

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee

Wednesday 27 August 2025 at 5.00pm **Room K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus** (MS Teams option available)

Minute of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting held on Wednesday 27 August 2025 at 5.00pm in Room K-TO-624 Kingsway campus and via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT:

Neil Lowden	Kelly McIntosh
Derek Smith	Simon Hewitt
Adele Lawrence	Connor Pithie
Stephen Oakley	Laurie O'Donnell
Ged Bell	Colin Smith
Kirstin Marsh	Sally Middleton

IN ATTENDANCE: Steve Taylor (Vice Principal / Secretary to the Board)
Julie Grace (Vice Principal Curriculum and Partnerships)
Jane Roscoe, Lee Lapin & Steph Toms (Directors of Curriculum & Partnerships)
Leann Crichton (Director of Student Experience)
Lauren Simpson (Active Campus Coordinator)

1. WELCOME

K McIntosh chaired in place of N Lowden and welcomed everyone to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Helen Honeyman and Penny Muir.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & CONNECTION

There are no declarations of interest or connection.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 14 May 2025 was approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6. CURRICULUM REVIEW & FUTURE CURRICULUM PLANNING

L Simpson presented an outline of the active campus role and work being undertaken (slides enclosed).

L Simpson noted that the role and activities were supported by funding through Sports Scotland, with this commencing during academic year 2023/24. The range of activities were outlined, including an increase in the number of events supported and the number of students engaging in the wide variety of active events and opportunities available.

L Simpson highlighted the importance of ensuring that events were not just sporting activities and noted work undertaken to ensure that the offer met the needs and interests of all student groups and helped to support students to be retained and to attain their qualifications. This included specific inputs to support LGBTQI students, students with disabilities and students from different ethnicities.

L Simpson highlighted work undertaken to support construction students to better engage in positive conversations and how this had impacted significantly on issues around behaviours, engagement and readiness to learn. It was noted that this work was underpinned by physical activities but also included development around the theme of positive masculinity.

D Smith asked about the impact on the construction students and L Simpson highlighted that the activities supported improved relationship building between students and staff and the identification of areas of common interest. L Simpson noted that the development of relationships and community through engagement in different contexts had been beneficial.

S Oakley asked what the next steps were in promoting an active culture. L Simpson stated that she wanted to further develop the partnerships that she had to support different opportunities and activities.

S Hewitt stated that the creation of the active campus roles and support through Sports Scotland was one of the few areas where there was 100% support from colleges and Principals across Scotland. He noted that this had been incredibly successful at D&A and elsewhere because the approach taken nationally was flexible and not a 'one size fits all'. S Hewitt asked how the different approaches nationally were being shared across the active campus network. L Simpson noted that there was really positive engagement and sharing across the network, with a number of colleges keen to hear about the D&A construction project work.

L O'Donnell asked about the barriers that might hamper work and L Simpson stated that the lack of sports facilities at Kingsway was a challenge as it limited what could be offered, but that flexibility around different activities helped to overcome this.

K McIntosh welcomed the work around positive masculinity and stated that it was good that this was focused on positive work, rather than toxic masculinity. J Grace highlighted that this work also sat alongside broader work within the construction and engineering departments to support positive conversations and attitudes around masculinity.

The Committee thanked L Simpson for her presentation.

7. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

C Pithie and A Lawrence provided an update on student engagement activity, summarising work completed during 2024/25 and outlining the key priorities for 2025/26.

C Pithie noted the outcome of the 2025/26 elections and the change in Team Leadership for DASA (with Sarah Rennie returning to replace Amy Monks who had moved into a new role with SPARQs).

A Lawrence outlined plans to develop the role of the class representative based on a detailed review undertaken in June 2025. This work would progress during 2025/26 with a view to pilots being run for January starts.

It was noted that the Thrive work had supported 282 breakfast club sessions during 2024/25 providing a mixture of free food and socialisation and engagement opportunities. Support for the Thrive programme would continue as the main focus for fundraising in 2025/26, with an initial request issued for the thrive shops and larders and links established with local supermarkets and foodbanks to help stock the food larders.

C Pithie noted the positive impact of the Student led staff Awards in June 2025, highlighting that all award winners and shortlisted entries had received a certificate outlining why student had nominated them

A Lawrence summarised her input to the national STEP (Scotland' Tertiary Enhancement Programme) project work and noted her desire to continue with this through 2025/26.

A wide range of summer activities and events had been organised for new and returning students. This work was a positive benefit for many students that may otherwise have been isolated over the summer or anxious about coming into College.

C Pithie stated that a key focus for the coming year was the review of the class representative arrangements, including the introduction of a new Class rep manual, revised arrangements to better support ESOL and Supported Education students and a simplification of some of the feedback loops.

S Oakley welcomed the update and highlighted how this work was important in aligning College values to the experience of our students. S Oakley asked about steps being taken to ensure that the good work being undertaken was better known across the College. C Pithie noted plans to further develop the social media presence of DASA and to promote events and activities more widely.

The importance and opportunities to align events with students and staff – such as Thrive fundraising events – was noted.

K McIntosh noted comments regarding survey fatigue in terms of planned changes to feedback loops and welcomed this being recognised.

