

Paper 1

**Minutes of meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee
held on 20 September 2023 on Campus**

Present

Stuart Moir	Chair
Gary Husband	Board Member
Simon Hoult	Board Member
Denise McNulty	Teaching Staff Board Member
Roddy Henry	Principal

In attendance

Kirsty Adamson	Depute Principal
Ingrid Earp	Board Secretary (Minutes)
Annette Miller	Curriculum Manager

Apologies

Marlene Gill

#	Agenda item
Part A – Opening Business	
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Chair) The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting and noted that it was Denise McNulty and Simon Holt's first L&T meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received as noted above and the meeting was confirmed as quorate.</p> <p>There were no Declaration of Interests advised.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting (Paper 1) The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 May 2023 were approved.</p>
2a.	<p>Action and Decision Log (Paper 1a) Action around the wording of the Assessment and Verification Policy remains open.</p> <p>Action re safeguarding training for Board Members remains open, but it is likely that the Board Secretary will direct Members to the online training provided by CDN.</p> <p>The Corporate Parenting Plan is not due for revision until 2024.</p>
3.	<p>Matters arising There were no matters arising out with the agenda for the meeting and the action log.</p>
Part B – For Decision	
4.	<p>Annual Committee Report to Board (Paper 2) This is a descriptive report about the activities of the Committee over the previous year (2022-23) and which includes decisions made and meeting attendance figures.</p>

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	<p>The Terms of Reference which were in place for 2022-23 are those referred to in this paper and which the Committee was working with.</p> <p>As the Terms of Reference have changed it was agreed that these would be talked through at the start of the next meeting so all members were clear what they covered.</p> <p>Action: LT01:B4 Board Secretary to add Terms of Reference to agenda for next meeting.</p> <p>Decision LT01:B4 Committee approved the report for submission to Board.</p>
<p>Part C – For discussion</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Student Representative Council (SRC) Report (verbal) James Kernaghan and Lauren Smith have been appointed as the two Student Board Members. It was noted that everyone is very much looking forward to working with them.</p> <p>All places on the SRC have been filled with some posts being shared as a result of the level of interest which is great to see.</p> <p>Action: LT01:C5 Board Secretary to check with Curriculum Manager student timetables re availability for future L&T meetings.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Depute Principal's Report (Paper 3) The Depute Principal talked through her report. Regarding staffing, it is anticipated that a Resident Assistant will take up the role shortly which will be a very welcome move. Since the time of writing, and as noted in item 5 the SRC nominations are now complete with lots of enthusiasm from students.</p> <p>The new management information system (MIS) is generally going well with progression to using it for reporting and analytics being the next step. Going forward the FES audit will also be done through the system which will be much more efficient than the current way of doing it. This work and the collaboration with Borders College is now a case study on the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) web pages.</p> <p>The development of existing projects was noted and the Depute Principal was able to inform the Committee that the applications submitted to Midlothian Council's employability fund had both been successful.</p> <p>Work is beginning to update and improve the Adult Achievement Awards (AAA) with the level 5 award being prepared for credit rating.</p> <p>The HMI report has been received which is positive and will be reported to, and discussed at, Board on the 28th September.</p> <p>A Member noted that this was a really good report with progress and developments taking place that are on a size and scale that is positive but manageable.</p> <p>The Chair commended the Depute Principal and her team on the report and particularly the projects that are being developed which indicate cohesion and synergy across the College and within the Region.</p> <p>Decision: LT01:C6 The Committee approved the report.</p>

