

Board of Management

Meeting of the Board of Management

**MINUTE OF 4th MEETING (BoM4) HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024
AT 1600 HRS ON CITY CAMPUS, ROOM C.04.044**

Present	
Alisdair Barron (Chair)	Stuart Mcdowall
Dave Anderson	Charlie Montgomerie
Nicola Cameron (Remote)	Stuart Patrick
Roddy Gillespie (Remote)	Ronnie Quinn
Lorna Hamilton (Remote)	Charandeep Singh
Paul Hillard	Leo Subido (Remote)
Ewart Keep	Audrey Sullivan
Paul Little	Josh Taylor (Remote)
Don MacKeen	
In attendance	
Claire Carney	Sheila Lodge
Michael Cross	Drew McGowan
Andrew Dickson	May Miller
Roy Gardner	Shona Struthers
John Gribben	Ann Butcher (Minute)
Observers	
Ron Hill	
Apologies	
Douglas Baillie	Shelley Breckenridge

A Barron welcomed the new trade union Board member C Montgomerie to his first meeting. He also welcomed R Hill who was observing the meeting as part of the External Effectiveness Review and Shona Struthers, Chief Executive, Colleges' Scotland who was presenting under item 3.

Item 3 was taken at this time.

Item BoM4-3	Presentation – Colleges' Scotland	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: S Struthers	Action Requested: Discuss
	<p>S Struthers provided members with an overview of the work of Colleges Scotland which serves as a collective voice for Scotland's 24 colleges across 13 regions. It advocates for the sector, influencing policies, and promoting world-class education and training. As a membership organisation, it campaigns for the recognition and accessibility of colleges nationwide. It acts as a connecting organisation, harnessing wider sector resources to maximise impact and engage stakeholders for positive policy changes.</p> <p>S Struthers further advised on College Employers Scotland which is a Committee of the Colleges Scotland board and helps put the Scottish Government's National Bargaining Policy into action in colleges. It works</p>	

	<p>in partnership with trade unions and its membership includes senior leaders from colleges across Scotland. Negotiations address matters such as pay and terms and conditions through the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC), which includes different groups focusing on various topics.</p> <p>The Board discussed key policy drivers such as influencing government investment in colleges to improve economic growth and productivity as well as international education activities and the potential role of Colleges' Scotland in negotiating a return to Erasmus+.</p> <p>A Barron thanked S Struthers for attending the meeting and offering insights into the work undertaken by Colleges Scotland.</p>
Decision	To note the work undertaken by Colleges Scotland.

S Struthers left the meeting.

Item BoM4-1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Note
Decision	Apologies were received from D Baillie and S Breckenridge.	

Item BoM4-2	Declarations of Interest	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Note
Decision	<p>A Barron reminded Board members of the Standards Commission's advice note for members of college sector boards which provides an overview of their responsibilities under the ethical standards framework to help assist them in recognising and dealing with potential conflicts of interest.</p> <p>C Montgomerie declared a connection to all items on the agenda and D MacKeen declared a connection under item 5.4 – 2024-25 SFC Funding and Voluntary Severance and Scenarios.</p>	

Item BoM4-4.1	Minute of the previous Board of Management meeting held on 14 December 2023	
Paper No: BoM4-A	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Approve
Decision	That the minute was approved.	

Item BoM4-4.2	Amendments to Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation	
Paper No: BoM4-B	Lead: D McGowan	Action Requested: Approve
Discussion	D McGowan presented minor amendments to the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation which were made with the introduction of trade union members and following the change to the Governance Professional role. Clarification that a non-executive member can be appointed as Vice Chair and/or Senior Independent members was also updated.	

	M Miller suggested that the Standing Orders, point 3.2 be further refined for clarification. This was agreed.
Decision	That subject amendment of point 3.2 in the Standing Orders, the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation were approved.

Item BoM4-4.3	Strategic Risk Review	
Paper No: BoM4-C	Lead: D McGowan	Action Requested: Approve
Discussion	D McGowan reported that following discussion at the Board's committees, changes proposed following the recent quarterly review were removal of SR22 (Negative impact of Brexit) and a revised score for SR23 (Failure to secure a sustainable model/level of funding) from 12 (Amber) to 16 (Red).	
Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Strategic Risk Register be approved with proposed changes. • That the Risk Management Action Plans were noted. 	

