

# Academic Affairs Committee

## Minutes

**Meeting reference:** Academic Affairs 2019-20/02

**Date and time:** Wednesday 20 November 2019 at 5.30pm

**Location:** Room 019

**Members present:** Margaret Cook, Principal (Chair)  
Andrew Comrie, Board Member  
Sheena Devlin, Board Member  
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)  
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

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

**Apologies:** Amy Studders, HISA Perth President  
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)  
Martin Price, Chair of Research, Scholarship & Knowledge Exchange Committee

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

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
4	<b>Minutes of Meeting held on 8 May 2019</b> Clerk to amend minutes re student staff members referred to in Item 13.1 did not including Mountain Studies staff.	Clerk	ASAP
6.1	<b>HISA Perth Update</b> Principal/Clerk to investigate working with Who Cares? Scotland as part of the Board's Development activities.	Principal/ Clerk	June 2020
6.1	<b>HISA Perth Update</b> HISA to investigate whether there was an opportunity to do more for student residents over the Xmas period	HISA	ASAP
8.1	<b>Balanced Scorecard</b> Clerk to investigate incorporation of sector/UHI comparison within the Scorecard.	Clerk	Next meeting

**Minutes:**

Item		Action
1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted.	
2.	<b>Additions to the Agenda</b>  There were no additions to the agenda.	
3.	<b>Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item</b>  There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.	
4.	<b>Minutes of Meeting held on 8 May 2019</b>  It was noted that the 6 student staff members referred to in Item 13.1 did not include Mountain Studies staff. Clerk to amend minutes accordingly.  The minutes were otherwise approved as a correct record.	Clerk
5.	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b>	
	<u>5.1 Actions Arising</u>  <b>Action:</b> A Workforce Planning report would come to the next meeting of the Committee  <b>Action Update:</b> Deferred to next Meeting  <u>6.1 Student Engagement</u>  <b>Action:</b> Extending Student Mental Health training to students was to be taken forward with HISA  <b>Action Update:</b> Training was scheduled to take place this week. An opportunity had also arisen to potentially extend this training provision in partnership with Perth & Kinross Council  <u>12.1 Safeguarding Policy</u>  <b>Action:</b> Future revisions to Policy to take place by email with decision confirmed at next meeting of Committee  <b>Action Update:</b> Deferred to next meeting.	

<b>6</b>	<b>Student Engagement</b>	
<b>*6.1</b>	<p><b>HISA Perth Update</b></p> <p>HISA Perth VP Education &amp; Engagement summarised the key points of Paper 2, highlighting the number of Class Reps trained, the relatively disappointing number of attendees at the GYST sessions despite the positive feedback received about the programme, and the campaign for Council Tax exemptions for progressing students.</p> <p>Board Member commended HISA on the report, noting in particular the desire to work with the College in areas of mutual benefit such as co-creation.</p> <p>Board Member noted the role of College and Board as Corporate Parent and suggested working with Who Cares? Scotland as part of the Board's Development activities. Principal/Clerk to investigate.</p> <p>Teaching Staff Member on the Committee asked whether there was an opportunity to do more for student residents over the Xmas period, possibly in conjunction with ASW, as ASW is open over much of the vacation period. HISA to investigate.</p>	<p>Principal/ Clerk</p> <p>HISA</p>
<b>*6.2</b>	<p><b>Student Surveys: Student Satisfaction &amp; Engagement Survey</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience introduced main findings of the most recent Student Satisfaction &amp; Engagement Survey (SSES) per Paper 3, noting the move to electronic methods for data capture. Response rate of 46% was ahead of the Sector average (43%).</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that future versions of the Survey will include comparators to show progress over time.</p> <p>Board Member asked about Action Plan to tackle areas of shortfall. Head of Student Experience noted that Course Teams had undertaken self- and course-evaluations to address. Committee Member further noted that a Digital Skills Strategy was being tabled at the next CMT meeting. Board Member noted that accreditation for digital skills might be available in partnership with Perth &amp; Kinross Council.</p> <p>Committee Member asked about electronic response rates vs paper. Head of Student Experience noted that response rates on paper system was around 60%, however expectations were for an initial reduction in response rate in Year 1 of new methodology.</p>	
<b>*6.3</b>	<p><b>Student Surveys: National Student Survey</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience introduced main finding of most recent</p>	

	<p>National Student Survey (NSS) per Paper 4, noting the differences in responder profile from SSES, and the upward trend being demonstrated.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience drew attention the potential issues linked to cross-College delivery, noting that an action plan was being developed to address areas of poor performance which takes this issue into account.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience further noted that programme Teams receive their own data set from the NSS. Action Plans, submitted to UHI Deans, are triggered if results in each area are below 80%, or drop from previous year.</p>	
<b>6.4</b>	<p><b>Additional Counselling Funding</b></p> <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 Scottish Funding Council.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<p><b>Student Recruitment</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experienced outlined latest Student Recruitment position per Paper 5, noting the importance in retention re draw down of credits, and the drive to draw in additional students over January.</p> <p>Board Member asked for evidence base in confidence shown for reaching target. Head of Student experience noted that data and trends were used to produce, but there are still unknown elements that can affect final figures, eg Community Education.</p> <p>Board Member noted need to better understand demographics re routes to education, increased focus on adult learners and changing modes of delivery, eg increased blended learning.</p>	

<p><b>*7.2</b> <b>*7.3</b></p>	<p><b>Curriculum Review Planning Update</b> <b>Self-Evaluation Planning Process</b></p> <p>Associate Principal (Curriculum) provided a presentation which linked Papers 6 and 7, outlining historical information and limitations around Course Annual Reviews, before providing detail on the proposed Curriculum Review &amp; Planning processes.</p> <p>Associate Principal (Curriculum) noted that the change in process was a substantial task, but one which provided an opportunity to allow academic staff and students to properly contribute to curriculum development and an improved student experience.</p> <p>Board Member welcomed the use of rigorous data analytics to allow curriculum teams to make decisions, and the opportunity to include organisational objectives within the self-evaluation element of the process.</p> <p>Board Member noted the additional opportunities provided by improved responsiveness within new model, eg common module across programmes, dual accreditation, blended learning at all levels, Gaelic for adult learners, etc.</p> <p>Committee thanks Associate Principal (Curriculum) for the presentation and commended the Papers.</p>	
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Performance Monitoring</b></p>	
<p><b>*8.1</b></p>	<p><b>Balanced Scorecard Update</b></p> <p>Clerk noted that not enough raw data had been provided to produce a meaningful commentary scorecard at this point, with particular shortfall related to the number of full-time programmes containing substantial work experience, and the number of students undertaking apprenticeships. Information on areas not addressed would be provided within next Balanced Scorecard update.</p> <p>Committee noted that some sector/UHI comparison within the Scorecard would be useful. Clerk to investigate.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Standing Committee Minutes</b></p> <p>The minutes for the following meetings were received and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholarship &amp; Research Committee, 11 October 2019</li> </ul>	

10	<b>Date of Next meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19 February 2020 at 2.30pm</li> </ul>	
11	<b>Review of Meeting</b> <p>The Committee agreed the meeting had covered its Terms of Reference.</p>	

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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** ☒