

#### Item 07b

#### **GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE**

#### **LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES**

## Minute of the meeting held on Wednesday, 04 May 2022 at 5pm via Microsoft Teams

#### 1. Sederunt:

Dr. Marion Allison (Chair);

Dr. Elaine Clafferty (Vice Chair);

Derek Smeall (Principal);

Ian Patrick;

Stephen Birrell;

Michael O'Donnell;

Heather McNeil;

Lauren McLaren (Student Association President) and James McGunnigle (Student Association President).

#### In Attendance:

Robin Ashton (Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality Enhancement); Peter Brown (Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum); John Gallagher (Head of Quality); and Debbie Friel, Committee Coordinator (for recording purposes).

## 2. Apologies

Linda Ellison (Secretary to the Board of Management); and Colm Breathnach.

#### 3. Terms of Reference

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with nine members in attendance.

## 4. Declarations of Interest

#### a. Interest

No declarations of interest were received

## 5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 2 March 2022

Members accepted the minute as an accurate record of the business conducted at the meeting held on 2 March 2022.

## 6a. Matters arising from the Minute of Previous Meeting held on 2 March 2022.

#### Item 09 - Code of Learner Behaviour

I Patrick stated that he had expected the action noted from Item 09 – "Develop a separate Disciplinary Procedure" to have been referenced within the Action Log.



## 6b. Learning and Teaching Action Log as at May 2022

R Ashton assured members that Item 09 would be added to the Action Log.

The Committee Chair requested that a meeting date be organised for the 'deep dive' in Learning and Teaching data and for this be added to the Action Log.

## 7. Risk Management Update

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality informed members that the Strategic/College Risk Register was considered annually by the Learning and Teaching Committee members. He drew members attention to the table listed on page two of the report and provided a detailed overview of the key movement in risks which could impact on the College's ability to deliver its strategic ambitions.

Members suggested that further recognition should be given within the Risk Register in the following areas:

- a) Sustainable Funding in relation to the Scottish Government funding settlement and the flat cash in the current environment.
- b) The term "Brexit" is removed from the Register, and the wider effects from this considered such as the wider economic transformation, locally and nationally, i.e. cost of living etc.
- c) Risk Ref No 2, "GKC Identity" (Appendix 1 of the report) queried if there should be a wider effect on the impact of risk noted under the section of 'Effect'. She added that the actual effects were much wider than what had been listed and that there was a reputation risk and in addition, a lack of recognition from influencers.
- Dr. E Clafferty queried point 5 on page 3 of the report and asked for an update on the Cladding issue. The Principal advised that the College had commissioned an independent surveyor to conduct a full investigation, additionally all panels had since been secured, however long term servicing would be ongoing.

Dr. E Clafferty queried Category 10, within Appendix B, she asked for assurance that the Fire Marshal/Wardens training had been completed as this was due by 18 March 2022.R Ashton confirmed that he would check with the Health and Safety Manager that this had been closed off and would report back to members.

Following a question from M O'Donnell on the Crisis Communication Training referred to on Page 1 of the report. R Ashton emphasised that the training undertaken was primarily based around any potential cyber-attacks on the College and the practicalities of communication with staff and stakeholders.

The Chair accentuated that Risk No 10 on the register referencing Recruitment and Retention looked to have remained stable. However, she queried this and referenced this against Point 9 on the cover report which indicated a more unstable situation. R Ashton agreed with the Chair that this risk would undoubtably increase once the College had the evidence of the year-end retention figure.



The Principal highlighted that although the College applications had decreased, the College was much more proactive with the offers and confirmation of places. This does not however mitigate against this risk.

A lengthy discussion followed in relation to applications against offers and the concerns surrounding early withdrawals. R Ashton spoke of the efforts being made with the College 'keep warm' activities and tracking of attendance and measures being taken in order improve retention figures.

R Ashton stated that he would pass on the collective views and opinions received to the Risk Management Committee for their review.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

#### 8. 2021-22 Curriculum Delivery and Student Activity Update

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement spoke to the contents of the report. He informed members that the College, in Block 3, had brought more teaching activity back on campus and increased timetabled classes with levels of activity at 60% of pre Covid levels.

R Ashton summarised the credit position of the College and reported that there was a slight shortfall due to higher-than-average withdrawal levels. He drew members attention to Appendix B of the report and outlined that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had identified a prioritisation of target achievement, with colleges being asked to meet their core and ESF targets as a priority. He continued to highlight the resource implications and explained the potential clawback implication of credits for the College.

