

# Learner Experience Committee

## Minutes

**Meeting reference:** Learner Experience 2022-23/01

**Date:** Wednesday 14 September 2022

**Location:** Boardroom (Braham Room 019)

**Members present:** Margaret Cook, Principal (Chair)  
Sheena Devlin, Board Member (from Item 7.1)  
Jenny Hamilton, Board Member  
Fiona Martin, Board Member (between Items 6.1 and 8.2)  
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member  
Liam Fowley, Student Board Member  
Todor Pavlov-Kennedy, Student Board Member (until Item 8.2)  
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal  
Robert Boyd, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee (until Item 8.2)  
Rosalind Bryce, Chair of Scholarship & Research Committee  
Deborah Lally, Head of Student Experience  
David Gourley, Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement

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

**Apologies:** Catherine Etri, Vice Principal (Academic)  
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)

**Chair:** **Margaret Cook**

**Minute Taker:** Ian McCartney

**Quorum:** 7

**Minutes:**

Item		Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular new Board Members Jenny Hamilton and Liam Fowley, before noting apologies.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Additions To The Agenda</b></p> <p>None</p>	
3.	<p><b>Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</b></p> <p>None</p>	
4.	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting held on 27 April 2022</b></p> <p>The minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b></p> <p><b><u>7.2 Student Destinations</u></b>  <b>Action:</b> Head of Student Experience to summarise Report and circulate once available  <b>Status:</b> Report complete, circulation to follow</p> <p><b><u>7.2 CDN Training Module</u></b>  <b>Action:</b> Clerk to circulate information when module goes live.  <b>Status:</b> Awaiting confirmation</p> <p><b><u>8.3 SFC Benchmarking Report on KPIs</u></b>  <b>Action:</b> Head of Student Experience to produce paper and circulate to Committee once data available  <b>Status:</b> KPIs to be finalised at end September 2022, following delays caused by late issuing of KPIs</p>	
6	<p><b>Strategy &amp; Policy</b></p>	
6.1	<p><b>College Strategy Alignment</b></p> <p>Depute Principal provided a verbal summary of next steps regarding the implementation of the Strategic Plan, noting that CMT would be engaged in breaking down targets over 5 years within individual teams, with a twice-yearly review linked to planning and budgeting processes in order to facilitate linked initiatives. In addition, consideration will be given to whether all KPIs will be regularly reported on, or just specific</p>	

	<p>areas. Depute Principal advised that there was a significant amount of work required to complete this phase of the process.</p> <p>Board Member advised there should be a focus for each Committee based on their remits.</p> <p>Teaching Staff Member's understanding was that Committees would be seeing all of document. Board Member suggested starting with the full document then reducing this down where required. This approach was <b>agreed</b>.</p>	
<b>6.2</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding Policy &amp; Procedure</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience introduced Paper 3, noting that this represented a minor iteration from the previous policy, mainly around legislative updates.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that the policy was now part of the UHI Single Policy Environment, however some contextualisation to Perth College had been completed. Head of Student Experience further noted that the recent Education Scotland review had expressed satisfaction with procedures, although some attention was required regarding awareness of PREVENT legislation.</p> <p>Board Member queried Board's responsibility in terms of strategic oversight in this policy area. Principal noted that reports were mainly operations, but suggested an annual report on safeguarding issues be prepared by Head of Student Experience for each Cycle 4 LEC, then feeding to June Board. This approach was <b>agreed</b>.</p> <p>Committee <b>APPROVED</b> the Safeguarding Policy &amp; Procedure.</p>	Head of Student Experience
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Student Experience</b></p>	
<b>7.1</b>	<p><b>Perth Partnership Project 2022-23</b></p> <p>Student Board Member presented Paper 3, summarising the process for consultation, and the newly-formed officer team's reflections on feedback, before arriving at the 3 priority areas of Mental Health, Creating and Promoting Social Events on Campus, and Cost &amp; Choice of Food on Campus.</p> <p>Student Board Member noted that HISA Perth were currently finalising their Plan of Work for the year, which hadn't been completed due to Freshers Week and Inductions.</p> <p>Chair expressed disappointment that Committee was unable to see the full Plan of Work at this stage, noting that, whilst the success of Freshers is to be acknowledged, the norm is to present the Plan at the</p>	

