

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee Wednesday 1 September 2021

Draft Confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting held on Wednesday 1 September 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
N Dowie	S Hewitt
S Middleton	H Honeyman
N Lowden	M Thomson
MC McNally	

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)	
S McGregor (Head of Sector)	R Taylor (Curriculum Quality Leader)
S Swinley (Head of Curriculum & Quality)	S McGovern (Curriculum Quality Leader)
G Smith (Curriculum Quality Leader)	

1. WELCOME

M Williamson welcomed Committee members and welcomed new Board members Nicola Dowie and Dr Sally Middleton and co-opted Board member MC McNally and also welcomed Engineering Team members Stephen McGregor, Stephen Swinley, Gavin Smith, Rod Taylor, and Scott McGovern.

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 28 April 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 at the end of session 2020/21 and the start of term 2021/22. S Hewitt noted the College was working in line with latest Government guidance and social distancing has been reduced from two metres to one metre.

J Grace noted most of the hair and beauty students had managed to complete their courses or were now returning to complete final elements on a deferred basis. It was noted that this was a really positive situation given the challenges last year. Some students had not yet finished their courses and the College was giving every opportunity to finish on a deferred basis, or as part of this year's course, rather than add on any additional years to a student's College journey. The additional funds received to cover the cost of additional resources etc had been very welcome to support this work and student outcomes.

J Grace highlighted the team were delighted that c.1400 Senior Phase school pupils had now enrolled for this academic year. J Grace noted she was hoping for a last minute surge in recruitment for full-time courses starting in September as numbers were lower than previous years.

J Carnegie provided an update from Health and Safety, in relation to COVID. J Carnegie noted campus signage had been a priority over the summer, ready for Student's returning to campus. The team had replaced all two-metre signage with one metre guidance. It had been confirmed that face coverings were required in most situations but could be removed in the classroom for both students and lecturers, where a one metre distance etc was in place. Close contact activities would still be required to wear appropriate PPE and face coverings would still be mandatory in communal areas and when moving around.

J Carnegie noted it was an on-going challenge to get students (and some staff) to follow the rules and mitigations, particularly as rules are more relaxed out with the College setting. J Carnegie noted that cases nationally were very high and noted that eight members of staff had tested positive since August and this could have an impact on face-to-face teaching on campus if more staff test positive and/or needed to isolate.

S Taylor provided an update and noted that the Quality Team had been providing extensive support and oversight of the SQA adapted assessment arrangements. This included providing support to teams with the Nat5 and Higher NQ arrangements and the HNVQ Decision Tree arrangements, before signing them off with SQA.

S Taylor also noted Learner Engagement and Student Services had been extremely busy over the summer, providing wellbeing and related activities to reduce isolation and support new students to engage with the College. Student Services had seen an increase in additional needs referrals and significant additional funding had been given to the College to extend support for students with mental health needs. This funding had been very well received and would support the appointment of a new Mental Health Team Leader and Student Support Officer roles.

S Taylor also highlighted teams had been working together to support the high levels of administrative activity needed to cope with deferrals and new students and to help and support our new students who might feel anxious about returning. The College was committed to providing a safe environment for students and are pushing the importance of regular COVID testing. It was noted that arrangements were in place to have 'pop up' vaccination clinics on campus during week 20 September 2021 for students to have their vaccine.

M Williamson praised a fully comprehensive report and praised the work of the senior team and College staff for their efforts.

N Lowden asked if there was a plan in place for staff who were isolating, to still deliver lessons to students via MS Teams or a class recording. J Grace confirmed if there was a surge in staff isolating, they had plans in place (where possible) for students to continue their classes through MS Teams.

A Monks asked if face coverings would still be worn in some departments. J Carnegie confirmed that close contact activities would still require PPE masks for students, staff, and clients in line with the appropriate industry guidance.

H Honeyman asked if the College had a plan for increases staff sickness absence, as this might occur during winter months with being back onsite. J Carnegie noted an increase in sickness absence is expected with COVID and winter flu etc. It was asked that this be covered within the appropriate section of the Risk Register. **S Taylor to progress.**

A McCusker asked for information around recruitment and numbers being down. J Grace noted this was the current main priority. Recruitment was down by c.600 full-time students, from last year. This was attributed to the increase in first year apprenticeships and universities having been given an additional 3000 places for school leavers.

J Grace also noted the College are keeping recruitment open for longer and the Administration Team had contacted around 850 students who didn't complete their course last year due to COVID and have offered them to come back and complete their studies.

J Grace noted that there were plans in place to increase other aspects of provision to ensure that the overall credit target was achieved.

M Williamson thanked the team for the update.

