

Academic Affairs Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: Academic Affairs 2019-20/02

Date and time: Wednesday 19 February 2020 at 2.30pm

Location: Room 019

Members present: Margaret Cook, Principal (Chair)
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Catherine Etri, Associate Principal (Curriculum)
Michaela Asisten, HISA Perth VP Education & Engagement
Deborah Lalley, Head of Student Experience
David Gourley, Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement
Robert Boyd, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee
Martin Price, Chair of Research, Scholarship & Knowledge Exchange Committee

In attendance: Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: Andrew Comrie, Board Member
Sheena Devlin, Board Member
Amy Studders, HISA Perth President

Chair: Margaret Cook
Minute Taker: Ian McCartney
Quorum: 8

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
6.2	Student Surveys: Induction Early Experience Survey 2019-20 Head of Student Experience to look into whether Q10 can be reviewed.	Head of Student Experience	Next Meeting
7.2	HISA Perth Update Associate Principal (Curriculum) provided a brief verbal update Curriculum Review & Planning process, and noted that a fuller update would be circulated by email for the benefit of Board members.	Principal/ Clerk	June 2020
7.4	Regional Outcome Agreement Depute Principal to provide progress reports by email when available.	Depute Principal	ASAP
9.1	Safeguarding Policy Reviewed Policy be circulated to Committee members to allow Chair's Action to be progressed.	Head of Student Experience	ASAP
11	Risk Review Clerk to update Risk Register to reflect changes to Risks 8, 10 and 11.	Clerk	March 2020

Minutes:

Item		Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted.	
2.	Additions to the Agenda There were no additions to the agenda.	
3.	Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.	
4.	Minutes of Meeting held on 20 November 2019 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.	
5.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
	<p><u>4 Minutes of Meeting Held on 8 May 2019</u></p> <p>Action: Clerk to amend minutes re student staff members referred to in Item 13.1, did not include Mountain Studies staff.</p> <p>Action Update: Completed</p> <p><u>6.1 HISA Perth Update</u></p> <p>Action 1: Principal/Clerk to investigate working with Who Cares? Scotland a part of Board's development activities.</p> <p>Action Update: Due to be completed by June 2020</p> <p>Action 2: HISA to investigate whether there was an opportunity to do more for student residents over the Xmas period</p> <p>Action Update: Not possible to achieve</p> <p><u>8.1 Balanced Scorecard</u></p> <p>Action: Clerk to investigate incorporation of sector/UHI comparison within the Scorecard</p> <p>Action Update: To be considered within wither Balanced Scorecard review</p>	

6.	Student Experience	
*6.1	<p>HISA Perth Update</p> <p>HISA Perth VP Education & Engagement summarised the key points of Paper 2, highlighting the successful recruitment of a Communications Intern, the interview process for the vacant Co-Ordinator position, and the recent SRC/Class Rep Gathering event which had over 40 student reps attending in total over the 2 days.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience requested an update on the Council Tax Exemptions campaign. HISA Perth VP Education & Engagement noted that no meaningful progress had been made. Associate Principal advised contacting one of the absent Board Members who had previously offered to help put HISA Perth in contact with key decision-makers at Pert & Kinross Council.</p>	
6.2	<p>Student Surveys: Induction Early Experience Survey 2019-20</p> <p>Head of Student Experience introduced Paper 2 which provided results and analysis of the Induction Early Experience Survey conducted in October 2019, and highlighted the key points.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted awareness of reduced response rates (which was deemed partly to be caused by the migration to an online feedback system) and is working with Sector Development Directors to address this, as well as some of the key areas noted as performing below expectations.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience also noted that actions were in place to promote earlier applications for funding as this would go some way to alleviating some of the issues around students' early experiences at College.</p> <p>Associate Principal noted that process for electing and training Class Reps was slower than normal this year, and asked HISA Perth to consider making this a summer priority in future.</p> <p>Staff Member of the Committee noted that some key satisfaction questions (Q1, Q18-20) scored 90+%, and queried whether this information had been disseminated. Head of Student Experience noted that it had, but would be look to reissue if message wasn't being heard.</p> <p>HISA Perth VP Education & Engagement queried whether Q10 could be reviewed. Head of Student Experience would look into whether this could be taken forward.</p>	Head of Student Experience

6.3	Student Funding Update <p>Head of Student Experience presented latest student funding update, as detailed in Paper 4, which had been prepared by the Student Funding Adviser.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience drew particular attention to the issues in monitoring numbers of care-experienced students, therefore making it difficult to predict if budgeted funds in this area fully adequate to cover actual amounts required,</p> <p>Head of Student Experience also advised the ESF funding for FE courses may be subject to change in 2020/21, which would likely require some realignment with regards to bursaries.</p>	
6.4	Additional Counselling Funding <p>Principal advised that Scottish Government funding of 80 counsellors split across University and College sectors had been announced, noting that the division of these resources within UHI had been the subject of some debate, but looked likely to settle on a Counselling Manager post hosted at Executive Office rather than additional resources being delivered to Perth College, prompting discussion on the potential preferred options on a local level should an alternative decision be reached</p> <p>A final decision on the matter was due to be made shortly by SFC.</p>	
7	Curriculum	
7.1	Student Recruitment Update <p>Head of Student Experience outlined latest Student Recruitment position per Paper 5, noting that College was around 700 credits below target, and indicated that core funding target had been met and that courses are planned for April to address shortfall in ESF.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that HE recruitment was 72 FTE behind target, however this gap was expected to close following student recruitment in January, and additional distance learning students coming on stream.</p>	
7.2	Curriculum Review Planning Update <p>Associate Principal (Curriculum) provided a brief verbal update Curriculum Review & Planning process, and noted that a fuller update would be circulated by email for the benefit of Board members.</p>	Associate Principal

