitment of additional HR resources. This area will focus on supporting absences and the recruitment programme.

The Chair thanked JFG for the update and asked that the Committees appreciation be passed onto the Human Resources team.

Decision/Noted

- To note the report.

Item SSEC2-5.6		Strategic Risk Review	
Paper No: SSEC2-H	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Discuss	
Discussion/ Matters Arising	PC highlighted that the focus of this report was upon the risks most closely associated with the Committee's remit.		

	<p>Risk 1 - <i>Failure to support successful student outcomes</i> was discussed. Alteration to the text pertaining to Risk 14 – <i>Negative impact of industrial action. Noting that the recent dispute has concluded with agreement.</i> PC requested for the Committee to delete the text.</p> <p>PC advised that there were no suggested changes to the risks.</p> <p>AS raised concerns around Risk 9 - <i>Failure to recruit, retain, and develop suitable staff</i>, whereby she felt that it should be increased. The Committee agreed to adjust the likelihood score from 2 to a 3 to produce a risk score of 6.</p>
Decision/Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the report. Action: Risk Score adjustment as above (PC) ASAP.

Item SSEC2-6.1	Audited Student Funding Support AY 2020/21	
Paper No: SSEC1-I	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	To note the audited student support funds expenditure for AY 2020/21.	
Decision/Noted	To note the report.	

Item SSEC2-6.2	Student Recruitment 2021/22 (Full Time January Start Programmes)	
Paper No: SSEC1-J	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>GP asked the Committee to note the progress of the Student Recruitment for 2021/22.</p> <p>GP reported that the enrolment figures were not as high as anticipated; however, it was noted that the Faculties were adding short courses in order to close the gap between the expected and actual enrolments.</p> <p>It was noted that the 2022/23 enrolments went live during the 3rd week of January 2022, which saw several thousand applications.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To note the report.	

Item SSEC2-7	Disclosability of Papers	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Agree
Decision/Noted	No changes were proposed.	

Item SSEC2-8	Any Other Notified Business	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Convener	Action requested:
Decision/Noted	The Chair noted PC's departure from the College; and thanked him for his valued contribution over the years.	

There was no other business raised.

Item SSEC2-9	Date of Next Meeting	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	Wednesday 18 May 2022	

The meeting closed at 1720 hours.

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
SSEC2-5.3 02 02 22	Webinar invitation to be extended to Board members.	ND	ASAP
SSEC2-5.6 02 02 22	Risk 9 score to be adjusted.	PC	ASAP

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
SSEC1-4.3 27 10 21	Programme of Work: Provide paper on output following Roberson Cooper Survey.	JFG	Feb 2022
SSEC1-5.1 27 10 21	Students' Association Update – Representation: Consider methods to further increase Class Rep participation including PT courses.	GP	Ongoing
SSEC1-5.3 27 10 21	Staff HR Metrics Report: Arrange information meeting with PMO staff.	SL	ASAP
SSEC1-5.5 27 10 21	Strategic Risk Review: provide analysis on Staff Reasons for Leaving.	JFG	ASAP
SSEC1-6.2 27 10 21	Careers Guidance Plan: Consider further development of employer engagement process.	CC/GP/ Deans	Ongoing
SSEC4-13	Staff HR Metrics Report: Consider update of College Values and Behaviours.	JFG	Ongoing