

Engagement Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: Engagement 2019-20/02

Date and time: Thursday 07 November 2019 at 5.30pm

Location: Room 019

Members present: Sharon Hammell, Board Member (Chair)
Debbie Hutchison, Board Member
David Littlejohn, Board Member
Lynn Oswald, Board Member
Margaret Cook, Principal
Amy Studders, President HISA Perth

In attendance: Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)
Catherine Etri, Associate Principal (Curriculum)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Katy Harrington, Head of HR & Organisational Development
Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: John Dare, Board Member (Staff)
Michaela Asisten, VP Education & Engagement HISA Perth

Chair: Sharon Hammell

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 3

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
6.2	Student Partnership Agreement Clerk to liaise with Principal, HISA Perth and Marketing to arrange for official signing of Agreement	Clerk	ASAP
8.3	International Strategy Further clarity required on income and surplus levels	Vice Principal (External)	F&GP/Audit meetings
8.3	International Strategy Publish final paper following redaction of Appendix 3	Clerk	Completion of approval cycle

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 29 August 2019 The minutes were approved as a correct record.	
5.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	
	<p><u>6.1 HISA Perth Plan of Work</u></p> <p>Action: Plan to be circulated once additional details around targets, etc had been added</p> <p>Action Update: Verbal update provided as part Agenda Item 6.1; HISA Perth President to distribute full Plan of Work prior to next meeting.</p> <p><u>6.2 Student Partnership Agreement</u></p> <p>Action: Progress to be reported at next meeting</p> <p>Action Update: Completed Agreement on Agenda as Item 6.2</p> <p><u>10.1 Promoting a Positive Learning Environment</u></p> <p>Action: Clerk to liaise with the College's Quality Manager to provide clarity of role definition under Section 7.1 of policy</p> <p>Action Update: Deferred to next meeting</p> <p><u>10.2 Student Code of Conduct</u></p> <p>Action: Clerk to discuss issue over wording with the College's Quality Manager with a view to providing HISA with clearest advice on taking the matter forward.</p>	

	<p>Action Update: Deferred to next meeting</p> <p><u>12 EDIT – Disability Confident Scheme</u></p> <p>Action: Clerk to explore lapse of Scheme and respond to Committee</p> <p>Action Update: Scheme still operation, matter discussed at EDIT and carried forward to November meeting</p>	
6	Student Engagement	
*6.1	<p>HISA Perth Update</p> <p>President HISA Perth provided a verbal update, summarising the range of work carried out by the HISA Perth team since August.</p> <p>Main points noted included; a shift from output to outcome based work; a higher level of Communications, with particular focus Class Reps, Societies, Halls, and Online communities; working collaboratively with the college and external organisations in order to increase capacity and develop partnerships; ensuring systems are in place to ensure better accountability to our members and stakeholders in terms of outcomes and properly communicate the difference and value we bring to the college, and the wider Perth community.</p> <p>President HISA Perth note that the Association is investigating the possibility of recruiting a student Communications Intern to increase and better manage the promotion and communication of HISA Perth activities, with particular focus on developing the Association’ social media presence.</p> <p>President HISA Perth extended thank to the College for assistance provided in the training provided to Class Reps, in particular the staff support provided in the delivery of numerous training sessions. Feedback from the Reps was positive, and the shift to more interactive sessions than in previous years was well-received.</p> <p>HISA Perth President informed Committee that the planned Rep Conference has been postponed until January due to staffing shortages, and to ensure there is enough time to produce a high-quality event.</p> <p>HISA Perth President noted that the GYST (Get Your Self Together) campaign - focusing on some of the real issues that affects students, eg identity, mental health, welfare, hate crime, bullying, security, etc - is due to start on 4th November, and the workshops are being heavily promoted across the College.</p>	

	<p>HISA Perth President also noted that the Association is currently working with the local Council regarding Council Tax Exemptions during the summer for our students progressing from HND to Degree programmes.</p> <p>Committee noted that HISA Perth is currently producing an internationalisation strategy, with a focus on ensuring more culturally diverse (including free-from) food offerings are available on campus; working with the Languages, ESOL and AST to create a buddy system to aid International students better integrate into our community; and assist in the promotion of different cultures and languages to provide students with an edge in employment within a more globalised world.</p> <p>HISA Perth President also noted that the Association will be heavily promoting a Voter Registration drive in advance of the General Election, and asked for assistance in ensure IT facilities were available to assist in this campaign.</p> <p>Board Member noted amount of work being undertaken by HISA Perth and sought reassurance that this was being reflected within the Plan of Work. HISA Perth President confirmed that the Plan of Work would cover the core aspects noted in the verbal update.</p> <p>Chair asked HISA Perth President to expand on the staffing shortages raised during the update. HISA Perth President noted that HISA had arranged for temporary cover and additional support to be in place whilst a key staff member was off sick.</p>	
<p>*6.2</p>	<p>Student Partnership Agreement 2019/20</p> <p>President HISA Perth introduced the Student Partnership Agreement for 2019/20, noting that the themes had been developed following input by SRC during AY 2018/19, and that the Agreement had been scrutinised and approved by the most recent meeting of Student Engagement Group.</p> <p>Board Member noted a number of positive aspirations within the Agreement, however asked how certain aspects of the Agreement could be resourced, eg the move to paperless classes and course materials. Principal noted that the wording used within the document was a positive factor as it reflected the longer-term nature of the aspirations.</p> <p>Committee APPROVED the Student Partnership Agreement 2019/20. Clerk to liaise with Principal, HISA and Marketing to arrange for a suitable time and venue for the official signing of the Agreement to allow for maximum publicity.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

