BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee
Wednesday 9 February 2022

Draft Confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting held on Wednesday 9 February 2022 at 5.00pm via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT:	M Williamson (Chair)	A McCusker
	G Robertson	S Hewitt
	K Ditcham	S Stirling
	N Dowie	H Honeyman
	S Middleton	N Lowden
	A Monks	S Mill
	MC McInally	B Carmichael

IN ATTENDANCE: S Taylor (Vice Principal / Secretary to the Board)
J Grace (Vice Principal Curriculum & Attainment)
J Roscoe (Director of Curriculum & Attainment)
S Toms (Director of Curriculum & Attainment)
T D'All (PA to Principal & BOM Chair)
L Louch (Sector Development Lead)   J Oliver (Head of Curriculum & Quality)

1. WELCOME

M Williamson welcomed Committee members, welcomed S Toms (Director of Curriculum and Attainment) to her first meeting also welcomed James Oliver (Head of Curriculum & Quality) and Laura Louch (Sector Development Lead) who are presenting on Digital and Cyber Developments.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from J Carnegie.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 November 2021 was approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

All Matters Arising were closed off.

6. **CURRICULUM REPORT – DIGITAL AND CYBER DEVELOPMENTS**

S Hewitt introduced the Digital and Cyber Developments update, summarising key national developments. S Hewitt was 1 of 2 Lead Principals for Digital Tech and over the last 3 – 6 months have focused on 5 key priorities:

- COVID
- Digital Poverty
- Raising Awareness of the College Sector
- Understanding the College Sector Role
- Help the Sector to Upskill & Reskill

The Launch of the Future Technology Partnership in November 2021, chaired by Kate Forbes, was noted. This group had a remit to focus on the Technology Sector with College Development Network (CDN) looking at Digital Skills for the Sector.

S Hewitt stated that various reviews had been undertaken around digital skills needs and that there were great opportunities for our staff and our communities in terms of digital developments, but that there was also a lack of understanding of what the college sector did in terms of supporting digital & technical skills development.

The need to make a concerted effort to be at the table of various groups and reviews being undertaken was noted and S Hewitt identified and confirmed work being progressed to achieve this.

The need to support the uptake of digital subjects within schools and through school / college partnerships was stressed and S Hewitt noted that the sector was now actively promoting this key area to help plug the gaps in young people studying digital and IT subjects.

J Oliver and L Louch showcased some of the digital and IT projects undertaken by D&A College providing an overview on a Cyber Project and Esports Dundee.

[Cyber Security Project](#)
J Oliver summarised the collaboration with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) aimed at embedding Cyber Security into course content for non-computing students through Cyber Security Fundamentals SQA certified programmes.

This had been delivered in bitesize chunks and within the vocational context for the students (in Social Science). J Oliver noted that much of this was sociological in nature, rather than technical and highlighted that the project had been supported by on-going reflection during delivery. It was noted that so far 89 students had engaged with the course, 35 from existing classes as a part of their course framework and 49 from other promotional work.

J Oliver noted that positive and constructive feedback had been received so far, with no significant negatives and 90% (4.5 form 5) satisfaction.

L Louch highlighted that the 2nd Phase of the project, requested by SDS, would extend the work to other colleges across Scotland, with the content delivered in any/all curriculum areas.

Best practice throughout delivery had been shared via MS Teams and meetings held once a month to support developments/enhancements. It was noted that the next stage of the work would be the further bid to SDS to embed Cyber Security Fundamentals in every college with opportunities also now arising to roll this out to businesses and schools.

[ESport Dundee](#)

L Louch explained the role of the College and the potential for D&A College Students in respect of the Esports Arena development in Dundee, due to open in 2025.

L Louch noted that D&A College and Abertay University would provide education pathways in partnership with the Arena and noted that the College was designing a suite of courses where students would learn and gain experience whilst working in Esports.

It was noted that competitive gaming sports was huge worldwide, with audiences of over 9 million and prizes as big $74.2M. Marketing revenue was also growing quickly with opportunities for sponsorship and merchandising expanding. L Louch noted that Esports would also feature as part of the Commonwealth Games this year.

