

Board of Management Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 28 May 2024
Paper No.	LTSEC4-K
Agenda Item	5.2
Subject of Paper	Academic Board Minute – 16 February 2024
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Paul Little, Principal
Date of production	February 2024
Action	For Noting

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the Academic Board minute of the meeting held on 16 February 2024.

Meeting of Academic Board

Minute of meeting held on 16 February 2024 at 1100 hrs – City, C.04.44

Present	
Paul Little (PL) (Chair)	Gus Grubb (GG)
Sheila Lodge (SL)	Jon Gray (JG)
Eddie Carr (EC)	Melissa Grbin (MG)
Claire Carney (CC)	Katie Jordan (KJ)
Chris Colvin (CCo)	Chris Keenan (CK)
Andrew Dickson (AD)	Stephen McLaughlin (SM)
May Donald (MD)	Leo Subido (LS)
David Findley (DF)	Josh Taylor (JT)
Roy Gardner (RG)	
In Attendance	
Jennifer Stevenson (JS) (Minute Secretary)	
Apologies for absence	
Alison Bell (AB)	Katie Hislop (KH)
James Davies (JD)	Elaine McKenzie (EM)
Deborah Fagan (DF)	Derek Robertson (DR)
John Gribben (JGr)	Siobhan Wilson (SW)

Item 1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Little	Action requested: Note
Discussion	Apologies were received from AB, JD, DF, JG, KH, EM, DR, SW	
Decision	The apologies were noted.	

Item 2	Chair's Business	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Little	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>He explained that he was keen to Chair the Academic Board meetings whenever he could, though his other commitments often meant he was in conflicting meetings with decision makers, politicians, employers, business owners et al. Without doubt, the pandemic has had a profound impact, and its legacy was still being felt.</p> <p>The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) budget cut anticipated a 21% decline in overall college funding for 24/25, however the Chair believed a more realistic figure might ultimately be 25%. Colleges and universities are being effectively deprioritised, with politicians having greater demands on increasing limited public funding. The way to ensure the future of City was to ensure that our excellence was evident to all decision makers, so that the College was always the 'first choice'. Excellence should be embodied in everything we do. Published tables, awards and recognition were evidence of affirming that excellence, and as an illustration, the College had been awarded the Queen's Anniversary Award (QAA), the highest</p>	

	<p>award in tertiary education for any university or college. The QAA is rarely given to colleges, and even more rarely for college research.</p> <p>Replying to SM, the Chair advised that the College had indeed a plan and that all information was available for staff to view. Moreover, conversations and discussions at all levels are transparent and open so there are 'no surprises'. The College's strategic plan for 10 years had been set out and the eight priorities were the north star from which we do not deviate.</p> <p>The out-turn deficit for 23/24 had been anticipated to be c. £8 million but was thought to be more c. £2million. This reduction required careful detailed planning to achieve. Confirmation of actual figures for 24/25 would be known in May. Not all colleges were so open nor so advanced in their planning.</p>
Decision	Noted

Item 3.1	Minute of Meeting 10 November 2023	
Paper No: AB02-A	Lead: P Little	Action Approval
Discussion	<p>The minute of the meeting held on 10 November 2023 was agreed as a correct record and approved without amendment.</p> <p>One action point arising from these minutes had been completed and the Chair thanked the Board for their comments.</p>	
Decision	Noted	

Item 3.2	Documents & Records Retention Policy and Documents & Records Retention Procedure	
Paper No: AB02-B	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	<p>Work on the Policy and Procedure had been carried out by the Data Protection Officer (DPO) to ensure the College was compliant with the UK GDPR law. The Policy and Procedure would ensure we also meet our obligations to all our awarding bodies regarding management of data, including disposal in a safe and timely manner.</p> <p>Particular attention was drawn to Section 5 – Responsibilities in the Documents & Records Retention Policy. On page 13 in the Document and Record Retention Procedure the DPO had identified the key process owners.</p> <p><u>Action</u> – DPO to confirm whether Canvas should be included.</p>	
Decision	Approved	

Item 3.3	Responding to Internal Audit Reports Procedure	
Paper No: AB02-C	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	<p>Part of being a public body is ensuring that the College is fully accountable by being regularly audited both internally and externally. The Compliance Officer, Karen Acheson, ensures that all follow up recommendations made by the Auditors are subsequently implemented in a timely manner. She is in effect the key liaison point between our auditors and those responsible for the areas being audited.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the College had appointed a Chief Financial Officer and a Financial Controller to keep the College on target financially: no other college had such a highly qualified or experienced team.</p> <p>He noted that the advantage of internal auditors was that they could make recommendations of good practice based on what they had observed in other sectors.</p>	
Decision	Approved.	

Item 4.1	College Performance Indicators AY2022-23	
Paper No: AB02-D	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Discussion
Discussion	<p>Each year the College seeks to review its key and operational performance as part of the annual quality cycle.</p> <p>The cycle culminates in a portfolio review where decisions on the continuation of courses are made.</p> <p>The portfolio review is also informed by two student surveys and external scrutiny by a range of external bodies, including Education Scotland (who reviewed the College twice this year).</p> <p>For 2022-23, performance reporting was delayed due to the impact of industrial action on student results. The data in this report will, therefore, remain caveated until sector data is published by the Scottish Funding Council.</p> <p>In terms of our quality assurance and enhancement work, the report notes the likelihood of our annual engagement visit from Education Scotland taking place in May 2024. Thereafter, we will embark on new tertiary quality framework arrangements overseen by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), although full guidance on this is not yet available.</p> <p>Although the College's performance is steadily improving, challenges remain in FT FE and FT HE. The contraction of the sector was noted. Most colleges are struggling to recruit students as many young people are nowadays staying on longer at school or going into work sooner.</p>	

	Mindful of the increasingly competitive regional market, the College remains committed to the continuous enhancement of both learning and teaching and the overall student experience.
Decision	Action: JG to implement fully the Curriculum Enhancement Process and ensure action is taken to address underperformance.