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7.	<p>Self-Evaluation Report (Paper 4) For context the Committee was informed that this report is looking back over the previous (2022-23 academic year) and notes achievements and progression against the Outcome Agreement for that year. It was also noted that both the Depute Principal and the Curriculum Manager both joined the College part way through this year so were picking up a plan and Outcome Agreement they did not have input into which presented a number of challenges.</p> <p>For student enrolments the pressures of the Covid pandemic were still present and Scottish Widening Access Programme (SWAP) enrolments continued to decline.</p> <p>The credit threshold for 2022-23 was met and there is clearly demand for the Rural Skills offering which could be for a number of reasons with progression to level 5 in a course still required.</p> <p>Retention rates continue to be good and although the Prep for FE course had a high (50%) dropout rate (a number of those students faced particular challenges) those that did stay on the course are all still at the College this year (2023-24). There could be an argument made to not run the Prep for FE course however for the students that were retained and completed, the progression was good – a discussion to be had around this, it isn't always about the statistics.</p> <p>A curriculum review will be carried out this year with a deeper analysis of the outcomes and reasons for them being part of the review.</p> <p>Some students have not officially been resulted as a result of Action Short of a Strike (ASOS) however there has been no impact on the progression of any students.</p> <p>Successful completion rates against the sector benchmark for full time FE were particularly good.</p> <p>The Depute Principal noted that significant effort had gone into improving tracking and monitoring over 2022-23 which was proving to be beneficial.</p> <p>The Committee commended the Depute Principal, the Curriculum Manager and the whole team for such a good report. The Curriculum Manager noted that those that do not fully complete are recorded as only 'partial success' and for many of those students this does not reflect what they have actually achieved.</p> <p>The Committee commended the Depute Principal, the Curriculum Manager and the whole team for such a good report and recommend it to the Board. This report is clearly going in the right direction and the team are putting in place measures to meet and deal with the challenges they may face.</p> <p>Decision: L&T01:C7 the Committee recommended the report to Board.</p>
8.	<p>Draft Outcome Agreement (Paper 5) The Principal talked through the draft agreement noting that there is new guidance for the production of the Outcome Agreement allowing for more concise submissions. It was noted that this is still a draft with a feedback meeting with the Outcome Agreement manager due to take place shortly.</p>

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	<p>The Committee couldn't endorse the Agreement given its draft status and the unknown nature of the potential changes. It was agreed that if there are any significant changes the Committee will be informed prior to the paper going to Board.</p> <p>Action: L&T01:C8 Principal to share revised Agreement with Committee, if there are significant changes, before submitting to Board.</p>
9.	<p>Recruitment, Retention, Attainment and Progression Report (Paper 6) The Depute Principal reported that recruitment had gone well for the new AY with 66 students in total which is line with the previous year.</p> <p>To aid progression for 23/24 the University of Edinburgh, the Open University and Napier University have been invited to speak with students and a memorandum of understanding is being drawn up with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to regularly visit the College and provide career guidance.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report and that it was exactly what the Committee wanted to see.</p>
10.	<p>Student Attendance Policy (Verbal) The Depute Principal reported that the revised Policy will now come to the November L&T meeting. This is because a new process regarding absence reporting is being trialled and time is required to see how that is going to work before changing the Policy. So far it seems to be working well and considerable time has been taken to explain the process to the students. The aim is to be able to identify absences early and intervene early to prevent further absence and work with the student on solutions that work for them.</p>
11.	<p>HMI Report (paper 7) This was taken as read and will be presented, and discussed, at Board. Generally, it is a very positive report with excellent feedback and only three areas of improvement identified. The HMI will present the report to Board and there will be a Q&A session with them and the Board Members.</p>
12.	<p>Risk Register – L&T (paper 8) All the risks pertinent to the L&T Committee are green which is very positive. The Chair asked if the Committee felt the risk description was accurate and that the risks covered everything that they should.</p> <p>Decision: L&T01:C12 The Committee agreed that the risks were what they need, and expect, to see as a Committee at the present time.</p>
13.	<p>KPIs and Strategic Objectives (Verbal) These will sit alongside the Outcome Agreement and the Self-Evaluation for 23-24 presented to the Committee next September. The Principal told the Committee that overall student success rates and student satisfaction rates are well above the sector norms so setting targets can be a challenge. The Committee noted that although targets were important there was more to success than just meeting targets.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>
14.	<p>Quality Update (paper 9) The Curriculum Manager told the Committee that the team is working closely with SQA and the quality manager there, providing support to staff when they are facing something new.</p>

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	<p>The Committee asked about the impact of the ongoing pay dispute and the action short of a strike (ASOS) that is taking place. Anything before ASOS has been submitted and there are some student results still out standing because of this.</p> <p>The Committee noted the update.</p>
<p>Part D – For Information</p>	
<p>15.</p>	<p>Curriculum and Student Experience Committee Minutes (Paper 10) The meeting had only been held the previous day so the Minutes will be available at the next L&T meeting.</p>
<p>Part E – Closing business</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>Any other business ASOS The Committee asked the Principal about the more detailed impact of ASOS. The Principal replied that hopefully the matter will be resolved shortly with as little impact on students as possible. To date there has been little impact at the College, with some colleges impacted much more than others. It was also noted that the lecturing staff at the College are boycotting the upcoming awards ceremony.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>Dates of next meeting The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 2.00pm on Campus.</p>