7. CURRICULUM REPORT – ENGINEERING TEAM DEVELOPMENTS & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

S Swinley, S McGregor, G Smith, S McGovern and R Taylor from the Engineering team provided a detailed [presentation](#) to the Committee around the work the team was doing to support students and the changes they had made as a team to improve student outcomes.

S Swinley highlighted the developments that had taken place in terms of the response to the cyber-attack and the pandemic and noted that this had supported the team to enhance the use of ICT in learning and update materials to on-line formats. It was noted that some of this forced development had supported forward movement in learning and teaching.

G Smith outlined changes made in terms of approaches to recruitment and the links between these changes and the streamlining of the curriculum were summarised.

S Swinley outlined work undertaken to create a clearer learner journey and to scaffold skills and learning at each stage to support and enhance progression.

Investment in new technology was noted, and S Swinley confirmed that sufficient investment was being made within this, supported by good links with the Energy Skills Partnership and access to national resources available through them.

S McGregor noted the team had made good progress in enhancing learning and teaching and providing the best opportunities to learners. S McGregor also noted the team had good relationships with Dundee Science Centre, Energy Skills Partnership, and other external partners, and summarised the opportunities developing through the Tay Cities Deal and MSIP developments.

M Williamson noted the enthusiasm and focus on the students really comes through.

S Mill asked if the team had sufficient resources to support the new curriculum and opportunities in areas such as robotics. S Swinley confirmed the College had provided a lot of resources and are in a strong position going forward for students to use.

S Swinley noted they team are in a good position for students returning to campus and have new equipment to help with their studies and enhance their learning. S McGregor added the College have a good relationship with ESP and share their resources and kit for students to use.

The update on developments within the Team, and the positive impact this had had on student outcomes was noted.

8. 2021/2022 CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

J Grace summarised the paper for discussion.

A McCusker praised the work of the team, especially with two Director posts vacant. J Grace noted that all of the priorities were focused around the 2025 strategy and key pledges.

J Grace noted that it was hoped that two strong candidates for the Director posts would be recruited before too long.

9. STUDENTS ASSOCIATION REPORT

A Monks presented the report [presentation](#) to the Committee and welcome N Dowie (Vice President for the Kingsway campus) to her first committee meeting.

A Monks summarised the key plans for the Students' Association for the year ahead and noted that it was good to have C Meldrum continuing in a staff role as part of the team, in her new role as Student Association Assistant. This role would focus on supporting class and lead reps.

N Lowden asked what WRAP training is, B Carmichael noted that this was training delivered this last year to classes and is a Wellness Recovery Action Planning.

M Williamson and the Committee praised the fantastic work carried out by Students' Association.

10. 2020/21 SQA NATIONAL 5 AND HIGHER 'EXAM' OUTCOMES

J Grace summarised the paper presented, welcoming the improved outcomes.

11. 2019/20 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR NATIONAL COMPARISON REPORT

S Taylor summarised the paper presented, noting that this continued to confirm the strong College performance. The outcomes for full-time FE learners (relating to c.60% of all College activity) were highlighted. M Williamson noted the strong performance outlined in the report.

12. VP CURRICULUM & ATTAINMENT REPORT

J Grace summarised the report provided. M Williamson noted the number of social media posts regarding student recruitment was positive.

13. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor summarised the Strategic and COVID Risk Registers and noted these were brought to the committee for approval. ST highlighted a number of major reviews happening including SQA and Education Scotland and noted that a new risk had been added to the Strategic Risk Register in respect of this, and that some elements may fall within the scope of L, T&Q.

Impact on risk 3.1. The risk was added the earlier part of the year and now the arrangements will be in place for the remainder of the academic year. Mitigations are in place in the event of another lockdown and the impact on students learning.

A McCusker asked if it would be useful to add in a new risk around the reduction in full-time recruitment and the need for enhanced retention. S Taylor would look at this for consideration by the Audit and Risk and then Board of Management in September.

S Taylor to Progress.

14. LT&Q METRICS

The LT&Q Metrics were noted.

M Williamson asked why the volume of credits for school / college partnership has significantly below the planned ROA target. S Taylor noted this was because of the pandemic and the College being unable to provide the usual range of taster sessions for school pupils before they start their course. S Hewitt added that colleges nationally had also been asked to de-prioritise activity for learners below Senior Phase level. It was noted that this was being challenged at a national level.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting will take place on Wednesday 7 November 2021 at 5.00pm, Microsoft Teams.

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Risk Register to be reviewed to ensure appropriate consideration of coverage of potential impact of increased levels of staff absence due to COVID	S Taylor	21 September 2021

Additional risk to be considered in respect of
Recruitment and Retention.

S Taylor

21 September 2021