**Academic Affairs Committee**

Minutes

**Meeting reference:** Session 2016/17, Meeting 3 of 3

**Date and time:** Wednesday 17 May 2017, at 2.00pm

**Location:** Room 19, Brahan

**Members present:**

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| Margaret MuncktonPrincipal and Chief Executive (Chair) | Dr Harold Gillespie, Board of Management Rep (Vice Chair) |
| Brian CrichtonBoard of management | David GourleyCurriculum & Business Engagement Director |
| Dawne HodkinsonInternational & Corporate Services Director | Deborah LallyHead of Student Records |
| Donald MacleanSupport Staff Representative | Jane EdwardsSupport Staff Representative |
| Jessica BorleyHead of Quality, Chair of Quality Enhancement Committee | Holly ScrimgeourPC Students’ Association Representative |
| Pam WilsonVice Principal Academic | Richard OgstonHead of Student Services |
| Rachel DanielVice President PCSA, Education and Engagement  | Roy AndersonHead of Academic Practice |
| Sharon McGuireTeaching Staff Board Member |  |

**In attendance** Barbara Nelson, Education Scotland

**Apologies:** Professor Martin Price, Chair of Research, Scholarship and Knowledge Exchange Committee

**Minute Taker:** Maureen Masson

**Quorum:** 8, including the Chair or Vice-Chair

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| **Summary of Action Items** |
| **Ref**  | **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Time Line** |
| **Carry Forward from 17 May 2017** |
| **6**  | **Presentation -*** circulate Deborah Lally’s presentation
* Presentation – investigate system developments including holding residential information and parent status of students
 | ClerkDL | Immediate |
| **7** | **PCSA/HISA update –** further work on governance, financial aspects and on transition arrangements | HS | For Board meeting on 14 June 2017 |
| **8** | **Access and Inclusion Strategy and Corporate Parenting Plan** Final Strategy and Plan to go to the Board meeting on 14 June 2017 | PW | For Board meeting on 14 June 2017 |
| **9.1** | **Curriculum Approvals**Keep under review whether a sector review of courses is necessary | PW | Review during 2017/18 |
|  | **Any Other Business** **Ongoing Industrial Action -** Keep these under review in line with ongoing if industrial action  | MM | In line with on industrial action  |

Minutes

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| Item |  | Action |
| **1** | **Welcome and Apologies**Margaret Munckton (MM), Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting including Barbara Nelson (BN) from Education Scotland who was in attendance. The Committee noted that Rob Boyd had decided to stand down and there was a warm vote of thanks for Rob’s input to the work of Academic Affairs over a long period.The Committee noted that Holly Scrimgeour (HS) was attending instead of Louis McNaught who had resigned from the role of Vice President on 16 May.Attendance and apologies were noted as above. |  |
| **2** | **Additions to the Agenda**An item *Ongoing Industrial action* would be covered under ‘Any Other Business’.MM requested that items 7.4, 8.2, 8.3, 9.2 and 11.2 were starred for discussion. |  |
| **3** | **Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item**Sharon Maguire declared interest in relation to the item on industrial action. |  |
| **4** | Minutes of Meeting Held on 22 February 2016These were accepted as an accurate record. |  |
| **5** | **Actions Arising from Previous Minutes****Carry Forward from 22 February 2017:****5** **Regional Outcome Agreement** **Action Update:** on the agenda**6.3 Correlation of NSS and Student Survey Results****Action Update:** ongoing**6 Circulate the presentation by Sharon Maguire, Sector Manager Sport and Fitness**  Action Completed**10.1 Formal review of Student Engagement and Strategy Enabling Plan**Action Completed**11 Draft revised Committee Terms of Reference** **and membership****Action Update:**  this item is to be included on the agenda for the 3 June Board Development Day, and then to a meeting of the Chairs’ Committee in August.**Matters arising**None. |  |
| **6** | **Presentation**Deborah Lally, Head of Student Records, gave a presentation on data developments for Quality Enhancement. The slides would be circulated for information. Academic Affairs noted the following key aspects:* Student systems held a range of data including whether students had a care experienced background or had additional support needs;
* The data relating to care experienced students, and those from the SIMD 10 area and the correlation between different characteristics;
* The focus on reporting and planning linking to measures in the Regional Outcome Agreement, access and inclusion and the student journey;
* That PC was performing well against the sector against sector averages;
* The BRAG system, which was being used consistently across all sectors, facilitated the collection of weekly attendance and performance data. Personal Academic Tutors (PATs) were using it and had access to a set of template letters to contact students if attendance declined or if there were experiencing performance issues;
* Student Records data could analysed in a variety of ways. Although no formal research had been done to measure the value of the data the Committee noted that attainment figures had increased. The working assumption was that the enhancements to systems and their outputs and analysis had helped with improved attainment figures; and
* Going forward, reports will be shared with sector heads at key points in the year.