Item 4.2 & 4.3	SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey Sector Comparison AY 2922-23 My Student Experience Survey Outcomes
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Paper No: AB02-E & F	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Discussion
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Discussion	<p>This discussion covered both student surveys.</p> <p>Starting with Item 4.3. the Academic Board discussed the internal 'My Student Experience' survey. This reflects on the student's journey through recruitment, funding, induction and the first weeks of classes.</p> <p>Mindful of the impact of industrial dispute, and the scale of disruption to the student experience, the results, although declining, were interpreted as positive given the circumstances.</p> <p>Deans reflected on the highs and lows in the satisfaction rates, noting that some Faculties had been affected by industrial action more than others. The Chair stated that industrial action had clearly had a negative impact on the students.</p> <p>Reflecting on the national SFC survey, undertaken in April, the improvements in both the response rate and satisfaction rates were noted. While our response rate was now sector-leading, especially for our FE students, the gap in satisfaction with learning and teaching between City and other colleges had in most instances increased and our position had slipped.</p> <p>The Board reflected on what more could be done to continue to increase response rates and to avoid further slippage.</p> <p>Survey fatigue, it was noted, could be a factor for lower response rates, and the fact that the survey format is somewhat dated. The Chair asked if we could also rethink how we phrase questions and work with the Students' Association to achieve this.</p> <p>It was noted that a large number of students lack their own IT equipment to complete the surveys online, and in response to this, students were being directed to the library or laptop loan scheme from the Student Association. Faculties were developing their own approaches, including using a trolley of 15-20 laptops at the end of the class to aid completion of the survey. SL asked if the survey could be adapted to suit modern technology and be</p>
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dropped to students via their mobile phone one question at a time over a short period.

JG said that a lot more effort was required across the College to engage with students to increase the satisfaction rate.

Students' Association representatives said they were being proactive in pushing the response rates and encouraging students to complete the surveys.

Mindful timetabling continues to be an area for improvement, as well as delivering greater consistency for learners on Canvas, also the Chair stated that information given to students at induction should include a checklist of where to find links and that this checklist should also be published on the intranet.

The Chair said there would always be challenges but for the next SFC survey in March the College should be aiming to make it easier for students to complete the survey.

JG advised that the SFC Survey was a national one and the questions could not be changed.

In concluding, it was highlighted that the forthcoming SFC survey needs to be a high priority for everyone in the College. Staff should dedicate time to supporting students to complete surveys in class time and to improve overall satisfaction rates to exceed the sector average.

Decision

Noted.

Item 4.4 Annual College Quality Report 2022 -23

Paper No: AB02-G	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Discussion
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Discussion	<p>This paper was noted. It demonstrated to the Academic Board the types of actions proposed to address many of the issues highlighted within the survey discussion on items 4.2 and 4.3.</p> <p>JT asked when students could reasonably expect feedback from submitted assignments as this had been raised by students who were waiting lengthy times. SL explained that staff are required to give feedback within 15 working days of submission. If there is a good reason why this cannot be done, students must be given an explanation within 15 working days and a revised deadline.</p> <p>CC was asked to ensure that the Assessment and Feedback Policy is available on the College website for all students.</p>	
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Decision	Action: CC to ensure Assessment and Feedback Policy is on the College website.	
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Item 4.5 Learning & Teaching Conference Update

Paper No: Verbal	Lead: C Carney	Action requested: Discussion
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Discussion	<p>The L&T Conference on 23 January 2024 had been very successful with key speakers being well received. An evaluation was currently underway and would help shape next year's conference, to be held on 21 January 2025.</p> <p>The College is at the forefront of the sector for staging such L&T conferences. The constituent workshops led by staff and students were a key element to its success and had role modelled the theme of 'The Inclusive College'. These workshops would run again during the year. Engagement across the College had been excellent.</p> <p>The Chair encouraged everyone to attend the next L & T Conference and encourage their colleagues to also attend.</p>
Decision	Noted

Item 5.1 5.4.1	Faculty Board Minutes Creative Industries
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Paper No: AB02-H	Lead: E Carr (For A Bell)	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted	
Decision	Noted.	

Item 5.4.2	Education & Humanities
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Paper No: AB02-I	Lead: G Grubb	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted	
Decision	Noted.	

Item 5.4.3	Hospital & Leisure
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Paper No: AB02-J	Lead: May Donald (For SW)	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	

Item 5.4.4	Nautical & STEM
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Paper No: AB02-K	Lead: C Keenan	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted	

Item 5.2	Approved QUAEC Minute 24 October 2024
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Paper No: AB02-L	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	

Item 5.3	Approved SAEC Minute 2 November 2023
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Paper No: AB02-M	Lead: C Carney	Action requested: Note
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Discussion	The paper was noted.
Decision	Noted.

Item 5.4	Approved SSC Minute 27 October 2023	
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Paper No: AB02-N	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	

Item 6.	Any Other Business	
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Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Little	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The Chair thanked members for their valued contributions.	
	No other business was raised.	
Decision	Noted.	

Item 7	Date of Next Meeting	
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Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Little	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The date of the next meeting was noted as 20 May 2024.	
Decision	Noted.	

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING held on 16th February 2024

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
3.2	To advise whether Canvas should be part of the Document & Records Retention Policy and Procedure	DPO	20.05.24
4.2	To fully implement the Curriculum Enhancement Process and ensure action is taken to address underperformance	JG	20.05.24
4.4	College Website to be updated by 4 March 2024 with the Assessment and Feedback Policy so that students can access it.	CC	04.04.24