While not as big in Scotland the new Esports Arena in Dundee would be the first registered Esports venue of its type in the UK & Ireland and would drive interest and demand in Esports.

L Louch noted that D&A College were partners with Esports Scotland and working on a range of initiatives. Event and experiences for students before the Arena opened and connections with schools were also being planned. It was noted that D&A were the only college in Scotland to have this type of partnership.

J Oliver highlighted various events developed to expand awareness of Esports and the opportunities this would bring including:

- Online awareness in March 2022 (Esports Scotland will lead). Workshops on setting up Esports Groups.
- April / May – Senior School pupils and Colleges Students competition
- SEL-5 Tournament – November 2022 hosted in Gardyne Theatre with various collaborations and curriculum areas including marketing & event, arts & design.

J Oliver highlighted that D&A College were looking at a range of avenues with BTech Esports Qualifications but noted that these did not cover Level 7 & 8, but work was progressing to create new HN qualifications in Esports.

L Louch noted that the Esports developments covered many different areas and curriculum specialism including: computing, media, web development, hosting, journalism, broadcasting / TV, photography etc. Future opportunities for students included placements and work opportunities, apprenticeships, schools / college events, face to face meets and safe spaces for coaching etc.

J Grace noted that the curriculum review currently being undertaken would raise awareness of these opportunities and ensure that future curriculum offers link into the new opportunities arising.

K Ditcham asked if there were concerns around health and wellbeing in terms of Esports activity. J Oliver noted how important it was having good conduct online and to get in early to work with young people re professionalism in Esports. L Louch noted Esports Scotland were aware of this as a requirement and have a community to monitor poor behaviour and support wellbeing. J Oliver noted that Esports was much more about managing, organising and setting up events, including the development of promotion, marketing, and administration rather than specifically online gaming.

S Middleton enquired about the bigger picture for example promotion to parents and key influencers of young people who may be wary about a focus on online gaming.

J Oliver highlighted the qualifications were not just around game playing but selling Esports holistically – event organisation, project management, personal skills and selling a range of activities - which were lacking in traditional computing style courses and would need to be promoted and explained as developments progressed.

Committee members thanked J Oliver and L Louch for their input and noted how useful it was to understand better the scale and range of opportunities available through the Esports developments.

7. **STUDENTS ASSOCIATION REPORT**

A Monks and N Dowie presented the report provided to the Committee.

A Monks summarised the report highlighting there were 338 class reps and 16 department reps now in place with great representation across the board and safe spaces for discussions through Miro boards for each department (to gather and collate feedback and other information).

N Dowie noted that the 3 Student Association Assistants were working hard, reaching out to students on a peer-to-peer level to check in with students that had missed classes, provide a friendly contact, and signpost and refer on to support as needed.

A Monks noted the continuation of the Attend to Spend project highlighting future plans to expand the offer to include vouchers to use in Hospitality and Hair, Beauty and Complimentary Therapies.

M Williamson congratulated the team on the number of reps involved and noting that the peer-to-peer conversations were a really positive development which would have a great impact on student retention.

H Honeyman noted the evolution of DASA over the last few years acknowledging the energy and passion of the team – huge thank you!

S Taylor noted that the peer-to-peer calls by DASA would also be highlighted as sector leading practice to Education Scotland during the Progress Visit taking place on 15 & 16 February 2022.

S Hewitt noted wider challenges highlighted around retention and noted that the CDN Research Centre were carrying out work from across the Sector looking at why students had not been able to engage. The report from this work would aid discussion at a national level.

8. **LEARNER SATISFACTION SURVEY – NOVEMBER 2021**

S Taylor highlighted the positive student survey feedback report with good levels of engagement and satisfaction. The number of students taking part in the survey was similar to previous years, with overall satisfaction improved and averaging 88% (4.4 out of 5).

S Taylor noted that the report was a high-level summary and that a detaileda breakdown of results at course stream / level is provided to the teams for review and action, with outcomes from this discussed as apart of Stop & Review discussions.