Item BoM4-5.1	Students' Association (SA) Update	
Paper No: BoM4-D	Lead: L Subido/J Taylor	Action Requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>L Subido provided the Board with a brief overview of student engagement undertaken during AY 2023-24. Updates on campaigns and events to help support marginalised groups including the Student Pantry resource; celebration and support of neurodivergent students and launch of the Healthcare and Wellbeing Survey to help identify key issues impacting the Student Experience were provided. The SA also continues to facilitate a variety of recreational activities through different student-led societies.</p> <p>The recent success of the Big Student Elections was reported, and the 2024-25 Presidential Team were advised as follows:</p> <p>Student President – Ciara McCarthy Vice President of Learning & Teaching – Valeria Ramos Vice President of Diversity and Wellbeing – Stacy Hawes Vice President of Socials and Activities – Polly Vaker</p> <p>The Board expressed thanks to the SA for their valuable, engaging and inclusive work undertaken throughout the year.</p>	
Decision	To note the update report.	

Item BoM4-5.2	Chair's Remarks	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: A Barron	Action Requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>A Barron informed the Board of the ongoing formal and informal meetings with local and regional Chairs. He reported on discussions and key issues surrounding the College sector budget for 2024-25.</p> <p>A Barron also provided an update on the recent Civic Reception held to officially recognise the Queen's Anniversary Award (QAA) received by the College, highlighting the collective efforts of everyone involved in this pioneering maritime research project.</p>	

Decision

To note the update report.

Item BoM4-5.3	Principal's Update	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Little	Action Requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>P Little reported that despite the current funding challenges, the College remains an inspirational, excellent and innovative institution. He highlighted several examples including the recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) seminar held during March, which focused on skills planning and regional impact. Additionally, the recent Learning & Teaching Conference emphasised the significance of inclusivity. He also extended thanks to the Innovation team, whose dedication led to the College becoming the first in the UK to receive recognition for both the Investors in Innovations validation and Digital Maturity Assured status. Furthermore, the prestigious QAA (the highest award in tertiary education) which was awarded to the College, alongside esteemed peers. He also highlighted the planned increase in training for Royal Navy engineers and the collaboration providing expertise in simulation technology with the international innovation campus facility in Rosyth.</p> <p>While acknowledging that the College is on track to meet its SFC credit target to secure funding for the year, P Little provided insights into the efforts of the Principal's Group in collaborating directly with the SFC and government officials to influence funding allocations. He anticipated receiving confirmation of indicative funding allocations tomorrow (28 March 2024). However, given the budget for 2024/25 presents a funding cut to colleges of 4.7% in revenue funding, it was noted that a flat cash settlement for learning and teaching was expected.</p> <p>The following updates were also advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First choice student recruitment applications are up 7% on this time last year, with total offers up by 3%. Total offers represent 85% towards enrolment targets. • Notification of new strike dates has been received from EIS-FELA and appropriate mitigations are being considered. • Discussions regarding a local strategic alliance are ongoing with the Scottish Government Minister and Glasgow College Chairs and Principals. 	
Decision	To note the update report.	

Item BoM4-5.4	2024-25 SFC Funding and Voluntary Severance (Open and Targeted)	
Paper No: BoM4-E	Lead: S Lodge/A Dickson	Action Requested: Approve
	<p>While the College is now in a stronger financial position than at the start of 2023, A Dickson reported that ELT has been forecasting the College's financial position for the end of AY 2024-25. Given the information received from the SFC indicates that the learning and teaching grant for 2024-25 will be flat cash (estimated to represent a real term cut of c 3.5% due to inflation), the realistic assumption now shows an underlying deficit of</p>	

£1.8m by the end of July 2025. Sectoral cuts to student support and digital poverty funding and the removal of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) were also advised.

To prevent this projected deficit from growing further, the Board were advised that a staffing reduction of 32 FTE will be required to reach break-even by the end of July 2025. This is based on the overall average salary of all employees and assumes that no other action can be taken. To achieve these necessary savings, the Board was informed that it is essential that staff planning to leave do so by the end of July 2024. Failure to meet this deadline may necessitate additional staff cuts during the course of session 2024-25. Building on the 19 mitigations introduced in AY 2022-23, the College will also continue to make efforts to reduce non-staff costs and to generate additional non-SFC income.

