

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

Wednesday 28 April 2021

Draft Confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting held on Wednesday 28 April 2021 at 5.00pm via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT:	M Williamson (Chair)	G Robertson
	B Carmichael	A McCusker
	S Mill	A Monks
	K Ditcham	S Stirling
	C Meldrum	S Hewitt
	M Thomson	H Honeyman
	N Lowden	

IN ATTENDANCE: S Taylor (Vice Principal / Secretary to the Board)
J Carnegie (Vice Principal Corporate Services)
J Grace (Vice Principal Curriculum & Attainment)
M Sanderson (Executive Secretary)
L Crichton (Head of Administrative Operations)
S Thom (Student Services Manager)
K Baxter (Learner Engagement Manager)

1. WELCOME

M Williamson welcomed Committee members and welcomed L Crichton, S Thom, and K Baxter to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 February 2021 was approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6. COVID 19 ARRANGEMENTS FOR LEARNING, TEACHING AND ENGAGEMENT OF LEARNERS

S Hewitt provided an update to the Committee on COVID 19 arrangements and guidance, praising staff for their hard work in getting to where the College is today.

Student attainment was noted as the key government (and College) priority at the moment and staff were working hard to ensure that as many learners as possible could complete their courses.

J Grace provided an update on key issues around Learning and Teaching, highlighting that the focus had been on students returning to campus. J Grace noted that some students were back on Campus (5% have been back since 4 March) with this number increasing on 19 and 26 April. Feedback had been extremely positive from both staff and students.

J Grace highlighted that all students had received personalised communication during the April holidays, either asking them to return to campus and explaining the arrangements and COVID mitigation requirements or confirming if their courses were staying online.

J Carnegie provided an update on work the Estates and Health & Safety teams had undertaken in preparation for staff and students returning to campus. J Carnegie noted the College was also about to launch COVID lateral flow testing system for staff and students returning to campus.

J Carnegie noted discussions were ongoing for Hair, Beauty and Complimentary Therapy Students completing their course. Where courses required close contact practical elements where face coverings were not possible, it was hoped that students could bring household members into campus to complete treatments. J Carnegie noted this was still being discussed at a national level and all college's unions and the Scottish Government would need to be content with the proposals.

J Carnegie highlighted that COVID cases remained low, with no on campus transmission.

S Taylor provided an update, noting that there had been a couple of staffing issues since the return to campus, but these were being dealt with. S Taylor also noted that SQA had confirmed arrangements for a Holistic assessment process and many courses could progress through these arrangements where necessary. Staff were being encouraged to review and consider the need for this approach and a revised system had been developed (along with guidance and training) for the approval and recording of holistic outcomes.

M Williamson asked for an estimate number of students who won't complete their course and asked how the additional funding received could support this. S Hewitt noted the additional funds would be used for extra resources and additional time to support students to complete their course and cover the costs of extra staffing hours.

J Grace highlighted there were expected to be around 600 deferrals which was a lower number than originally estimated. The number was a mix of Hair and Beauty, apprentices and other students who had not been able to complete the practical elements of their course. J Grace noted the Senior Management Team were looking for creative ways of embedding additional time into the next academic year for these students, so they did not need to add an additional year onto their learning journey. S Hewitt highlighted the important message the team were sending to students and staff was to maximise attainment in this Academic Year to avoid deferrals and repeated learning.

A McCusker asked if Students who were studying practical courses had been disengaged and what plans were in place to re-motivate them and encourage them to return to Campus next year. It was noted that this would be covered under the presentation, but that an important element was also the availability of funding for students without detriment to their future learning journey.

S Hewitt noted his involvement in the national Taskforce work and stated that this was now looking at plans for next academic year. S Hewitt stated that the key element to support planning for 2021/22 was the requirement for physical distancing and noted that, if the two meter distance will still be in place, the current support, arrangements, and mitigations would be required. S Hewitt stated that the confirmed funds available to plan for next year were a big part of this and would support the College to be more creative around potential solutions.

7. CURRICULUM REPORT – SUPPORTING LEARNERS DURING COVID

K Baxter, L Crichton and S Thom provided a detailed [presentation](#) to the Committee around the work all teams are doing to support students during the pandemic.

