

**Paper 1**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors held on  
Wednesday 8 October 2025 on campus**

**Present:**

Gary Husband	Chair, Board of Directors
Andy McGoff	Member, Board of Directors
Jane Grant	Member, Board of Directors
Howell Davies	Member, Board of Directors
Margaret McLean	Member, Board of Directors
Alyson Tobin	Member, Board of Directors
Stuart Moir	Member, Board of Directors
Iain Reid	Member, Board of Directors
Susanne Schulz	Member, Board of Directors
George Currie	Support Staff Member, Board of Directors
Hala Kurdi	Student Member, Board of Directors
Roddy Henry	Principal

**In attendance:**

Kirsty Adamson	Depute Principal
Mary Slater	Director of Operations
Ingrid Earp	Board Secretary
Jamie Graham	Observer

**Apologies:**

Aislinn Wood, George Reid, Zoi Zompopoulou and Colin Prichard

Before the meeting proper started the Board received a presentation from the Business Development Manager, Tarzem Shoker on business development activities he has undertaken to date and plans for the future.

Agenda item	
<b>Part A – Opening Business</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies and Declaration of Interests</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies as above. In particular Hala Kurdi was welcomed to her first meeting as President of the Student Association and Student Board Member. There were no declaration of interests and apologies were noted as above.</p>
<b>2/3.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meetings (paper 1) and Action and Decision (A&amp;D) Log (paper 1a)</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting on 12 June 2025 and 3 July 2025 were accepted as an accurate record.</p> <p>The updates to the Action Log were noted accordingly.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>All matters arising were covered in the A&amp;D log.</p>

## Part B – Items for Approval

### 5. **Strategic Objectives - Priorities and KPIs for 2025/26** (Paper3)

The Principal said that the College is now in the last year of the current strategic plan and moving forward there will be a focus on the curriculum and the changes needed there as well as increasing commercial income.

The Depute Principal informed the Board that big decisions are required regarding the core curriculum with a drive to improve efficiency on delivery. There are currently a number of staff on small FTE contracts and the number of students on SWAP and the Associate Degree programme courses is falling year on year. A Member agreed that this trend seemed to be occurring elsewhere with younger students seeming to prefer more vocational courses. A number of scenarios will be worked through with a view to a proposed future curriculum. The decision has already been made to continue with the curriculum as is for 2026/27, a conversation has been held with SFC re the curriculum transformation programme however it is more difficult to implement that mode of transformation and delivery at NAC. A new curriculum will be in place for 2027/28.

A set of principles: sustainable, meets demand, affordable and utilising existing staff skills as much as possible, will be applied to any curriculum review.

The Depute Principal reported that the College has been in touch with LANTRA re possible collaboration on courses with them. A Member suggested also talking to SRUC and the Depute Principal said that discussions were also being held with UHI.

Grant funding is an option but these are reducing funds with more demand than ever for them. Lottery funding is being explored and discussions are ongoing with QMU re other ways to work with them and maintain the associate places.

With regards to the FOLA and AAA courses the Depute Principal said that these courses were hugely rewarding for those undertaking them and the newly appointed Education Projects Officer is beginning to look at increasing income from these.

The Director of Operations then spoke about increasing commercial income informing Board that, at present, the College is on course to meet international targets with positive conversations ongoing with Wisconsin. Events income is proving to be more challenging however the relationship with the new wedding planners is looking more positive. A Members asked what the wedding planners were looking for in their engagement with NAC. The Director of Operations said that the College is essentially only providing the venue, the planners provide everything else. The Principal did note that some investment will be required to make the venue more attractive to those seeking to hold their wedding there such as in the drawing room and crypt and outside in the Italian Garden for photo opportunities.

A Member suggested looking to all the people who walk their dogs in the grounds and make provision for them such as a coffee truck and another Member urged that clients who would prove to be repeat business would be a good focus and that as soon as data is available it would be useful to dig into that as, at the moment, it is all in the abstract.

A Member asked about the piece of recent consultancy work the College commissioned re the catering/hospitality side of the College. The Principal said that a number of recommendations had been received with a lot of them acted on already and beginning to make an impact.

	<b>Decision BoD01:B5 Board approved the Strategic Objectives and KPI paper and agreed that the curriculum be updated for 2027/28.</b>
6.	<p><b>LRPA – Unison</b> (Paper 4)  The Principal informed Board that this is the copy Unison have agreed to other than the reference to ‘Board of Management of the College’ has been removed to make the agreement clearer. The Principal anticipates that Unison will agree to this change.</p> <p>There being no questions the Board agreed to the LRPA.</p> <p><b>Decision BoD01:B6 Board approved the LRPA with Unison as presented to them.</b></p>
7.	<p><b>Finance and Resources (F&amp;R) Committee Annual Report</b> (Paper 5)  The paper has previously been discussed and recommended for Board approval at the most recent F&amp;R meeting.</p> <p><b>Decision: BoD01:B7 Board approved the F&amp;R Committee Annual Report.</b></p>
8.	<p><b>Annual Health and Safety Report</b> (Paper 6)  The Director of Operations talked through the paper noting that it had been discussed and recommended for Board approval at the most recent F&amp;R meeting. She noted that some statistics may look on the high side however it should be noted that often low numbers of staff and students are involved.</p> <p>A Members asked about mental health training and the Board was told that the College has Mental Health First Aiders in place and they are named on the Health and Safety notices around the College.</p> <p><b>Decision BoD01:B8 Board approved the annual Health and Safety Report.</b></p>
<b>Part C – For Discussion</b>	
9.	<p><b>2024/25 Outturn</b> (Paper 7)  The Director of Operations spoke to the paper which had also been discussed at the most recent F&amp;R meeting. She noted that the figures had moved in a positive direction with much of this due to an increase in summer schools. The College is expecting a surplus of £207k for 2024/25 which includes a sum of money for Covid ‘consequentials’ of £150k.</p> <p>Board noted this as a good result in a challenging environment.</p>
10.	<p><b>Budget 2025/26</b> (Paper 8)  The Director of Operations drew the Board’s attention to some variances from the budget which was approved. The income figure from QMU has decreased with a lower amount of students on that programme than forecast and there are also fewer students in the residences than forecast. There have been some changes in staff costs due to the resignation of a member of staff and the pay award for support staff has yet to be agreed (this will be backdated to 1 Sept 2025).</p> <p>A Member asked about the level of confidence the senior team had in the College’s cyber security arrangements and the Principal said that this is one of the objectives of the ICT officer this academic year.</p>