Members were reminded that the Board approved a revised Voluntary Severance (VS) scheme in November 2023 and were asked to endorse plans for a new round of VS. It was proposed that the scheme will reopen from 28 March until 19 April and will be open to all members of staff. If the open call does not deliver the full number of FTE posts required, the College will move on to targeted VS on 29 April. In this event, trade unions will be informed of areas to be targeted for VS and group and individual consultations will commence during that week. A copy of the timeline for VS was provided for information. The Board also noted that a funding application to pay for VS will be made to the DFC and to the Arm's Length Foundation.

D MacKeen expressed his concern regarding the potential discontinuation of support provision for students, especially those with additional needs which were essential. He also enquired if an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) would be undertaken and whether a lessons-learned exercise had been done following the previous round of VS and Compulsory Redundancies (CR), emphasising its negative impact on staff morale. S Lodge confirmed that an EQIA would be conducted following receipt of applications but before any decisions to approve were finalised. Additionally, S Lodge drew members' attention to the internal audit report on the severance schemes, both voluntary and compulsory, included in the meeting papers (Paper BoM4-R) which serves as a lessons-learned report and gives assurance that policies, guidance and statutory requirements were adhered to throughout.

L Subido raised concerns about the potential negative impact on students who are already vulnerable given the current strain on support services. P Little referred to the cut to support funding and emphasised the importance of addressing student needs. He advised that, where possible, the College will seek to minimise any impact on students. L Subido also enquired whether the open call for the VS scheme included SMT members. J Gribben clarified that a separate approval process for SMT would be implemented to ensure good governance.

C Montgomery acknowledged the difficult financial situation and recognised the need to undertake cost-saving initiatives. He also paid tribute to the agreement reached in November 2023 between the College and EIS-FELA to end the protracted local industrial dispute. However, he reminded members that the dispute came from a belief that the VS and CR process was incorrect and was based on a strict timeline rather than

considering alternatives. He expressed concern over the absence of a more comprehensive lessons learned report. While recognising the need for cuts, C Montgomery expressed a desire to avoid further disputes. He considered that trade unions had not been afforded ample time to review these proposals and suggested that additional meetings be scheduled after the Easter break period to address any concerns.

S Lodge informed the Board that a log of all lessons learned had been kept throughout the previous process and reminded members that an independent auditor review had been conducted, with no recommended actions made. She confirmed her willingness to meet with trade unions after the break to take forward the consultation process and welcomed any additional proposals trade unions might wish to put forward.

C Montgomery proposed an amendment to the original recommendation as tabled. He proposed that any decision on the use of VS be deferred to a later date to avoid any further disputes and allow for the opportunity to put forward alternative proposals. A vote of members was taken. With 2 members voting yes, 13 members voting no and 2 members abstaining, the amendment was not carried. With 15 members voting yes and 2 members voting no, the original recommendation was approved.

Decision

- To note the College’s anticipated SFC Funding for 2024-25.
- To endorse the commencement of open and targeted Voluntary Severance.

L Subido and J Taylor left the meeting.

	Scenarios:	
Item BoM4-5.4.1	Finance	
Item BoM4-5.4.2	Learning and Teaching	
Item BoM4-5.4.3	Workforce Planning	
Item BoM4-5.4.4	Operations	
Item BoM4-5.4.4	Corporate Development	
Paper No: BoM4-F-BoM4-J	Lead: ELT Members	Action Requested: Discuss
Decision	To note the updated scenarios.	

Item BoM4-5.5	Impact of Industrial Action on the Student Experience	
Paper No: BoM4-K	Lead: C Carney/J Gribben	Action Requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>C Carney reminded the Board of the rolling local strike action that concluded mid-December 2023 and the associated impact on the student experience which resulted in 40 out of 76 (52.5%) teaching days lost. Where possible, curriculum teams made appropriate decisions for the continuation of courses to ensure student progression which included: using underutilised staff; delaying the end of the academic year; providing additional teaching during inter-semester week/holidays; additional contracts/overtime for staff in areas that were fully utilised; and changing units within frameworks.</p> <p>Early withdrawal data (where students withdraw within 5 weeks of the start date) demonstrates no impact on withdrawals or student retention. This was mainly due to a change in recording student attendance during the</p>	

strike action and moving the early withdrawal 'cut-off' date. The Board noted that further withdrawals have also been maintained and have improved since AY 2022-23. C Carney further informed members that withdrawal surveys showed that the prolonged strike action had not been a feature in student responses.