7.3	<p>Learner Journey Strategy</p> <p>Associate Principal presented Paper 6, which provides a summary of the Perth & Kinross Learner Journey Strategy 2019-22, which had been developed alongside Perth & Kinross Council and Skills Development Scotland, and formed part of the College's EREP document.</p> <p>Associate Principal noted that the strategic priorities were aligned to national priorities, and that the approach to setting establishing principles to ensure partnership working was a new way of working in the region.</p> <p>Associate Principal advised that there was a willingness to agree a core common curriculum across the region, however this was still at an early stage, and the College will play a key part in this process, however significant work remains to be done in this regard.</p> <p>Chair asked whether money was available from the Council Learning Partnerships to take this strategy forward; Associate Principal indicated that this was being looked into.</p>	
7.4	<p>Regional Outcome Agreement Update</p> <p>Depute Principal provided a verbal update on the Regional Outcome Agreement, noting that a central narrative and hyperlinks had been provided for local input, with local engagement to be collated. Depute Principal would provide progress reports across a range of areas for circulation by email when available. Timescales were not clear, therefore work is being conducted at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Associate Principal advised that a paper was being pulled together from a student experience perspective to identify levels of work undertaken locally; although this work was primarily focused on the forthcoming HMI visit, it will link across to ROA issues.</p>	Depute Principal
7.5	<p>MA Electrical Installation Report</p> <p>Associate Principal table Paper 7 for information, noting a very positive report, with no areas for development re service delivery. 1 item noted for development was the low response rate for the SECTT survey, which is an ongoing problem for the College.</p> <p>Committee requested that Associate Principal pass on their congratulations to the team involved in such a positive report.</p>	

8	Performance Monitoring	
8.1	<p>Student Retention & Attainment Report 2018-19 SFC Benchmark Report on KPIs</p> <p>Head of Student Experience presented Paper 8 advising that all charts were published online by SFC for all stakeholders, with the commentary contextualised for Perth College.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience highlighted key areas of Report, noting in particular that the College was still performing above SCQF sector average, albeit the gap has closed slightly, and that schools/college partnerships showed considerable increase in performance.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience further noted that College showed poor performance related to Higher provision, and reasons for this were being examined. It was also noted that the Gender Gap had widened at College, likely due to provision of “traditionally” female courses. Head of Student Experience advised Committee that a Sector Development Managers meeting was due to be held shortly to explore these issues further.</p>	
8.2	<p>Balanced Scorecard Update</p> <p>Clerk presented Paper 9, which presented a mixed picture re attainment of Student Activity Measure 7 and 8.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience informed Committee that shortfall in achieving Care Experienced student target is likely to be down to non-disclosure at registration, with steps being taken within the Student Support Team to try to address this. HISA Perth VP asked about specific numbers of Care Experienced students at Perth College; Head of Student Experience advised that around 35 students had disclosed, however it was estimated that around 60 Care Experienced students attended College.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that Baseline A for Measure 7 will need to be revised due to contraction of sector, as SFC targets were used for funding purposes.</p>	
9	Strategies, Policies & Procedures	
9.1	<p>Safeguarding Policy – Update</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that a Safeguarding Policy had been presented to Academic Affairs Committee last May, the Policy being passed in principle for Chair’s Action, pending specific actions</p>	

	<p>required to provide specific Perth context to the single policy environment.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience informed Committee that, while the policy had slipped down the priority list, a new group had been formed to revisit the matter, and asked Committee that the reviewed policy be circulated to Committee members to allow Chair's Action to be progressed. This approach was APPROVED.</p>	Head of Student Experience
9.2	<p>Scholarship & Research Strategy</p> <p>Chair of Scholarship & Research Committee presented the Scholarship & Research Strategy (Paper 10) for approval, noting the change of name from Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy, the removal of Strategic Aim 4, and the extension of the Strategy to 2021 to fit in with the College's strategy cycle.</p> <p>Subject to amendments to the footers within the policy relating to titles and timescales, the Scholarship & Research Strategy was APPROVED.</p>	
9.3	<p>Digital Skills Strategy</p> <p>Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement presented the Digital Skills Strategy (Paper 11) for approval, summarising the key points.</p> <p>Depute Principal commended the work done on this Strategy, and noted that single-page layout was very user-friendly and this format should be looked at for future strategy documents.</p> <p>The Digital Skills Strategy was APPROVED.</p>	
10	<p>Standing Committee Minutes</p> <p>The minutes for the following meetings were received and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarship & Research Committee, 13 January 2020 	
11	<p>Risk Review</p> <p>Clerk presented Paper 13 for discussion, with Committee asked to review current Risks within the scope of the meeting and to consider other areas of Risk.</p> <p>Whilst the risk scores were considered appropriate, amendments and additions were recommended to Risks 8, 10 and 11. Clerk to update Risk Register accordingly, prior to presentation at Board meeting in March.</p>	Clerk

12	Date of Next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06 May 2020 at 2.30pm 	
13	Review of Meeting <p>The Committee agreed the meeting had covered its Terms of Reference.</p>	

DRAFT

Information recorded in College minutes are subject to release under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A). Certain exemptions apply: financial information relating to procurement items still under tender, legal advice from College lawyers, items related to national security.

Notes taken to help record minutes are also subject to Freedom of Information requests, and should be destroyed as soon as minutes are approved.

Status of Minutes – Open ☒

An **open** item is one over which there would be no issues for the College in releasing the information to the public in response to a freedom of information request.

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.

The College may also be asked for information contained in minutes about living individuals, under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. It is important that fact, rather than opinion, is recorded.

Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