<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Heads of Terms</b> (Verbal)</p> <p>The SIM (M McLean) talked through the progress to date with this item, noting that this had slowed over the summer holidays. There is currently a bit of a stalemate between the legal companies of the College and the Trust around the status of the first Trust deed. The SIM is working on resolving this.</p> <p>A Member noted that the Trust would appear to be spending approx. 20% of its income on legal fees which is relatively high although it was acknowledged that this may still not fund a significant amount of legal time.</p> <p>The Board thanked the SIM, and noted their appreciation, for all her work on this item.</p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Depute Principal's Report</b> (Paper 9)</p> <p>The report was taken as read and there were no questions raised.</p>
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Director of Operations Report</b> (Paper 10)</p> <p>The Director of Operations drew out some of the points in the paper. The support staff pay award is stalled as agreement from Scottish Government to fund the shortfall has not yet come through.</p> <p>For job evaluation - this is ongoing with job descriptions to be updated using a new template (not yet received). A Member asked about the number of roles to be evaluated at the College and the Principal replied that the College actually has more roles than people in post as the exercise is backdated over several years.</p>
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>Principal's Report</b> (Verbal)</p> <p>The Principal reiterated that the current year is the last one of the strategic plan currently in place and that, being aware of all the pressures, the aim is to look ahead to the next five years with the next strategic plan. The Board Development Day in November will be used to look ahead, examine what some of the challenges might be and consider the operating model of the College. Given the breadth of experience and knowledge that the Board has amongst its Members it is anticipated that this can be drawn on to develop options for the future.</p> <p>42% of the College income is from SFC, lower than other colleges, however the number of students is relatively small. 20% of income comes from international business which is a big positive and something to be built on.</p> <p>The recent Audit Scotland report into College finances has been published and circulated to Board and has received media attention. Key recommendations from that were that colleges may need to deliver less to remain sustainable and that adult education and the needs of students have changed significantly.</p>
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p><b>Chair's Report</b> (Verbal)</p> <p>The Chair updated the Board on some of the work he has been doing nationally on college governance and a new piece of work he has been commissioned to take part in around the Code of Good Governance for HE.</p> <p>Interviews had recently been held for new Board Members and David Peace has been appointed (subject to the necessary checks) with ratification of that appointment to be at December Board.</p>

	<p>Members were also asked to read the SFC report recently published around expectations of College and University governance if they have not already done so (link previously circulated by the Board Secretary).</p> <p>A recent report has also been published by Colleges Scotland around the challenging financial situation of Colleges with some colleges running out cash sooner rather than later. Colleges Scotland are improving their advocacy of the sector although there are lots of competing demands on government funding. A Member suggested that colleges could indicate impact by involving their local communities more and emphasising the role in local delivery.</p>
16.	<p><b>Chair's Review</b> (Paper11) The Chair left the room for this item.</p> <p>The SIM took the paper as read and thanked those who had completed the evaluation but at a return rate of 67% there was scope to improve on this next year. The evaluation that was received, was, on the whole, positive with a successful working relationship with the Principal being apparent.</p> <p>Some of the review discussion had been around the Chair freeing up some of their time by others on the Board undertaking particular activities, bearing in mind the Code of Good Governance and the College's Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>There being no questions the Chair returned to the room.</p>
<b>Part D – For Information</b>	
17.	<p><b>Principal's Review</b> (Paper 12) The Chair had no additional comments to make and thanked the Principal for his leadership of the College.</p>
18.	<p><b>Risk Register Update</b> (Paper 13) This item and the Board's appetite for risk will be reviewed at the upcoming Board Development Day.</p>
19.	<p><b>Board Member Responsibilities</b> (Paper 14) This paper, from the Board Secretary, reminded everyone of their responsibilities as College Board Members and Trustees of a Charity with links to the relevant websites such as OSCR and the Standards Commission.</p>
20.	<p><b>Board Secretary's Update (Training)</b> (Paper 15) The paper laid out the training available to Members and requested that Members inform the Board Secretary when any training has been undertaken. If a Member feels that the training available has not met their requirements they should pick this up with the Board Secretary.</p>
21.	<p><b>Approved Policies</b> (Paper 16) The paper noted the policies approved at the recent round of Committee meetings.</p>
22.	<p><b>Approved Minutes</b> (Paper 17) Noted.</p>

<b>23.</b>	<b>Any other business</b> The Depute Principal noted that the Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP) is due for submission before the December Board meeting so will be circulated to Board by email.
<b>18.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> The date of the next meeting is Thursday 4 October 2025. A light buffet will be available and a presentation/discussion item will start at 4.00pm.