The internal student satisfaction survey undertaken during October 2023, shows an unsurprising decrease (12%) in the overall student College experience to last year. The national SFC student experience survey will run until the end of April, and it was noted that the College's ranking may be further influenced by the impact of these local strike actions and the upcoming national and local strike actions in the weeks ahead. An agreed sector position on Action Short of Strike (ASOS), specifically a deduction of pay for partial performance of duties (eg for completion of student resulting) was also advised.

The impact on the College's reputational risk was highlighted through the ongoing concern for one of the College's largest clients who have subsequently placed their training contract out to tender and the upsetting loss of regularity and pathways for students particularly those with neurodiverse conditions were also advised. The need to maximise opportunities for growth in some areas, particularly as a Glasgow city region was highlighted.

The Board acknowledged the importance of resetting industrial relations between management and trade unions, a process that will require substantial effort from both sides. The aim to establish more constructive dialogue, while considering the impact on learners' life chances was recognised.

Decision

To note the update report and the potential impact of further industrial action on the student experience.

C Carney, A Dickson, R Gardner and J Gribben left the meeting.

Item BoM4-5.6		The Influence of City of Glasgow College	
Paper No: BoM4-L	Lead: M Cross	Action Requested: Discuss	
Discussion	<p>M Cross provided a brief overview detailing the connections established by staff and the ongoing efforts to promote the College and the wider cause of technological and vocational education across Scotland, the UK and internationally.</p> <p>The Board expressed their appreciation for the insight into influencing and the decision-making processes. While acknowledging the broad scope and long-term nature of outcomes, members welcomed further details regarding the allocation of financial resources for projects and activities as well as case studies illustrating tangible benefits. Additionally, it was suggested that the influencing roles of Board members and the SA be included for a more comprehensive understanding.</p> <p>A Barron commended the excellent report which provides details on raising the students' profile and acquiring grants and, noting the employment guarantees for staff.</p>		
Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the report. 		

Item BoM4-6.1	Governance Report	
Paper No: BoM4-M	Lead: D McGowan	Action Requested: Note
Discussion	<p>D McGowan highlighted the upcoming recruitment of non-executive members. Applications opened on 25 March 2024 and are scheduled to close on 14 April 2024.</p> <p>Members were encouraged to share recruitment information within their respective professional networks. The Board commended the excellent updates made to the recruitment pack which provides a welcome representation of the College.</p>	
Decision	To note the update report.	

Item BoM4-6.2	Commissioner for Widening Access 2024 Annual Report	
Paper No: BoM4-N	Lead: M Cross	Action Requested: Note
Discussion	<p>A summary of the Annual Report 2024 by the Commissioner for Widening Access was submitted for noting. M Cross provided an overview of the policy background and the College's contribution to the widening access agenda. Members recognised the crucial role that colleges play in widening access to education for people and communities facing deprivation and disadvantage.</p>	
Decision	To note the report.	

Item BoM4-7	Reports from Board Committees	
Item BoM4-7.1	Committee Items for Approval	
Item BoM4-7.1.1	Risk Management Policy	
Paper No: BoM4-O	Lead: D McGowan	Action Requested: Note
Decision	That the updated Risk Management Policy was approved, as recommended by the Audit and Assurance Committee on 14 March 2024.	

Item BoM4-7.2	Committee Items for Noting/Information	
Item BoM4-7.2.1	Freedom of Information Report 2022-23	
Paper No: BoM4-P	Lead: D McGowan	Action Requested: Note
Decision	To note the Annual Freedom of Information Report for 2022-23.	

Item BoM4-7.2.2	SFC Financial Sustainability of Colleges Report	
Paper No: BoM4-Q	Lead: A Dickson	Action Requested: Note
Decision	To note the SFC Financial Sustainability of Colleges Report.	

