

# Academic Affairs Committee

## Minutes

**Meeting reference:** Session 2017/18, Meeting 1 of 3  
**Date and time:** Wednesday 22 November 2017, at 2.00pm  
**Location:** Room 19, Brahan

## Members present:

Margaret Cook Principal and Chief Executive (Chair)	Harold Gillespie, Board of Management (Vice Chair) by video link
Brian Crichton Board of Management	David Gourley Curriculum & Business Engagement Director
Jane Edwards Support Staff Representative	Deborah Lally Head of Student Records
Donald Maclean Support Staff Representative	Jessica Borley Head of Quality, Chair of Quality Enhancement Committee
Richard Ogston Head of Student Services	Prince Honeysett President HISA Perth
Nurina Sharmin Vice President HISA Perth	Maureen Masson Secretary to the Board of Management

**Apologies:** Professor Martin Price, Chair of Research, Scholarship and  
Knowledge Exchange Committee  
Dawne Hodgkinson, International & Corporate Services Director  
Sharon McGuire, Teaching Staff Board Member

**Minute Taker:** Maureen Masson

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

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
<b>Carry Forward from 22 November 2017</b>			
6.1	Explore the possibility of developing STEM take away cards similar to those prepared to publicise modern apprenticeships.	Principal	Next meeting
7.4	Clarify the correct terminology for 'Developing Scotland's Workforce'	Curriculum and Business Engagement Director	ASAP
11	Organise the date for the next meeting of Academic Affairs	Secretary	By Christmas closure

## Minutes

Item	Action
<b>1 Welcome and Apologies</b>  The Principal welcomed everyone to her first meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee for session 2017-18.  Attendance and apologies were noted as above.	
<b>2 Additions to the Agenda</b>  There were no additions to the agenda.	
<b>3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</b>  There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.	
<b>4 Minutes of Meeting Held on 17 May 2017</b>  These were accepted as an accurate record.	
<b>5 Actions Arising from Previous Minutes</b>	
<b>6. Presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Circulate Deborah Lally's presentation.</li></ul> <b>Action – complete</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Investigate system developments including holding residential information and parent status of students.</li></ul> <b>Action –Student records development ongoing</b>	
<b>7. PCSA/HISA update –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Further work on governance, financial aspects and on transition arrangements.</li></ul> <b>Action complete –Board approved final merger agreement on 14 June</b>	
<b>8. Access and Inclusion Strategy and Corporate Parenting Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Strategy and Plan to go to the Board meeting on 14 June 2017.</li></ul> <b>Action complete –Board approved strategy on 14 June</b>	
<b>9.1 Curriculum Approvals</b>	

- Keep under review whether a sector review of courses is necessary.

**Action – ongoing review and curriculum strategy on the agenda for the meeting**

**Industrial Action**

**Action - Concluded**

**6 Student Experience**

**6.1 Student Experience Students' Association Report**

The Committee noted the report from HISA Perth that summarised the activities the Student Association was working on. Of particular interest was the Equate Scotland work and efforts to improve the gender imbalance in STEM. The Committee was keen to explore an opportunity to promote STEM activity by, for example, preparing small 'take away' cards highlighting courses, initiatives etc. Something similar already existed for promoting modern apprenticeships so marketing would be asked to develop something similar.

Principal

**6.2 Student Surveys: Exit Survey/Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey**

The Head of Quality introduced the paper and set out the background to the survey. The Committee noted the first 10 questions about overall satisfaction and engagement were set by the SFC and were common to all FE institutions. The College set the other questions. Responses were shown for a 3-year period, as it was helpful to look at trends as well as individual years.

The Committee noted that the individual results and trends were carefully monitored were followed up and action plans prepared where appropriate. Efforts were also being made to improve students' understanding of the questions and give greater prominence to the survey via blackboard for example.

The Committee noted that much had been done to encourage student participation but that there was a fine line between compelling students to complete the survey versus taking part independently. It was agreed that it was critical for the key messages to be pitched at an appropriate level.

The Committee noted that the SFC had been contacted over the wording of question 10 about the influence of the student association. There was greater scope for additional support through HISA for full student body engagement via, for example, the class

representative system. Other ways to engage students were discussed such as focus groups working with HISA. Creative thinking was needed on ways to engage part-time students who were generally on campus after the curriculum admin team had finished their working day.