He informed members that Education Institute Scotland (EIS), following a ballot on 5 April, had announced that they were taking strike action across 14 days in April and May. Additionally, he drew members attention to Appendix A of the report, providing details of the letter received by the College from EIS.

R Ashton advised member that EIS, in their letter, had stated that information on assessments/results would be withheld. He further explained that the College had written to all learners informing them that that for continuing students their place for the next academic session would be guaranteed regardless of incomplete units. Additionally, for leavers, the College was working with SQA and Universities to consider ways to complete learners qualifications.

Dr. E Claffery, queried if the Universities were aware that additional support would be needed for some students. R Ashton explained that SWAP were having this type of discussion directly with the Universities for their courses.

Dr. E Clafferty further queried, paragraph two, page 6 of Appendix B, she asked if the College could exploit the additional discretion in delivering short courses. R Ashton explained that this was an option but the credits income would need to outweigh the additional administration burden.



The Principal drew members attention to the date of the SFC Letter (21 March 2022) and explained that whilst it appeared that much flexibility has been given, it was very far into the academic year in order to make full use of these flexibilities.

L McLaren thanked the Vice Principal for his continued support and for the mitigating efforts being put in place by the College. She added that this was very reassuring and spoke on behalf of the Student Association and the students.

M O'Donnell referenced the 93% of credit target delivery. He questioned if the College had taken account of the withdrawal rates and measured this against the overall target, how much, he asked, of the overall target would have been achieved. R Ashton confirmed that this had been looked at, additionally, the difference between our early retention figure for this year against that of previous years and the impacts of this. He highlighted the challenges were two-fold, learners not turning up fully enrolled and then a higher withdrawal levels of those students who had attended. M O'Donnell stated that it was helpful to know the information for the coming academic year and understood that it was a very challenging operating environment. Additionally, it was helpful to know that Senior Management have looked at the figures for comparisons.

The Principal added that the College did analyse its data and historically it showed that it was evident that there was a higher risk of students not returning to college after the October break. He then explained how the College would look to mitigate this by heightening engagement activities prior to the break. He also added that the difference in reasonings between a student staying or leaving the College was extremely minute.

H McNeil queried why Glasgow Kelvin College had a cohort of 80% of staff on strike compared to other colleges who had a significantly smaller percentage. The Principal explained that this high percentage is historic with the College, he noted that it despite this, the College has established a good relationship locally with both the teaching and support unions.

Following a question from the Chair on the possibility of a resolution being reached. The Principal assured members that further meetings had been scheduled and that every effort was being made to come to an agreement.

The Chair thanked members for their contribution.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.



## 9. Education Scotland Progress Visit

The Head of Quality informed members that Education Scotland (ES) would carry out a Virtual Progress Visit (PV) at the College on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Thereafter the Senior Management Team expected to receive feedback on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022. J Gallagher explained that the PVs provided external evaluation of progress against actions for improvement within the Enhancement Plan. He added that the PVs were held annually and planned collaboratively between the College, ES and the Scottish Funding Council.

He summarised the five main themes that the PV would focus on and noted that a series of meetings had been arranged to facilitate discussions between the inspectorate and selected members of staff/learners. He drew members attention to the schedule, attached as Appendix 1 and invited comment or questions.

Following a question from Ian Patrick, R Ashton advised that no timescales had been given on when the report would be finalised. He said that in past times Ian Beach, HMIe, had presented the feedback from the report to the Learning and Teaching Committee and had indicated that he would be happy to do so again.

Members agreed that the presentation should be scheduled for the Board of Management meeting in August 2022, if possible.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the reports.

#### 10. SCQF Partnership – College Credit Rating Review

The Head of Quality informed members that in February 2022, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP) reviewed the College's processes and arrangements related to its SCQF programmes. J Gallagher highlighted that following the review process, the SCQFP had provided the College with the attached feedback report (Appendix A). Overall, the SCQFP recognised that much work had been undertaken by the College in terms of the development of new credit rating guidelines and a stronger process to support programmes at the end of their credit rating lifecycle in 2021. However, the report included some minor action points which would further fine tune the processes.

He added that the minor action points were currently being addressed and a return would be made to the SCQF by the 18th May 2022.

The Chair thanked J Gallagher for his comprehensive report.

Dr. E Clafferty queried that the action plan was incomplete and asked who would be responsible for its completion and return. J Gallagher advised that the College would report back to the SCQF on the outstanding actions this month.