Item BoM4-7.2.3	Internal Audit Report – Severance Schemes	
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Paper No: BoM4-R	Lead: P Hillard	Action Requested: Note
Discussion	<p>P Hillard tabled the internal audit on the College's voluntary severance (VS) and compulsory redundancy (CR) schemes which was recently considered by the Audit & Assurance Committee. He highlighted that the auditors had concluded that carefully planned and implemented effectively, with evidence of robust scrutiny undertaken by the Board, and adhered to relevant policies, guidance and statutory requirements. Board members noted that the report provided an overall level of assurance as 'good', with no recommended actions identified.</p> <p>C Montgomerie particularly highlighted the statement that 'the College clearly communicated the rationale for the severance schemes to the different stakeholder groups, staff and trade unions' and expressed his dissatisfaction with the conclusion in the report about communications with trade unions, remarking that they had not been consulted as stated.</p> <p>A Barron emphasised that this review had been conducted independently and commended the positive outcome. D Anderson acknowledged that while C Montgomerie might have reservations about the process, the main findings and the identification of strengths and opportunities for improvement were based on factual evidence.</p>	
Decision	To note the report.	

R Hill left the meeting at this time.

Item BoM4-7.3	Committee Minutes	
Item BoM4-7.3.1	Conveners' Committee	
Paper No: BoM4-S	Lead: D Baillie	Action Requested: Note
Decision	To note the draft minute of the Conveners' Committee meeting held on 29 January 2024.	

Item BoM4-7.3.2	People & Culture Committee	
Paper No: BoM4-T	Lead: A Barron	Action Requested: Note
Decision	To note the draft minute of the People and Culture Committee meeting held on 13 February 2024.	

Item BoM4-7.3.3	Development Committee	
Paper No: BoM4-U	Lead: L Hamilton	Action Requested: Note
Decision	To note the draft minute of the Development Committee meeting held on 15 February 2024.	

Item BoM4-7.3.4	Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Committee	
Paper No: BoM4-V	Lead: A Sullivan	Action Requested: Note

Decision	To note the draft minute of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee meeting held on 27 February 2024.
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Item BoM4-7.3.5	Finance Committee	
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Paper No: BoM4-W	Lead: R Quinn	Action Requested: Note
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Decision	To note the draft minute of the Finance Committee meeting held on 6 March 2024.	
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Item BoM4-7.3.6	Audit and Assurance Committee	
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Paper No: BoM4-X	Lead: P Hillard	Action Requested: Note
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Decision	To note the draft minute of the Audit and Assurance Committee meeting held on 14 March 2024. P Hillard commended the positive levels of assurance provided as 'good' for all 5 Internal Audit reports submitted.	
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Item BoM4-8	Any Other Notified Business	
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Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Note
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Decision	<p>Lorna Hamilton</p> <p>A Barron informed the Board that this would be L Hamilton's final meeting as she had informed him of her decision to resign from the Board. On behalf of all colleagues, A Barron expressed his gratitude for the privilege of working with her, acknowledging her significant contributions. L Hamilton expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to serve. She emphasised the importance of unity and consensus among members despite the challenges faced. L Hamilton also extended a special thanks to R Gardner and C Gethin for their support during her tenure as convener of the Development Committee.</p>	
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Item BoM4-9	Review of Meeting	
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Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Chair	Action Requested: Note
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Decision	A Barron thanked members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting, which he reminded those present was observed as part of the External Effectiveness Review. While the College has made marked progress on financial sustainability, he said, the environment we operate in continues to be challenging and will require our attention. In closing, A Barron expressed his hope that the College and our trade unions would work together to address these issues.	
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Item BoM4-10	Disclosability of Papers	
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Paper No: Verbal	Lead: D McGowan	Action Requested: Note
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Decision	The disclosability status of all papers remained unchanged, except for the Risk Management Policy (Paper BoM4-O) which had been approved and was now considered disclosable.	
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Item BoM4-11	Date of Next Meeting
Decision	Wednesday 19 June 2024

The meeting closed at 1915 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
c	College Performance Report 22-23: Provide a Power-Bi dashboard demo at a future date.	PL/JG	Date to be agreed
BoM3-3.6 14 12 23	Strategic Risk Review: Explore forecast and feasibility of mitigating high-scoring risks.	DM	ASAP Complete
BoM3-4.1 14 12 23	SA Update: Consider including class rep benchmarking information and additional NUS updates in future reports.	LS/JT	Ongoing
BoM3-6.1.1 14 12 23	CGI Ltd – Director Nominations: Review nominated non-executive directors.	Board	BoM Mtg 19 06 24
BoM3-6.2.5 14 12 23	Health and Safety Annual Report: Consider adding comment on Page 7.	SL	ASAP Complete