

Board of Management Learning & Teaching Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 15 February 2022
Paper No.	LTC3-B
Agenda Item	4.1
Subject of Paper	Learning and Teaching Update
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Dr Claire Carney
Date of production	28 January 2022
Action	For Discussion and Decision

1. Recommendations

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

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on progress on Learning and Teaching delivery.

3. Consultation

3.1 The contents and substance of the paper have been developed, discussed and reviewed with the Student Experience Group (Deans and Director of Student Experience), the Student Academic Experience Committee, the Digital Transformation Group, the Associate Dean Forum, and the relevant working groups.

4. Key Insights

4.1 Regarding covid restrictions, when reporting to the Nov 2021 Board LTC, we were operating at a 'beyond 0' level and whilst many of the restrictions had been lifted across society, certain restrictions remained within colleges.

4.2 Since that time, we have seen the emergence of the Omicron variant and the College took the decision to move majority of learning back online from Monday 20 December with only critical delivery of practical learning and teaching and key staff on campus for the last teaching week of 2021. This would continue from 10 January 2022 and be reviewed every two weeks.

4.3 Deciding on the criticality of courses was quick and efficient following the outcomes from the Covid Learning and Teaching Task Group established by the VPSE with representation from across Faculties, Student Experience Directorate, Performance, HR and the Student Association. The aim was to consider separate scenarios that capture different durations of lockdown and potential impact on likely number of days available for practical delivery of classes and assessment. It identified a set of principles for prioritisation of students, e.g. to complete certification and safety critical provision, maximising delivery (within restrictions) and likely costs of these and implications for learner progression. The levels of criticality identified included:

Level 1 They require to complete the course immediately as they are in their final phase or year; non completion will result in no professional qualification or articulation.

Level 2 This course can have a short-term deferral (e.g. addressed in summer)

Level 3 Can be deferred to subsequent college phase or Academic Year.

Level 4 Can be cancelled but there will be commercial implications.

4.4 In a positive move, most covid restrictions across wider society were removed from 24 January 2022. Following lobbying from the College with Scottish Government, the College subsequently moved to a fairer and more equitable service position where physical distancing is now a delegated decision for colleges to implement. At the time of writing, the College plans to phase return of classes on site with the aim by Block 3 (week beginning 14 March 2022) to have majority of students back on site. This a hugely positive situation and will allow for delivery and achievement of necessary practical activities but also the fundamental social engagement necessary for students to build confidence and resilience.

Key Developments and Review

4.5 The following sections highlight key updates and developments on learning and teaching and academic planning arrangements:

- **Student Experience Survey (Oct 2021):** Given strategic direction through our Student Academic Experience Strategy (*Active, Blended and Connected*) coupled with the realistic assumption identified above we have taken a developmental and learned approach where we have reviewed and surveyed our staff students to assess impact and development points. The most recent evidence provided by the Student Experience Survey is very positive and demonstrates an increased overall satisfaction for the College to 91%, an increase of 2.7% from the previous session. Overall satisfaction for Learning and Teaching also increased to 88.7% an increase of 3.9% from last year. Impressively and indicative of the role of the library over this period, students showed increased satisfaction with library resources available including provision of learning spaces an increase of 7.3% to 89%. This is a remarkable achievement given the turbulent times experienced but is indicative of the maturing of approach and the investments made in online development and delivery. What is evident from the Student Engagement Survey and review work conducted over last academic year is that students like the flexibility and inclusive nature of the blended model. However, and as expected, there are areas that require development and much of this has been identified and actioned across Faculties and Directorates. At a strategic level, the College has introduced certain longer-term mitigations to enhance the quality of online delivery and student support. Some of these outcomes are already delivering results and the following sections highlight key updates on some of these:
- **Blended Learning Fund:** The committee will be aware of the fund developed last academic year to support the development and enhancement of online learning, teaching and assessment resources. The majority of projects are now complete (with the exception of a small number with agreed longer time frames. The fund was very well received and has demonstrated real impact in L&T delivery. A new Fund for 21/22 has recently closed and outcomes announced. There are some really interesting and innovative projects including development of microcredentials and a cross college sustainability course.
- **Virtual Learning Environment (VLE):** Canvas, our new VLE is being rolled out across the college with College staff working through 'Growing with Canvas', five modules of content that takes users through everything they need to know about using Canvas at City of Glasgow College. In addition, there is a weekly programme of webinar training sessions to support adoption. Each Faculty has newly appointed Faculty Digital Champions (1 lecturer and 1 curriculum Head) who are timetabled one per day per week to support the Faculty Canvas roll out. To date nearly 800 staff have signed up and the project is well on track for full migration over summer period 2022.
- **Learning and Teaching Conference 2022:** Following the success of last year Learning and Teaching conference 'Let's get Phygital' conference, the college will host the 2022 event in June (date TBC). A conference planning group has been established and key themes and speakers will be identified in the coming weeks.
- **City Student:** a key aspect of the Student Academic Experience Strategy is the development of a set of City Student Attributes that are reflective of the City of Glasgow College experience that students can articulate and employers recognise. This work is about to be initiated, led by an Associate Dean with cross college and student representation.
- **Staff Support for Digital Delivery:** The Learning and Teaching Academy continue to provide a comprehensive range of developmental activities and resources to support individual staff and curriculum teams. A schedule of activity is available and promoted on the intranet and [relevant webpages](#). Please also refer to LTA paper (for noting).

- **Student Communications Framework:** A key learning point from Covid is the importance of clear and regular communication with students. The VPSE has worked with the Student Experience Directorate, City SA and the Communications Directorate to develop a sustainable Communications Framework with a clear process for developing and delivering communications to the student body. Further work is being developed and led by CitySA and Communications in the provision of communications training and a resource guide for Faculty and lecturing staff to highlight key aspects of communication principles for example, inclusivity, consistency, approach, tone, method and timing.
- **Learning Spaces:** A formal learning spaces group has been initiated and is a subgroup of the Digital Transformation Group. The group will consider 'no tech', 'low tech' and high tech' space developments across both campuses.

5 Impact and Implications

5.1 Reduced covid restrictions and removal of physical distancing is a very positive move for curriculum delivery and subsequently student experience.

5.2 The College will continue to invest in digital transformation and staff development to ensure we are positioned to deliver the SAES and enhance the student experience.