Dr. E Clafferty requested the completed return be brought back to the next scheduled Learning and Teaching Committee meeting in order to sign this item off.



H McNeil asked for assurance that the College Internal Quality procedure had been road tested and internal quality checks done prior to going live. J Gallagher highlighted that there had been no new credit rating programme that had gone through the new process, so unfortunately there was no opportunity to test the system. He added that he was hopeful to expand the opportunity to do so in the new session, from August with some live courses.

The Chair asked if this item could be brought back to a future Learning and Teaching Committee to progress on the updates.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

## 11. Students' Association Update

The Student Association Presidents spoke to the content of the report that sought to provide members with an update in relation to various areas of activity in 2021-22.

Areas highlighted included:

- Student Association clubs and societies;
- Student Executive Committee update:
- Meet the Manager Event; (postponed and would be rescheduled);
- Class Representative Meetings scheduled; and
- National Union of Students Small grant scheme Think Positive Campaign.

L McLaren summarised on the forthcoming Student Association elections for academic year 2022-23 and that this would be promoted via M/S Teams, social media and email.

The Chair thanked the SA Presidents for their contributions throughout the academic session. She noted that both presidents had been very positive, proactive and informative in representing their colleagues and had brought value to the Committee.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

## 12. SFC Indicative College Credit Allocations for AY 2022-23

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement spoke to the contents of the report. He informed members that the SFC had published indicative college funding allocations for AY 2022-23. He added that sections 17 to 27 in the attached SFC publication (Appendix B) sets out SFC intentions for Credit activity across Scotland's colleges.

R Ashton requested members to note two key points, firstly that the College expected its credit target to fall to around 80,000 credits. Secondly, If the College fell within 2% of its target, it was likely that there would be no immediate clawback on funds. He added that the College were still waiting on the credit guidance which would provide further detail as to the allocation of credits for each course.



Additionally, he highlighted that at sector level funding had a significant reduction of 3.5%.

H McNeil queried if the tolerance of 2% was applicable to Universities. R Ashton said that he would assume that it would be applicable for both.

Following a question from Dr. E Clafferty in relation to new Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) opportunities. R Ashton highlighted that there has been a reduction in FAs over the past two years. He highlighted that the region had been given an increased FA target this academic session which the College continued to actively promote with the local schools.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

#### 13. Recruitment Update

The Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum informed members that as of the 25 April 2022, the College had received 9421 applications resulting in 4454 live offers. He added that of the 4454 live offers the College had received 3196 acceptances.

He provided members with an overview of the applications received and the live offers and acceptances in comparison to the values from April 2020. He continued to explain that the overall 2022-23 admissions cycle had an almost identical data trend to that of April 2021. P Brown continued to highlight that the increase in offers over the last two years was a direct contribution to the new admissions processes and approaches. He advised that the streamlined application process and the reduction incorporating interviews resulted in a quicker turnaround application compared to previous years. He asked that members be aware due to the industrial strike action taking place by EIS, a significant risk impacts on keep warm activities, applicant interviews and the processing time on offers, all would have a negative impact on 2022-23 admissions cycle.

H McNeil commented that the work undertaken by the College in terms of the admission processes was hugely valuable and she felt that the general trend for applications and offers was a positive one.

Dr. E Claffery queried the high number of learners in August 2021 who did not attend any classes and asked if there were any lessons learned from this that would make the College more confident this year in its processes. P Brown explained that the College had endeavoured to incorporate a more statistical approach to the admissions process. Additionally, incorporated onsite keep warm events which included a College and classroom tour, meeting the lecturer and fellow learners and allowing the applicants to be more comfortable and familiar with the College environment. This also provided an indication to the College of the learners commitment and intention to start their course.

Following a question from M O'Donnell on the downwards trend of applications and the possibility of additional Marketing support, P Brown clarified that the College had a very little marketing budget in this area and in the past the College has experienced relatively little impact from those efforts. Additionally, there was huge competition with the regional colleges due to the commonality of courses on offer.



P Brown added that there was some scope to explore new marketing approaches, on engagement with students, with a new website being developed for next year.

D Smeall added that in terms of the statistics of learners not appearing the analytical approach is critical when looking at this. He added that it is understood that at this time there are ample job vacancies and learners, particularly in non-advanced courses, this could possibly be a contributing factor as to a percentage of those learners. Additionally, he added that he agreed with M O'Donnell that the common approach to business is marketing, however, he stated that it is less clear in education how impactable marketing is. However, the College recognises that reputation is a huge factor and that there needs to be a fine balance.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

## 14. Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement informed members that the report produced by Professor Kenneth Muir provided a detailed overview of the proposed changes to Scottish Education, with particular focus on Curriculum for Excellence and School Education.

