

Engagement Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: Engagement 2020-21/02

Date and time: Tuesday 03 November 2020 at 5:00pm

Location: Online

Members present: Debbie Hutchison, Board Member (Chair)
Sheena Devlin, Board Member (until Item 9)
Katrina Hodgson, Board Member
Margaret Cook, Principal
Alex Wilson, HISA Perth President
Miranda Landale, Co-opted Board Member

In attendance: Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Catherine Etri, Associate Principal (Curriculum)
Katy Lees, Head of HR & Organisational Development
Aimee Cuthbert, HISA Perth Students' Association Coordinator
Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: Andrew Comrie, Board Member
John Dare, Staff Board Member
Cameron Murray, HISA Perth VP Education & Engagement

Chair: **Debbie Hutchison**

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 3

Summary of Action Items			
Ref	Action	Responsibility	Time Line
7.1	Student Completion & Progression Associate Principal to circulate full comparative information on completion and progression stats when available	Associate Principal	Next meeting
8.2	Balanced Scorecard Formatting of indexing to be consistent.	Project & Planning Officer	Board meeting
8.3	COVID 19 Audits Challenge Responses Review of response papers to reflect suggestions as noted in minutes.	Vice Principal	Audit Committee
10.1	HR Update Mandatory training for Board Members to be reviewed.	Head of HR & OD/Clerk	Next Meeting

DRAFT

Minutes:

Item		Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies noted.</p>	
2.	<p>Additions to the Agenda</p> <p>An update on Perth-focused issues arising from the National Student Survey was added as Item 6.3</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item</p> <p>There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 29 August 2019</p> <p>The minutes were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p>	
	<p><u>6.1 HISA Perth Update</u></p> <p>Action 1: HISA Perth President to report back on how impact of Class Rep Training would be measured</p> <p>Action Update: On Agenda under Item 6.2</p> <p>Action 2: Committee to be updated about final arrangements for the proposed Student Hardship Fund at the next meeting.</p> <p>Action Update: On Agenda under Item 6.2</p> <p><u>6.2 Perth Partnership Project</u></p> <p>Action 1: The full Partnership Project proposal will be tabled at the next Engagement Committee meeting.</p> <p>Action Update: On Agenda under Item 6.1</p> <p>Action 2: Associate Principal to circulate IT & wi-fi survey report from Transitions Project once data analysed.</p> <p>Action Update: Analysis noted within Digital Poverty report (Item 7.3)</p> <p><u>7.3 Risk Register – Engagement Committee</u></p>	<p>On Agenda</p> <p>On Agenda</p> <p>On Agenda</p> <p>On Agenda</p> <p>On Agenda</p>

	<p>Action: updates required to Risk Register, viz:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Risk 1 – measure of local engagement to be reviewed, with a possible link to the Balanced Scorecard. b) Risk 3 – progress on the Business Development Strategy to be added. c) Risk 23 – Digital Poverty to be referenced. Clerk to action d) Wider COVID risks linked to anticipated outbreaks in winter should be reflected. <p>Action update: All updates completed</p> <p><u>8.1 External Engagement Update</u></p> <p>Action: Student representation at transnational partner institutions to be discussed between the College and HISA.</p> <p>Action Update: On Agenda under Item 9.1</p> <p><u>10.1 Board Development Activities 2020/21</u></p> <p>Action: Soundings to be sought from Chairs' Committee re preferred timings and location/delivery of the sessions.</p> <p>Action Update: Completed</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>On Agenda</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Student Engagement</p>	
<p>6.1</p>	<p>Perth Partnership Project</p> <p>HISA Perth President introduced Paper 2, noting that the Paper has been discussed at Student Engagement Group, and that proposed actions related to issues raised directly by students through the consultation phase – links with College departments will be established to ensure that actions are progressed.</p> <p>Chair thanked HISA Perth for such an accomplished document.</p> <p>Board Member echoed comments in paper around digital exclusion, and asked whether external sources of assistance such as Connected Scotland had been approached. Associate Principal noted that external sources were covered within the Digital Poverty paper tabled later in the meeting. HISA Perth President noted that this issue would be discussed with students at the next Student Representative Council scheduled for 11 November.</p> <p>The 2020/21 Perth Partnership Project was APPROVED.</p>	