It was agreed that it might be appropriate to include a question about the quality of learning material in future surveys and their accessibility and inclusivity.

The Committee commended Ian Morrison for the good work he had done to promote the survey.

### **6.3 National Student Survey 2016 -17**

The Committee noted the paper which gave a brief overview of the main outputs from the National Student Survey which was for final year student to complete. The Committee noted the summary of key results and the graphs charting the responses for overall satisfaction by academic partner and subject network.

The full report with detailed outcomes was available from the Head of Quality.

## **Curriculum**

### **7.1 Curriculum Strategy**

The Curriculum and Business Engagement Director introduced this item. The Committee noted that the Strategy had been developed in the context of the College 2021 Vision articulated in the Strategic Plan taking account of strategic priorities and external drivers. It set out seven main aims and the means for measuring those aims. The Committee noted that greater emphasis would be put on curriculum design and innovation, to meet the needs of employers, locally, nationally and internationally. It was also important to work with curriculum leaders over the period of the plan to ensure delivery methods were fit-for-purpose and different pathway for study were available and flexible.

The Committee was reacted positively and **approved** the Curriculum Strategy.

### **7.2 Curriculum Planning and Chart of Courses**

The Curriculum and Business Engagement Director introduced the paper noting that a potential risk area for the College was curriculum areas where there was static/little/no growth and that this would be monitored. There were two areas, however, where growth was predicted to be positive – in the main, this linked to the ‘developing young workforce’ initiative. One such area was the delivery of foundation apprenticeships which links to the modern apprenticeship

scheme. A number of new Foundation Apprenticeships were planned for the next academic year. The potential growth area was in the provision of a food, nutrition and textiles degree aimed at those wishing to pursue a career in home economics teaching. The Committee agreed that with limited options it was important to look for innovation or possible niche areas and development of post doctoral options which was seen as a possible growth area. Flexibility and agility were important in curriculum design.

### **7.3 Student Recruitment**

The Head of Student Records reported a positive position in terms of the figures for FE early retention. At this point in the year, the College was on course to hit the target for core and ESF funded students.

In terms of HE, there was a small shortfall in the number of FTE. This, however, this had been mitigated by increasing the number of part-time enrolments and plans for a January start dates for courses would minimise the shortfall even further.

The Committee noted the positive recruitment position and the fact that an increased number of part-time student would possibly affect the outcomes in the student surveys. Further work was ongoing with the Sector Development teams to understand why there was shortfalls in some areas and to understand trends which appeared to show a reduction in the number of progressing students on some programmes.

A questionnaire had been developed to reach out to students who had applied to the college, but did not take up a place in the end. Even if a small response returned, it was hoped that some rich data would be gathered to help inform future curriculum planning.

### **7.4 Developing Young Workforce (DYW) Update**

The Curriculum and Business Engagement Director introduced the paper that provided an update on DYW and the related KPIs. The Group noted the positive progress and the efforts that had been made to reach pupils with additional support needs and those who had become disengaged.

Clarification was needed in relation to the overarching term used, in particular whether the description was Developing Scotland's Workforce.

Curriculum &  
Business  
Engagement  
Director

### **\*7.5 Education Scotland Closed item**

- 8 Performance Monitoring**
- 8.1 Balanced Scorecard Update**  
The Committee noted the Balanced Scorecard Update and progress against achieving measures.
- 8.2 SQA Systems Verification Visit**  
  
The Committee noted the outcome of the SQA Systems verification visit and that actions to address amber outcomes had been implemented resulting in an assessment of 'significant strength' in all 6 quality categories.
- 9 Remit and Role of Committees**  
**Draft Plan of Work for the Committee 2017-18**
- \*9.1**  
The Committee approved the draft plan of work for the year.
- 10 Standing Committees**
- 10.1 Quality Enhancement Committee – 2 November 2017**  
The minutes were noted.
- 10.2 Research Scholarship and Knowledge Exchange Committee –3 November 2017**  
  
The minutes were noted.
- 11 Date and Time of Next meeting**  
To be confirmed as the current dates clashes with the date of staff conference.
- \*12 Review of Meeting (to include check against ToR)**  
Members agreed the meeting had covered its Terms of Reference.

Secretary

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**Status of Minutes**      **Open** ☒      **Closed** ☐

With the exception of item 7.5 which will be redacted from the open minute.

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Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998?

Yes ☐ No ☒