The Committee thanked Deborah for the presentation and the work that had been done to develop student systems. Planned work to improve systems, including further alignment to SFC tools was noted.In addition, possible data links between residential students and the parent status of student would be explored. Work to link the timetabling system to student diaries was also planned. The Committee noted that100% attendance is linked to bursary payments – students receiving bursary payment have been made aware of this.DL assured the Committee that the data protection aspects related to student records were fully complied with. Data was made available via a secure shared portal only to staff who were granted access. Data was not shared by email. In addition all data was drawn from SITS and as such was covered as disclosed information.The possibility of commissioning research around correlations arising from the data is factored in the workplan for 17-18. It was noted that some of the outputs from the work would go forward to the Research, Strategy and Knowledge Exchange Committee in due course. | **Clerk****DL**  |
| **7** | **Student Experience** |  |
| **\*7.1** | **Students’ Association Report**HS introduced the paper which had been received by the Engagement Committee at its meeting on 11 May. The Committee note that the OBI awards had been held and that over 400 nominations had been received. PCA were reviewing options for providing feedback to students. She thanked Louis McNaught his hard work in organising the OBI awards. PW updated the Committee on the transition arrangements regarding PCSA and HISA. Further work on the proposal to join HISA were to be presented to the Board at its 14 June meeting. Work to clarify governance and financial aspects and the arrangements for transition were needed. Given that the relationship between HISA and PCSA had matured over the last year there was a strong degree of confidence that the proposals would be accepted.  | **HS** |
| **\*7.2** | **Student Support Update**The Committee noted the paper about the structure and work of Student Services and some of the emerging trends. The Committee agreed that paper gave a helpful overview of the work that was done ‘behind the scenes’ and provided an indication of the breadth and volume of work.The Committee agreed that it would be important to be proactive in reviewing and predicting how student demand/trends may change in the future, how that may impact teaching provision and the ability of support structures respond to meet changing needs. As an example, the Committee noted that there had been a 25% increase in PLSP students and that would impact on support services and resourcing. BN commented that Education Scotland would be pulling together national data. Emerging analysis suggested an increase in support for students with additional needs. The College would compare its data against national data to review trends in considering impact on wider resourcing and opportunities to link with other national agencies. **7.3 Student Destinations Report** The Committee noted the report, the data for which is part of the annual SFC statutory return. Of the 89% of qualifiers (i.e. students who had completed courses), 84% went on to a positive destination (but not necessarily related to their studies). Whilst this represented a decrease on last year’s return, it would be important to check the sector level when it became available later in the year.Negative destinations were noted as the following:* Unable to work through illness
* Where a student had caring responsibilities
* Those who do not want to work