The update and on-going work of DASA was commended by the Committee.

8. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR COMPARISON REPORT

S Taylor summarised the report noting that this related to the 2023/24 student outcomes as the national data on these had been published during the summer.

It was noted that the figures published had been amended to reflect the change made in the performance indicator (PI) measures during 2023/24, with these now excluding early withdrawals. This change had also resulted in the updating of the previous 5 year trend data to ensure that the measures were consistent over that period. These changes had disproportionately impacted on the College (as it traditionally has good levels of early retention).

S Taylor highlighted that D&A was above average for Scotland for all but one of the measures and was the top performing College for full-time HE programmes. The College was also in the top 10 in Scotland for all bar four of the PI measures published.

J Grace noted that further work was progressing on overall retention but noted that the College approach was to aim to support students to attend as long as possible so that they gained some benefits from their College experience. This could impact on the new PI measure but was preferable to 'counselling' students out at an early stage.

S Middleton noted the impact of more aggressive university recruitment on college activity levels and asked if this was impacting on student outcomes. J Grace stated that it was too early to say for definite, but that lower HE recruitment was being offset by higher HE recruitment to there was this possible impact.

The report was welcomed.

9. SPRING 2025 LEARNER SURVEY UPDATE

S Taylor noted that a verbal update had been provided on the provided a verbal update on the spring student survey at the last meeting and that the report now confirmed the outcomes and provided the detail of these.

J Grace highlighted the increase in engagement with the survey and the improved overall satisfaction rating of 90%.

The different levels of participation between academic areas was discussed and it was noted that work was progressing to encourage uptake for those students less likely to undertake the survey. This included further opportunities to engage in survey completion but also ensuring that there were alternative ways for students to provide feedback.

S Oakley asked if there were specific themes emerging from the survey and J Grace advised that these differ between academic teams and that any themes would be discussed as part of the Stop & Reflect meetings. It was noted that there were always comments about the price of food in the canteen.

L Crichton stated that there were also other ways of analysing the survey outcomes by different student groups to help inform action planning as appropriate.

L O'Donnell noted that there were no numbers (only percentages) against completion rates and asked that this be included in future reports. **S Taylor to progress.**

10. SQA EXAMS ATTAINMENT REPORT

S Toms introduced the report and stated that overall attainment had improved in 2024/25, with Nat 5 outcomes +13.5% and Higher outcomes +7.5% compared with the previous year.

S Toms stated that on-going review work was being undertaken in areas where the exam results were not as good but highlighted previous discussions around the need to balance outcomes with offering additional chances for students in a college setting.

N Lowden asked about the numbers presented compared with previous years and S Toms stated that they were reduced overall (due to the removal of Higher Care) but otherwise were broadly comparable. N Lowden asked that the data be shared with the Committee outlining how many students were initially recruited, rather than just those presented for the final exam. This was agreed. **S Toms to progress.**

K McIntosh noted the data provided in respect of estimates vs actuals and asked if there were any specific issues or areas of concern around concordance between these. S Toms noted that this was being reviewed and K McIntosh stated that she was happy to support engagement with council staff to help support local subject networks and expertise sharing where this was helpful. This offer was welcomed.

N Lowden stated that it was positive to see the increase in overall exam pass rates.

11. CURRICULUM & PARTNERSHIPS REPORT

L Crichton provided an update on student recruitment highlighting the challenges around HE recruitment as both local universities had moved to clearing for a significant number of courses. FE level courses had shown strong recruitment.

Early engagement in student registration has helped to support more students than previously to complete their enrolment prior to starting, ensuring that they had access to all systems and information needed before their courses started. Work completed with the Student Services team had also helped to increase the number of student support plans in place prior to the start of the semester. Approximately a third of students with support plans had these in place in advance of commencing their course. Other improvements included a more user friendly booking system for student support.

L Crichton noted the opening of the new community hub facility in Arbroath, bringing a wide range of community groups and services onto the campus to enhance the services available to students and better support services for the wider community. S Hewitt noted that part of the operation of the hub would be as a proof of concept to help inform the new campus employability model.

J Roscoe highlighted recent recognition of staff and students, including the award received by Esther Doig in the Business Team as Young Enterprise Scotland Business Mentor of the Year 2025 and the Administration Academy awards celebration.

N Lowden stated that he wanted to formally record his thanks to the College for stepping in to support school pupils following the collapse of a private training provider to attain their NPA Long Hair Design and Makeup qualifications. N Lowden stated that the College has been extremely supportive and flexible to support the school pupils to achieve.

K McIntosh thanks all contributors for the quality and comprehensiveness of the report.

12. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor noted that the item had been reviewed, and, at this stage, no changes were proposed to the risks delegated to the Committee. This was approved.

13. LT&Q METRICS

S Taylor highlighted the key metrics for noting, highlighting the updating to the PI trend details as discussed earlier in the meeting.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 12 November 2025, Room K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Student Survey completion to note rates and numbers completing	S Taylor	12 November 2025
Data on day one outcome for Higher and Nat 5 candidates to be shared with the Committee	S Toms	12 November 2025