K Baxter provided an update on the Learner Engagement Team and how the team have adapted to moving all their materials and support online and delivering sessions remotely. K Baxter noted the positivity from the team in adapting quickly. The team met at the beginning of the pandemic to look at the services they provide and how this could work online and if students would be engaged by this.

K Baxter noted that there had been extremely positive feedback from students who adapted well to the online services and had been engaging enthusiastically with the team.

Key activities and services were summarised, including:

- Working closely with curriculum teams who might not have engaged with them before COVID.
- Creating strong external partnerships for online sessions with students.
- Hand delivering food parcels to students (over 450 food parcels during the two lockdowns).
- Continuing the delivery of periods products through the Government funded Period Poverty Project.
- Starting after hours activities including the launch of a YouTube channel for students to engage with the team and each other.

S Thom provided an update on behalf of the Students Services team outlining the growth in needs for student support and the reasons students had been seeking increased support during lockdown.

S Thom noted there has been an increase in mental health and wellbeing concerns and support needs and the team had been highlighting that they were always available to provide support. Engagement with students had been very well received, and there had been a significant increase in demands on the Student Services team. This included a surge in significant mental health support needs, issues around relationships and violence, isolation, adaption to change and financial difficulties.

S Thom highlighted the challenges for student parents who were studying whilst trying to balance home schooling and caring responsibilities. The team had been providing support and were helping many students adapt to the new way of learning and online teaching. A range of support activities had also been made available to students including financial support sessions and focused mental health counselling.

L Crichton provided an update on behalf of Administrative services. More funds had been made available from the SFC to help the College provide winter COVID payments to students, to help them through the pandemic and help towards rent and bills if eligible.

L Crichton noted that the timescale for distribution of these funds had been very short and the team had had to adapt quickly to providing new services and programmes remotely for students. L Crichton noted that much of what had been developed would continue after COVID and would provide better blended opportunities and contact going forward.

M Williamson praised the fantastic presentation from all three teams and noted the clear hard work and dedication from staff within the teams.

N Lowden also praised the hard work the teams were undertaking and how well they had adapted.

A McCusker and H Honeyman praised the presentation and thanked the teams for their hard work. H Honeyman asked teams to ensure they were looking after themselves whilst they looked after the students.

8. STUDENTS ASSOCIATION REPORT

C Meldrum presented the report [presentation](#) to the Committee.

C Meldrum provided an update to the group and noted voting was open for the new Student President and Vice President. The election would close on 30 April 2021.

C Meldrum and A Monks highlighted the wide range of activities that the Students' Association were supporting.

C Meldrum noted a workshop had been created for Students around Wellbeing and the team were carrying out service design sessions to plan activities and budget spend.

M Williamson and the Committee praised the fantastic work carried out by Students' Association and thanked Cher Meldrum for her amazing input to the work of the College whilst Student President.

9. 2019/20 POST COURSE SUCCESS

S Taylor summarised the paper presented. S Taylor highlighted the amount of work being carried out by L Crichton's team in phoning students to enquire about their destination after College.

M Williamson noted that the positive destination figures were higher than she was expecting and noted that it would be of interest to the Committee to see the national figures for comparison.

10. VP CURRICULUM AND ATTAINMENT REPORT

J Grace summarised the report and noted that major Modern Apprenticeship contracts had been secured since the last meeting. The target was ambitious but achievable.

N Lowden asked about the likely report from the Education Scotland engagement. J Grace confirmed the review was around remote learning and interviews were carried out with Students, Staff and Managers. S Taylor advised that the report was expected in June, but that this would be a sector wide report (similar to the recent schools one) rather than a D&A College report.

11. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor summarised the Strategic and COVID Risk Registers and noted that no changes had been made to these. S Taylor highlighted there were still a number of issues and support needs for learners and that the risk on student attainment would remain under review.

12. LT&Q METRICS

The LT&Q Metrics were noted, and S Taylor highlighted that it was anticipated that the College would meet its initial Credit target, with work progressing on the additional activity allocated in December 2020.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting will take place on Wednesday 1 September 2021 at 5.00pm, Microsoft Teams.

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
---------------	-----------------------	-------------

No action points were noted.