J Grace highlighted comments / themes and actions around the loss of personal connections due to online learning and COVID restrictions, alongside some confusion and negative feedback arising from the use of multiple platforms for learning/assessment.

A McCusker said well done on the feedback results achieved, especially given the impact of COVID and the need for various restrictions to be put in place.

9. **VP CURRICULUM & ATTAINMENT REPORT**

J Grace summarised the report provided highlighting the on-going disruption to the learning experience, particularly in terms of the impact of Omicron before and after Christmas.

J Grace noted the positive outcome from the British Council Inspection and the huge amount of work undertaken to support this. This feedback and inspection outcome were noted.

The College has been successful in 3 out of 4 bids to pilot next generation HN qualifications (HN NextGen). This meant that we could shape the qualifications of the future and have staff involved in the development.

It was noted that recruitment & retention remained as big challenges and a top priority. This included intensive work to achieve credit targets and a focus on the experience on campus for our students.

J Roscoe provided a brief overview of the work of the Learning Experience Group and the Senior Phase Community of Practice Group. The remit, scope and purpose of the Learning Experience Group was to work collaboratively, enhance teaching practice and student-centred learning. The Senior Phase Community of Practice pulled together all those teaching on schools' programmes to share collective skills, experience, concerns and challenges.

S Taylor noted that the Education Scotland Progress Visit would take place (online) between 15 and 17 February 2022 with a team of 3 HMIe, 3 Associate Assessors and one Student team member involved. They would meet with c. 90 staff & students over the 3-day period and verbal feedback would be provided on 17 February with a formal report coming to the June Board of Management Meeting.

M Williamson asked about recruitment retention on a national level and if the College would see national figures. J Grace confirmed we do but these were always a bit out of date, but that feedback from other colleges revealed a similar picture and similar concerns.

J Grace noted that funding challenges may arise if previously withdrawn students (due to COVID) decide to come back to college as they will have used a year of their funding.

A McCusker enquired about the curriculum review and asked about plans to bring details of planned changes etc to the Committee. J Grace noted that the timeline supported initial plans to be provided by teams by the end of March 2022, with work then required to review and refine the various proposals into a clearer plan. It was noted that the challenge was around the activity target to be met if funding is reduced and it was noted that this could only be sustainable if the target is reduced like in 2011.

J Grace noted that the overall approach to prioritise curriculum changes would be on what was right for students and what was right for the local economy, communities and progression into employment or on to further study.

J Grace confirmed that an update on the curriculum review would be brought to the next meeting. This would include plans for changes in 2022/23, 2023/24 & 2024/25. **J Grace to progress.**

10. **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**

S Taylor said (reflecting on the earlier conversations around the recruitment numbers) that there was an increased risk around meeting the regional priorities, resulting in a proposed change in scoring for Risk 1.1. This was agreed and the Committee approved the update of the Strategic Risk Register.

11.   LT & Q Metrics

S Taylor highlighted the usual Metrics for noting.

12.   COVID 19 UPDATE ON LEARNING, TEACHING & ENGAGEMENT OF LEARNERS

S Hewitt intimated that the shift in the narrative around COVID 19 at a national level was both positive and negative as we could see progress being made, but Colleges remained under stricter guidance. Updated college and university guidance had been expected to be made available in January 2022, but this had been put on hold due to the new Strategic Framework expected in February 2022.

The college was starting to plan for the return to fewer (or no) restrictions, particularly in terms of planning and timetabling for 2022/23. This would be developed around a revised plan once the new national strategy was known.

S Hewitt noted that there were several challenges with new ways of working (such as making Teams calls in a traditional working spaces) and stated that this would need a transition period to allow for change and adaptions to take place.

J Grace acknowledge the College was still trying to manage COVID with the current restrictions and for those outside the organisation to understand that colleges had a different set of guidance to the outside world.

Developments in terms of the Ways of Working project and plans for significant student engagement in future working were noted.

13.   DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Wednesday 27 April 2022

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Report to the Committee on Curriculum Review progress/outcomes	J Grace	27 April 2022