*6.3	<p>Student Mental Health Agreement 2019/20 - Update</p> <p>President HISA Perth noted to Committee that the Student Mental Health Agreement was now a UHI—led project, and therefore does not need approval by partner Colleges. President HISA Perth further noted that HISA Perth would be represented on the UHI committee leading the project.</p> <p>Following a question from the Chair regarding the effect this may have locally, President HISA Perth noted that the approach to the Agreement will be a more generic framework with a small amount of localised input.</p> <p>Principal noted on related topic that Scottish Government funding of 80 counsellors within post-16 education was due to be finalised, and that UHI approach was likely to be centralised retention of this funding with a division of resource to academic partners will be confirmed via Partnership Council.</p>	
7	<p>Performance Monitoring</p>	
7.1	<p>Balanced Scorecard</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.</p>	
8	<p>External Engagement</p>	
*8.1	<p>External Engagement Update</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) apologised for the late tabling of the External Engagement paper, which was due to a recent business trip to China, before summarising the document.</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) noted in particular that Perth College was now the top-rated British Council Language School in Scotland; that the partnership with the Hunan Institute of Engineering continues to develop with the highest number of students now progressing to degree level, which will prompt a review of the delivery model given future expansion; that routes to new partnerships are looking favourable in China, US and India; and that the Statement of Assurance from Education Scotland related to UKVI Tier 4 licenses had noted the College’s “exemplary practice”.</p> <p>HISA Perth President noted the paper’s reference to the visit of</p>	

	<p>Richard Lochhead (Minister for FE, HE & Science) to the campus, and asked why the Association had not been informed of this campus visit. Principal apologised for this oversight and assured the Association that such an omission will not be repeated.</p> <p>Board Member queried the focus on developing links with China given the current negative press surrounding digital security and risks. Vice President (External) noted that the College had robust policies and firewalls in place within the ICT department as students based in China can access the College VLE, however consideration was being given to bolstering systems in terms of IP and data.</p>	
<p>*8.2</p>	<p>Business Development Strategy</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) introduced the Business Development Strategy paper, noting that the primary goal is to significantly impact the growth and development of the regional economy, while achieving closer engagement between Business Development and Curriculum teams within the College.</p> <p>Vice President (External) noted that a more focused targeting of sources of revenue would be required, as would better alignment to local and regional business needs. A core aspect of the strategy will be the use of a “key account” approach to business development, rather than selling education-based “products”.</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) concluded by noting that the document was very much in an iterative stage as would need discussion and approval at F&GP and Board level, however the initial staff consultation had already been conducted, and the document provides a framework for how to target new business opportunities.</p> <p>Board Member welcomed the paper, noting that it clearly sets out the direction of travel for this area, however asked for clarification on some key data as some information does not tie in with Council projections in terms of timescales for implementation. Clarity was also sought regarding 2-weekly wage figure within the Business Base.</p> <p>Board Member noted that there was no timeline utilised within the RAG summary. Vice Principal (External) will add this to future iterations.</p> <p>Committee discussed the opportunities provided by the College meeting the needs of micro-businesses and the use of collaborative business spaces</p>	

<p>*8.3</p>	<p>International Strategy (CLOSED Item)</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) introduced paper 5, noting the strategic need for increased sources of income and the opportunity to build on College's international reputation.</p> <p>The proposed strategy provides a phased approach to developing existing international markets and moving into growing and target markets, assisted by the recent changes to post-study work visas.</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) outlined that the metrics in the growth targets were linked to the Strategy Map & Balanced Scorecard section, producing a projected increase in overall Perth College share of revenues from £900k in current year to £2.7m by Year 5.</p> <p>Board Member thanked Vice Principal for comprehensive paper before seeking further clarity on income and surplus levels. Vice Principal agreed, and would produce an updated paper for consideration by Finance and Audit Committees.</p> <p>Committee discussed closed nature of this item, noting that that paper could be published on the website following redaction of Appendix 3 due to commercially-sensitive information.</p>	<p>Vice Principal (External)</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Staff Engagement</p> <p>Head of HR & Organisational Development provided update on staffing issues, noting the progress made on job evaluations, and the 6th December deadline for feedback being submitted to the consultation process.</p> <p>Head of HR & Organisational Development expanded on the summary of work being conducted on TOIL, noting that analysis of current levels of TOIL was being prepared for the next meeting of CMT. It was also noted that date for transition from old to new TOIL arrangements would need agreed.</p> <p>Following a brief discussion, Committee agreed that Clerk would discuss issue over wording with the College's Quality Manager with a view to providing HISA with the clearest advice on taking the matter forward.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Board Visibility & Understanding of the Board's Role</p> <p>Chair introduced a discussion item based around the need to sense-check Committee's current understanding of the Board's role around key issues, particularly within the context of the current consultation</p>	

	<p>process, and asked Committee to consider how the Board could be doing anything differently.</p> <p>The discussion resulted in some suggestions for wider consideration, noting that more reassuring messages about the transparency of PCUHI governance processes would be helpful in building and maintaining staff and student confidence in the college's response to financial challenges which are being experienced across the FE sector.</p>	
11	<p>Chair's Update</p> <p>Chair noted an intention to step down from the Board in the new year, and outlined the likely process once a leaving date and succession plan had been agreed.</p>	
12	<p>Committee Minutes</p> <p>The minutes for the following meetings were received and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDIT, 05 September 2019 • Staff Engagement Group, 06 September 2019 • Student Engagement Group, 09 September 2019 	
13	<p>Date of Next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 January 2020 at 5.30pm 	
14	<p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>The Committee agreed the meeting had covered its Terms of Reference.</p>	

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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 (Except Item 8.3)

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**