The outcome of the plan would inform action planning in May/June for next year’s induction arrangements. Brian Crichton (BC) commented that it was important to keep under review whether the historical use of funds impacted future thinking, particularly if surplus funds had to be handed back.. With ongoing data analysis it would soon be possible to link student from a care experienced background to destination data.**7.4 Student Engagement in Quality Processes**Jessica Borley introduced the paper which provided an overview of the means of involving students in quality processes. The paper had been considered by the Quality Enhancement Committee in January 2017. The Committee noted the mechanisms for getting feedback from students on the quality of their courses. PCSA had surveyed students for feedback and the class representative system was also an important route to source feedback. A survey of the class representatives had been undertaken I February 2017, but only a small number of class representatives had participated. However, the responses had been positive and comments taken into account in the report.  A number of actions had been identified for 2017 and will be reported on next year.PCSA had also developed a student version of Take 5. This had highlighted that students want more active learning and greater use and consistency/standardisation of IT in that learning.The SRC would review opportunities for improved engagement with students working with sector rep via focus groups, particularly for those areas where there was no call rep. Other sector models/examples would also be reviewed for good practice.The student partnership agreement would be revisited to ascertain how well student ambassadors had worked and scope for using well established HISA models would be explored. A gap analysis would help identify our current position with regard to student engagement against where the college would like to be and how it might make that transition.BN noted that the approach that Education Scotland had taken initially, to focus on number of class reps, was changing to be more focussed on quality input and influence. |  |
| **8** | **Strategic Planning** |  |
| **8.1** | **Regional Outcome Agreements – 2017-20**The Committee had been involved in developing the ROA and the noted that the agreement was approved by University Court in March 2017. The agreement reflected the College and UHI priorities and presented the overall tertiary landscape. The Committee noted that there were different measurements for HE and FE and that It was difficult to predict targets for the region.  |  |
| **\*8.2** | Access and Inclusion StrategyThe Committee noted the Access and Inclusion Strategy which would go to the Board for approval in June. The Strategy defines the College’s aspirations for accessible and inclusive services. It also links to wider relevant College documents and sets out how effectiveness and impact of the plan will be monitored. The Committee noted that SFC and Colleges Scotland had given a steer on the format and that the document was a distilled version of an initial scoping document. Once the document was approved by the Board the priority would be to collect baseline measures and to identify priorities. One example of baseline measures and a key priority for the College was support for students with dyslexia as a significant proportion of students identified as having a specific learning difficulty were dyslexic. It would be important for staff to understand the operational mechanisms for supporting students.BN commented that a culture change in behaviours was emerging with a greater focus on supporting students, regardless of background/disability, to encourage students to take ownership of their learning to prepare them for life beyond the College.  | PW |
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| **\*8.3** | **Corporate Parenting Plan** The Committee noted the Corporate Parenting Plan which highlighted the key structures, systems and provisions to ensure the College carries out its duties in relation to the Children and Young Persons Bill 2014.The structure of the Corporate Parenting Plan was common to all partner UHI Colleges and the UHI Executive Office was also preparing linking to plans of Colleges. The College Plan had been prepared in partnership with other agencies including PKC and a ‘joined up’ approach had been taken.The Committee noted that positive work that had been undertaken and endorsed it for Board consideration in June. | PW |
| **8.4** | CPD Workforce Pan 2016-17 |  |
|  | The Committee noted the Workforce Plan which summarised key training and development activities planned in 16-17 with an update on progress against actions. Positive progress had been made during the year and the plan linked to key College priorities which would built on for next year’s plan.  |  |
| **9** | **Curriculum** |  |
| **\*9.1** | **Curriculum Approvals** The Committee had seen the Curriculum map for session 16-17 previously, and the paper highlighted courses added in-year, and the rationale for them.Academic Affairs noted that a Curriculum Strategy would come forward for approval at its next meeting. The breadth of provision in the Curriculum was noted and the rationale for courses and different demands placed on College to meet a variety of needs. As well as processes for new course provision, the College also had robust processes in place for closing/replacing courses. However this had not been reviewed at a sector level for some time and may be something to keep under review in the future. | PW |
| **\*9.2** | **Student Numbers (2016/17 and 17/18)**The Committee noted the paper and, in particular, that the HE and FE core targets had been met, but not the ESIF target which had doubled compared to session 2015-16.  |  |
| **10** | **Engagement** |  |
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| **10.1** | **Tay Cities Deal** |  |
|  | The City Deal bid had been submitted and the College and other partnerships awaited clarification of the timescales following the general election in June. There was some anxiety amongst partner groups in terms of having resources available at the appropriate time to work up the full business case and this would be kept under review.  |  |
| **\*10.2** | **PKC Annual report 2015/16**The Committee noted the Annual Plan which would be helpful for the Board Development Day. The Committee noted that the locality outcome document, when available, would be less PKC centric with a focus on wider partnership working. |  |
| **11.1** | **Performance Monitoring** |  |
| **\*11.1** | **Quality Themes Review** |  |
|  | The Committee noted the paper which set out the developing enhancements to 2016-17 Quality Review Activity. A new sector overview reporting process had been implemented. Key points to note included :* During the last year 2 review meetings had been held;
* the Staff Conference in November had focussed on the self-evaluation paperwork; and
* sector managers’ reports highlighted key themes for each area.

