

Learner Experience Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: Learner Experience 2022-23/03

Date: Wednesday 08 February 2023

Location: Boardroom (Braham Room 019)

Members present: Margaret Cook, Principal
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal
Jenny Hamilton, Board Member
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member
Liam Fowley, Student Board Member
Catherine Etri, Vice Principal (Academic)
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Deborah Lally, Head of Student Experience
Robert Boyd, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee

In attendance: Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board

Apologies: Fiona Martin, Board Member
Todor Pavlov-Kennedy, Student Board Member
Rosalind Bryce, Chair of Scholarship & Research Committee
David Gourley, Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement

Chair: **Margaret Cook**

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 7

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Minutes:

| Item | | Action |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies.</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Additions To The Agenda</p> <p>None</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</p> <p>None</p> | |
| 4. | <p>Minutes of Meeting held on 23 November 2022</p> <p>The minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p> | |
| 5. | <p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p> <p><u>6.2 Safeguarding Policy & Procedure</u> Action: Head of Student Experience to prepare annual report on safeguarding issues for each Cycle 4 LEC, then feeding to June Board Status: Not complete – due Cycle 4</p> <p><u>7.1 HISA Perth Plan of Work 2022-23</u> Action: Student Board Member to issue the updated version of the Plan of Work prior to Committee meeting scheduled for February 2023. Status: On Agenda under Item 7.1</p> | <p>Head of Student Experience</p> |
| 6 | <p>Items For Approval</p> <p>There were no items presented to this meeting for approval.</p> | |
| 7 | <p>Learner Experience</p> | |
| 7.1 | <p>HISA Perth Plan of Work 2022-23</p> <p>Student Board Member presented Paper 2 and noted that items marked in bold had been updated since last meeting. Student Board Member highlighted the number of SRC meetings that had taken place and various events scheduled. Student Board Member advised that initial SRC consultation feedback had highlighted student issues around car parking, lifts and free snacks.</p> | |

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| | <p>Student Board Member informed Committee that the departure of the HISA Chief Executive had been announced and an Interim Chief Executive had been appointed for 6 months from mid-February.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether there had been a change in sentiment related to the cost of living crisis. Student Board Member noted that initial student focus centred on costs of food and transport, however a responsive campaign had helped with regard to food therefore current focus is more aligned with getting students to College.</p> <p>Teaching Staff Member queried number of Society formations. Student Board Member clarified that these numbers related to Societies that were registered and active, and there are likely to be a number of inactive Societies still registered. Student Board Member noted that Societies need a constitution to receive funding, and that Societies can achieve UHI Club status to enhance continuity.</p> <p>Chair noted that a huge amount of work had taken place to organise the Winter Fling, however numbers of student attendees had been very disappointing, and asked for thoughts on how to maximise attendance. Student Board Member advised that lessons had been taken on board around the type of marketing used, and the next event will adopt a different approach, including timings. Student Board Member noted that resources obtained for the event had been used in other ways.</p> <p>Chair advised Committee that Academic Partners had recently been advised that local HISA Officers' contracts were being reduced, which would likely have a negative impact, and that rates of pay would be different between local and regional officers. Chair additionally advised that concerns around these issues had been flagged to HISA directly. Student Board Member confirmed that the decision had been made without consultation with local partner students' associations, however it is hoped that the Interim Chief Executive will have an immediate impact in addressing core issues.</p> <p>Chair noted that the Chair of HISA Trustee Board will be written to for clarification on the issues raised and their impacts.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 2.</p> | |
| <p>7.2</p> | <p>Perth Partnership Project 2022-23 - update</p> <p>Student Board Member advised that a meeting with the Depute Principal and the Head of Student Experience had taken place to discuss capacity issues previously noted. Following this meeting, a Short-Life Working Group had been formed to take the matter forward.</p> | |

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| <p>7.3</p> | <p>Induction & Early Student Experience Survey (ESES)</p> <p>Vice Principal (Academic) summarised Paper 3, noting the difference in methodology of conducting this year’s survey from the previous Jisc-online tool to direct involvement of HISA Perth Student Voice representatives and a new interactive tool developed via Slido.</p> <p>Student response rates increased to 59% from previous year’s 38%, and overall satisfaction rates increased to 97% from 93%. The whole exercise and change in methodology was views positively by Education Scotland during their recent visit.</p> <p>Board Member congratulated the team on the results, and queried whether future focus would be on learning rather than teaching. Head of Student Engagement noted that feedback had been provided via student engagement sessions, and Vice Principal (Academic) advised that the questions listed do not necessarily reflect the terminology used at Perth College.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 3.</p> | |
| <p>7.4</p> | <p>Draft HMI Report</p> <p>Vice Principal (Academic) advised that a full report was not available for circulation as yet, however was able to verbally update Committee that feedback provided had been very positive and that the College was seen to be highly effective. Vice Principal (Academic) noted that the final report was due to be received at the end of March, and it was intended to invite the Inspector to the next meeting to allow further discussion.</p> | |
| <p>8</p> | <p>Curriculum</p> | |
| <p>8.1</p> | <p>Student Completion & Progression – update</p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided a verbal update on student completion and progression rates, noting that no information had yet been received from SFC re KPI data to allow a formal report to be prepared.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that collation of destination information was in hand, however early indicators were that full-time numbers were up and withdrawal rates were flat.</p> <p>Following a query around withdrawal rates, Head of Student Experience clarified that early withdrawal rates were not recorded, however data available shows that health/personal reasons and going into employment were the 2 main factors in withdrawals.</p> | |

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| <p>8.2</p> | <p>Student Recruitment – update</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that FE numbers for AY2022/23 were likely to surpass credit target following the January recruitment process, however HE numbers will be approximately 400 short of target.</p> <p>The AY2023/24 recruitment cycle has commenced, with targets submitted to UHI.</p> <p>Vice Principal (External) queried conversion rates. Head of Student Experience advised that these were improving but this was likely to be down to students changing mid-course or keeping options open.</p> | |
| <p>8.3</p> | <p>Curriculum Review</p> <p>Vice Principal (Academic) advised that the Curriculum Review had commenced, and involves a staff team from across the College. Some courses had already been demitted, and where possible duplication will be removed re HNC and 1st Year degree programmes.</p> <p>Vice Principal (Academic) noted that the UHI Curriculum Review was being conducted by external consultants and is likely to impact on Academic Partners' HE areas.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether any areas had been identified to fill in gaps. Vice Principal (Academic) advised that Teacher Education in Craft & Design had been identified as a new growth area due to national prioritisation, and additional investment in sports therapy to cope with increased demand had opened new possibilities. In addition, Perth College was looking at filling gaps with other partner colleges that are running courses due to be discontinued there, but continuing at Perth.</p> <p>Staff Board Member queried whether 2-year foundation degrees were yet available in Scotland. Vice Principal (Academic) responded that these were not yet available.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether there was any scope to look at accreditation for private providers. Vice Principal (Academic) advised that there was scope in this area but consideration would need to be given with regards to how to draw down funding in this area.</p> | |
| <p>9</p> | <p>College Policies & Strategy</p> <p>There were no items presented to this meeting.</p> | |

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| 10 | <p>Committee Minutes</p> <p>Committee noted the following minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarship & Research Committee, 18 January 2023 • Student Engagement Group, 11 November 2022 | |
| 10 | <p>Date of Next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 26 April 2023 | |
| 11 | <p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>Committee confirmed the business of the meeting had been consistent with the 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

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**