	<p>first meeting of the academic year. Student Board Member apologised and advised that the Plan would be issued in advance of the next meeting.</p> <p>Chair expressed surprise that, given the issues around cost of living, this was not an area of priority. Student Board Member noted that cost of living had not been identified at the time of the consultation with students, however issues affecting cost of living will be absorbed into the Food of Campus priority area.</p> <p>Board Member noted that the consultation had amounted to 39 respondents, and asked how confident HISA Perth was that this reflects student opinion. Student Board Member responded that any student response places importance on the issue identified, however acknowledged that student engagement had been a challenge, combined with online consultation fatigue – HISA Perth is looking to address low levels of engagement.</p> <p>Depute Principal noted that College focus groups regularly achieve higher levels of student engagement than 39 out of 2,500 full-time students, which indicates that HISA Perth’s mechanism for engagement is fundamentally flawed. Head of Student Experience offered support in capturing input from students, but advised that HISA Perth should consider the timings of when they look to capture data, as May/June is far from ideal.</p> <p>Depute Principal queried what expertise HISA Perth have in the area of mental health. Student Board Member referred to the “Partnership” element of the project, and HISA Perth would be looking to work with the Perth College professional team in this area.</p> <p>Student Board Member sought to reassure Committee that consultation is not a closed door, and HISA Perth is constantly taking feedback and adjusting its priorities accordingly. Student Board Member noted that higher levels of engagement are already being seen this year compared to last year.</p> <p>Chair requested that Partnership Project be reviewed to reflect Cost of Living and resubmitted for approval, and that the HISA Perth Plan of Work be forwarded to Clerk for circulation to Committee members as soon as possible.</p>	<p>HISA Perth/ Clerk</p>
<p><b>7.2</b></p>	<p><b>OBI Awards 2022 Report</b></p> <p>Student Board Member presented Paper 4 for information, noting that the 2022 OBIs were the most successful to date in terms of nominations and attendance at the event.</p>	

	<p>Teaching Staff Member noted that STEM tends to show poorly in terms of take-up of OBIs, and asked for thoughts on reasons why this may be the case. Student Board Member noted that HISA Perth was looking to reach under-represented areas, and part of this is to make the nominations process as simple as possible.</p> <p>Committee <b>noted</b> Paper 4.</p>	
<p><b>7.3</b></p>	<p><b>Student Satisfaction &amp; Experience Survey</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided a verbal update on the SSES noting that response rates had fallen since College started to conduct these in-house.</p> <p>Board Member asked about overall satisfaction differences between FE and HE. Head of Student Experience advised that differences tend to be that FE students are more frequently on campus and receive more direct support.</p> <p>Teaching Staff Member noted that NSS results were much more favourable, with a 93% satisfaction rate, 4<sup>th</sup> in overall satisfaction rates and 3<sup>rd</sup> in PG satisfaction rates. Chair noted that the SSES had a much smaller sample size, which may skew results.</p> <p>Staff Board Member queried whether the products on offer need looked at. Chair agreed, as there are a number of courses across UHI that aren't attracting students.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether anything can be done from FE to HE. Chair advised that transition numbers were good when compared to direct entry to HE.</p>	
<p><b>7.4</b></p>	<p><b>Student Funding Update</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided a brief update on Student Funding, noting that, thanks to staffing restructures and a move to online submissions, all applications were up to date (compared to generally being 1 month behind at this time of year), which has allowed the Funding Team to focus on processing, As a result, funding has now been released for FE Bursaries and all students are registered for Student Loans.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that, due to these improvements, the College is now able to offer tailored support to cohorts of disadvantaged students (eg care experienced), and this has improved relations with students.</p>	

<b>8</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	
<b>8.1</b>	<p><b>Student Completion &amp; Retention – update</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided a verbal update on completion and retention numbers as 2020/21 figures are in the process of being finalised following deferrals over summer and returns/non-returns.</p> <p>Sector indicators are that success rates have declined, however Perth College is likely to be ahead of this position.</p>	
<b>8.2</b>	<p><b>Student Recruitment – update</b></p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided a verbal update on recruitment numbers, noting that FE numbers were healthier than HE, however funding is not secured until November; however confidence was high that FE targets will be hit.</p> <p>HE numbers, on the other hand, are concerning. This includes issues around progression and Networked delivery. Whilst there are pockets of healthy numbers (Health &amp; Social Care, Childcare), Humanities and STEM are struggling.</p> <p>Board Member queried drop-out rate trends, and what impact shortfalls may have on courses.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that, while that information is not readily to hand, high-level data on drop-out rates can be provided to future Committees.</p> <p>With regard to impact of shortfalls, Head of Student Experience advised that only 1 course at Perth College has thus far been affected, with students transferring to other courses/programmes. The main impact is on part-time/hourly contracted staff as full-time staff are utilised first.</p> <p>More broadly, Head of Student Experience noted that many HNC courses are recruiting at 66-75% across the sector, which is a huge concern.</p> <p>Head of Learning &amp; Teaching Enhancement asked if there were ways to shore up the pipeline to better support HE programmes, such as Direct Access short courses. Depute Principal noted that these were in the gift of UHI, not Perth College.</p> <p>Chair noted that UHI did not get additional student numbers during COVID due to not having achieved previous targets, and these numbers have been retained by other Universities.</p>	

	<p>Teaching Staff Member noted that UHI offers an online access course for Science, however this type of approach would require teaching staff to work over the summer across the Partnership.</p> <p>Head of Learning &amp; Teaching Enhancement queried the scope for reverse articulation. Head of Student Experience advised that One-Plus Funding would allow for this, but it's currently difficult to access these students; Scottish Government only looks at non-completion rates. Chair noted that night schools may be the untapped market as this allows focus on school leavers now going into employment.</p> <p>Board Member requested a discussion document for future options be prepared for a subsequent LEC meeting. Chair <b>agreed</b> that SMT would take this forward.</p>	SMT
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Committee Minutes</b></p> <p>Committee <b>noted</b> the following minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Engagement Group, 20 June 2022</li> </ul>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Date of Next meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 23 November 2022</li> </ul>	
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Review of Meeting</b></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**

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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**

DRAFT