<p>6.2</p>	<p>HISA Perth Plan of Work</p> <p>HISA Perth President presented Paper 3, highlighting key items for committee to note</p> <p>HISA Perth is working with Chinese students on representative structures.</p> <p>Key impact measures within the Plan of Work had been clarified.</p> <p>COVID 19 Student Support Fund has now been launched and funds are being awarded.</p> <p>Principal expressed thanks on behalf of College Senior Management Team for the Plan of Work, and Chair agreed, noting that document would be good for tracking purposes.</p>	
<p>6.3</p>	<p>NSS Perth</p> <p>Chair noted the paper circulated by email on 30 October, which provided an extract of Perth data from the UHI NSS results discussed at the last meeting.</p> <p>Associate Principal summarised the main aspects of the paper, noting the impact of COVID due to the timing of the survey, and the College's approach to intervention (ie any programme rated below 80% is highlighted to the appropriate Dean and an action plan is developed to look at cross-College improvements).</p> <p>Associate Principal advised that overall satisfaction for Perth HE programmes was down 4% on previous year, and noted in particular that there were specific concerns around the delivery model for Learning Community (although the move to blended learning may have a positive impact).</p> <p>HISA Perth President commented that the presentation of these results was very helpful.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Curriculum</p>	
<p>7.1</p>	<p>Student Completion & Progression update</p> <p>Associate Principal provided a verbal update on the current situation regarding completion and progression, noting that while most of the 300+ students who had not completed their 2019/20 courses due to COVID-19 impacting on practical elements had now done so, a number of were still working to complete.</p>	

	<p>Associate Principal noted that the ongoing situation had made it difficult to receive a final position from SFC re how they will be measuring their KPIs this year, although it is hoped that more information will be available by the next meeting.</p> <p>Associate Principal advised that more courses than had been expected managed to stay in line with previous year. Full comparisons will be provided to Committee when known.</p>	Associate Principal
7.2	<p>Student Recruitment</p> <p>Associate Principal provided a verbal update on current student numbers, noting that 1074 FE students had been recruited against a target of 1164, although withdrawals will have an impact on funded positions. This figure compares well against other colleges, and January starts should allow the annual targets to be met as more people may see college an option in the post-COVID environment. Board Member noted that more students are anticipated to opt to stay on at school due to blended learning.</p> <p>Associate Principal advised that HE numbers were showing strongly, with current numbers running at an FTE equivalent of 1982 for the year against a target for 1992. Associate Principal indicated that the College would normally be around 100 behind target at this time of year so this represents a positive picture and justifies the high level of focus given to the recruitment drive over the summer.</p>	
7.3	<p>Digital Poverty</p> <p>Associate Principal summarised the main issues outlined in Paper 4, noting the identified need to address the issues raised and the use of a Transitions Project by way of response. Associate Principal noted the speedy reaction in compiling and issuing a survey and the wide engagement this produced, and the identification of 758 students affected by digital poverty.</p> <p>Associate Principal outlined the various routes of provision for around 700 additional laptops and wireless devices, and noted the application to Connecting Scotland for mobile devices.</p> <p>Principal noted the huge team effort of staff across the College to make such a difference in this important area and Committee recorded their thanks to all involved.</p>	

	<p>Committee requested that the following additions/revisions be considered for Paper 8 (External Auditor challenge statement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area 1 (p2) – list of all relevant policies, or link to policies pages, should be provided 	Vice Principal
9	External Engagement	
9.1	<p>External Engagement Update</p> <p>Vice Principal presented Paper 9, which covers 2 months due to Committee timings, and noted the standard report had been augmented with an appendix detailing a transnational education annual report re work in China during 2019/20.</p> <p>Vice Principal highlighted that COVID 19 had resulted in the cancellation of the 2020 Summer School, and that the 2021 School would need to be reviewed in terms of viability.</p> <p>HISA Perth President asked what additional support was being made available for students on international programmes. Vice Principal advised that students were being supported by the Institute in China and via local tutors.</p> <p>Chair asked about the recognition of UHI degrees noted in Paper 9 appendix. Vice Principal clarified that the success of the project has allowed students to see the quality of teaching within the Partnership and has encouraged more to choose to complete their Honours year in Perth, which opens routes for attaining preferred destinations for Masters programmes.</p>	
10	Staff Engagement	
10.1	<p>HR Update</p> <p>Head of HR & Organisational Development presented Paper 10 for information, highlighting that clarification was awaited with reference to extension of the government's furlough scheme.</p> <p>HISA Perth President asked whether the long-term sickness levels reported are likely to impact on student experience. Head of HR & Organisational Development noted that provisions were in place to ensure this is not the case.</p> <p>Head of HR & Organisational Development noted that mandatory training for Board Members was due for review. This would be looked at with Clerk and brought back to Committee</p>	Head of HR & OD/Clerk

11	Board & Policy Development	
11.1	<p>Addressing Racism - Update</p> <p>Principal noted with regret that not as much progress had been made on establishing the membership of the SLWG as had been hoped, therefore the timescales for reporting would need to be deferred to the March Board meeting.</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, 17 September 2020; • Staff Engagement Group, 03 September 2020; • Student Engagement Group, 16 September 2020. <p>Head of HR & Organisational Development advised Committee that Staff Engagement Group is currently without a Chair, so the opportunity was being take to review membership of the Group.</p>	
13	<p>Date of Next meeting</p> <p>Thursday 28 January 2021 @ 5:00pm</p>	
13	<p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>The Committee agreed the meeting had covered its Terms of Reference.</p>	

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 2018. 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 2018? **Yes** **No**