The Committee welcomed the paper and noted the new sector reporting process and that it reflected a significant change in approach. This was a helpful framework for development and the template for use across all sectors was designed to help sector managers answer key evidence based questions and bring a consistency of approach. |  |
| **11.2** | **Balanced Scorecard Destinations**The Committee noted that it was being asked to note the section about student destinations. For FE, the Committee noted that the proportion of students entering a positive destination was slightly lower than last year, but that against the 2011-12 baseline the proportion continued to be green. The figures for HE were not yet available and would be presented to the Committee at a future point. |  |
| **12**  | **Committee Organisation** |  |
| **\*12.1** | **Draft Plan of work for the Committee 2017-18** |  |
|  | The Committee noted that draft plan of work and that the ‘External Review’ information would be added as required. Any comments on the draft plan of work should be forwarded to the Principal. |  |
| **13** | **Standing Committees** |  |
| **13.1** | **Quality Enhancement Committee – 26 April 2017** |  |
|  | The minutes were noted. |  |
| **13.2** | **Research Scholarship and Knowledge Exchange Committee – 4 May 2017**The minutes were noted. |  |
| **14** | **UHI Committee Updates** |  |
| **14.1** | **Academic Council – 15 March 2017** |  |
|  | The report was noted |  |
| **14.2**  | **Research Scholarship and Knowledge Exchange Committee – 15 February 2017** |  |
|  | The report was noted. It would be helpful, in future if the note could follow the agreed template format. |  |
|  | **Any Other Business****Ongoing Industrial Action**MM updated the Committee on the latest position regarding ongoing industrial action. CMT had met earlier in the day and had considered the impact of the dispute from the perspective of both students and staff, in terms of moral and relationship management, and to identify immediate actions.No settlement had yet been reached and the Deputy First Manager had made a statement to Parliament on 16 May - an independent mediator had been appointed to facilitate further discussions. Locally, more student complaints had been received as action continued and concerns were expressed about the students who may not engage during the period on ongoing action. An immediate priority of College staff would be to help ensure students got as much help as possible to complete their student studies.It was noted that the SQA continue to plan their normal schedule of external verification visits. Communications with key groups during the period of strike action were key and SMT would be reviewing communications ongoing. The Committee noted that whilst the pay element of the ‘deal’ had been agreed, there was no formal commitment from government to cover the additional costs. It was important that this was clarified soon. HS was keen that messages to students are clear and consistent to all groups. SM queried whether there was any national guidance to students that could be communicated, particularly if the dispute continued on for some time. Jane Edwards declared an interest as a Unison staff member and expressed concerned that goodwill on the side of support staff may be eroded as the dispute continued, particularly as leave/time off could not be organised. The level of disruption was varied across the sector with some Colleges impact more than others and College Principal discussions would be ongoing during the strike action period. The Committee noted that this was an evolving situation. If the strike continued into the third week of May, discussions with national bodies such as the SQA may have to be followed up, similarly for exam boards. The College may also have to review priorities and postpone the staff conference or progression boards.  | **MM** |
| **15** | **Date and Time of Next meeting**  |  |
|  | To be confirmed |  |
| **16** | **Remit and Role of Committees** |  |
| **\*15** | **Review of Meeting (to include check against ToR)**Because of time constraints a check against the ToR was not covered. |  |

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Status of Minutes Open [x]  Closed [ ]

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A **closed** item is one that contains information that could be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.

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Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998?
 Yes [ ]  No [x]