R Ashton explained that the recommended changes are far reaching and suggested major structural change to the educational landscape of Scotland. He continued that the overall report and the Scottish Government response had made little reference to college education and of any changes which would directly impact on colleges.

He noted that a key point emphasised by Prof. K Muir was that all stakeholders would have the opportunity to debate and challenge emerging suggestions and it would be important for the sector to engage with this at any early stage.

The Chair stated that the SCQF had recently announced that all qualifications at level 6 would be considered on UCAS applications. She added that it would be interesting to see if this has been noted as some of the outcomes.

I Patrick queried if the Scottish Government had given their response. R Ashton advised that the Scottish Government had gone through the report and had noted where they had indicated areas as fully or partially accepted.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

## 15. Pathways from Poverty Report

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement informed members that the report sought to highlight the central role that Scotland's colleges play in tackling poverty and in creating a more inclusive society. Additionally, the report detailed the impact of Covid-19 on Scotland's economy and highlighted that colleges had proactively sought to reduce the impact of this on those already most vulnerable to poverty and to support the well-being of our learners.



Dr E Clafferty noted that the report mentioned several times of an 'Open College' and asked if this was in comparison to that of the 'Open University' and imaged that form of level. R Ashton noted that this was one of their themes and perhaps was more of a speculative concept rather than a worked through proposal.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

## 16. Education Scotland Review of Foundation Apprenticeship provision in Scotland

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement informed members that Education Scotland had undertaken a review of Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) between March 2020 and November 2021. He highlighted that the attached report considered a range of aspects across delivery of FA programmes and student outcomes. He noted that the report highlighted examples of good practice and areas where improvement could be made.

I Patrick queried the College's experience with FA statistics. R Ashton explained that it was very much dependant on the programme but was clear that maintaining engagement from school pupils on a two-year programme proved to be extremely challenging. He added that gradually one-year programmes had been developed and overtime most programmes would move in that direction. He added that the College would look to consolidate its FA offer and move out of areas where poor retention had been recognised.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

## 17. Wider Harms Report

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement informed members that the Scottish Government published the attached report which considered the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on student learning, mental health and wellbeing, staff and CLD volunteers, alongside wider social and financial effects. The report brought together views from University, College and CLD representatives along with relevant survey data.

The Principal highlighted that the report had been written by the Scottish Government, knowing the importance and highlighting the wider harms with mental health and wellbeing impacting students. He added that members should be aware that the same Scottish Government has disgracefully removed the funding for this area. He assured members that the College would continue to campaign on this matter and that J Vincent, Principal of Clyde College, was the College Sector's lead representative for mental health.

The Principal, following on from a question from H McNeil, assured members that the College had fully ensured that all relevant resources were being diverted to assist those students who had/is suffering the impacts from COVID-19.

The Chair thanked R Ashton for his report.



Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

#### 18. GTC Scotland Consultation Outcomes

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement spoke to the report and summarised on the outcomes from the recent General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) consultation on proposals relating to the registration rules for College lecturers.

R Ashton highlighted that following the closure of the consultation on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the GTCS commissioned an external independent researcher to review the responses to the consultation. He drew attention to the appendix of the report which summarised that there would be no changes to the GTCS Registration and Standards Rules at this time.

The Chair queried if the College when recruiting teaching staff, would now insist that it was a prerequisite that applicants be GTCS registered. The Principal responded that the College would not and that in some cases when recruiting, especially in skilled trade areas, it was preferred that there was more emphasis on experienced time served applicants, and those applicants would not necessary have a teachers qualification.

I Patrick questioned if the College stipulated it was a requirement that any employee being subsidised for TQFE would remain employed for a fixed period of time.

The Principal agreed that it was a good point raised and that he would investigate this further.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

# 19. Risk Management – Risk Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items.

Members agreed that no new risk management issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

# 20. Equality Management – Equality Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

Members agreed that no new equality management issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

## 21. Data Protection – Data Protection Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

Members agreed that no new data protection issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.



22. Closure

The meeting closed at 7pm

- 23. Date of Next Meeting TBC
- 24. Committee Focus Group Self-Evaluation Template Members Only Session.