

# Learner Experience Committee

## Minutes

**Meeting reference:** Learner Experience 2023-24/01

**Date:** Wednesday 6 September 2023

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

**Members present:** Margaret Cook, Principal  
Jenny Hamilton, Board Member  
Fiona Smith, Student Board Member  
David Gourley, Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement  
Robert Boyd, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee  
Catherine Etri, Vice Principal (Academic)  
Deborah Lally, Head of Student Experience

**In attendance:** Isobel Syme, PA to Principal and Chief Executive  
Colina Wright, Interim Student Voice Manager

**Apologies:** Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member  
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal  
Rosalind Bryce, Chair of Scholarship & Research Committee  
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)

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

**Minute Taker:** Isobel Syme

**Quorum:** 7

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**We will act with integrity in everything we do**

**Student Centred + Innovative + Ambitious + Respectful + Inclusive + Collaborative**

**Minutes:**

Item		Action
1.	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b> Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.	
2.	<b>Additions To The Agenda</b> None	
3.	<b>Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</b> None	
4.	<b>Minutes of Meeting held on 26 April 2023</b> The minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting with the change to wording below.  Apologies - Alistair Wylie, Board Member. Mr Wylie had not commenced his term as Board Member on the date of the meeting.	
5.	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b> N/A	
6	<b>Strategy and Policy</b>	
6.1	Policy for Approval – N/A	
7	<b>Learner Experience</b>	
7.1	HISA Perth Strategic Update  Student Board Member highlighted a number of recent and ongoing activities. Colina Wright is undertaking the Student Voice Manager role on an interim basis. There has been an external refresh with regard to HISA's title. External consultancy took place to appoint a new chief executive officer. A consultative exercise is also taking place regarding all the roles within HISA to ensure the roles are reflective of what is required – ongoing. Coming towards the end of our current strategic plan and will soon start taking forward a new one with achievable targets.  Chair queried the staffing complement within Perth as we have had a vacancy for a year.  Student Board Member clarified that interviews are taking place next	

	<p>week and multiple candidates had applied. Looking at current capacity within the team and administration support.</p> <p>Vice Principal, Academic queried the involvement of Peredit in consultation and how this had been managed.</p> <p>Student Board Member confirmed that Peredit were only involved in the CEO recruitment and that consultation round role changes is being undertaken internally.</p> <p>Board Member advised that a good student service and active student voice would be welcomed and highlighted the difficulties in student engagement at the moment.</p> <p>Board Member advised that there is a lot of good practice within the sector and in other colleges and we could look to “piggy back” on to this.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience queried the next steps with regard to the internal consultation.</p> <p>Student Board Member explained that communications will go out and that an update will be provided to this group at the next meeting.</p>	Student Board Member
7.2	<p>HISA Board Project</p> <p>Committee <b>NOTED</b> Paper 2.</p> <p>Student Board Member provided key highlights within the paper and outlined how this project report had been put together and who had been involved. The main output is the Action Plan, making sure we empower the student voice and working with partners.</p> <p>Chair commended on a really good piece of work and agreed that student voices on boards and committees is very important.</p> <p>Board Member put forward the view that trying to keep track of the implementation of the plan might be quite challenging.</p> <p>Student Board Member explained that a lot of the recommendations are being tracked internally and work has already started on this. The plan will be tracked locally by the Assistant Voice Managers.</p> <p>The committee <b>RECOMMENDED</b> this paper to the Board.</p>	

7.3	<p>HISA Elections Report 2023 Committee <b>NOTED</b> Paper 3.</p> <p>Student Board member talked to some of the main highlights within the paper.</p> <p>The election performance at UHI Perth saw a 1.77% turnout across all modes of study, while turnout across UHI was 2.9%. UHI Perth had the eighth highest turnout per unit of population, of any Academic Partner during the 2023 election.</p> <p>Chair expressed disappointment regarding the resignation of the Education role position and hoped that an election is held as soon as possible to allow us to move on with a full team.</p> <p>Board Member requested information on the roles within HISA UHI.</p> <p>Student Board Member will send information on the current roles and update as required.</p> <p>Interim Student Voice Manager explained that we cannot co-opt members and that it would be beneficial to have second place people rather than having to have a by-election.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that the appendixes information show that voters are declining year by year. It was agreed that we need to see how we can turn this round and what support we can give. It was also agreed that information across the sector would be helpful.</p> <p>Vice Principal Academic suggested that a comparison with the rest of the sector would be really helpful to see where we sit on the Scottish map with regard to engagement and to look at good practice across the sector. Need to drill down into the data.</p> <p>Interim Student Voice Managed explained that network building and sharing information is key. We need to look at how people engage and break down the data with regarding to voting across UHI.</p>	Student Board Member
7.4	<p>Student Funding Update</p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided a verbal update.</p> <p>Numbers are constantly changing at the time – this academic year against last academic year numbers are all on the increase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bursary applications – 442 last year/563 this year</li> <li>• EMA applications – 114 last year/168 this year</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Care – 79 last year/107 this year</li> <li>• FE Hardship applications – 74 last year/118 this year</li> <li>• HE Hardship applications – 67 last year/114 this year</li> </ul> <p>EMA applications – students are being encouraged to apply for hardship funds as well.</p> <p>HE hardship funds – we are going to use funds from another pot to start with until we get monies through.</p> <p>Currently two week turn-around for applications to be processed. Daily drop-in dedicated sessions with ticket system are in place.</p> <p>Board Member queried the threshold spoken about.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience explained that the amount of money students can get is capped for EMAs.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	
8.1	<p>Student Completion and Progression – update</p> <p>Head of Student Experience updated the group. ASOS continues to delay results being processed. We have done our utmost to have no detriment to students. Communication went out to all students. The general message – we would allow progression and then depending on outstanding results we would support as much as possible. There is a weekly return going to the Scottish Government re this who are mostly interested in apprentices and how many have been impacted by this and what the impact has been. This has included pay, promotion, employers, etc. Where we can we are confirming qualifications.</p> <p>Graduation is continuing although this will be slightly different this year in that we will be holding a celebration event rather than a graduation event.</p> <p>Prizegiving event took place in June this year and was very well attended.</p> <p>ASOS is continuing along with strike action.</p> <p>Chair provided clarity with regard to the Graduation event.</p>	
8.2	<p>Student Recruitment Update</p> <p>Head of Student Experience updated on current numbers.</p>	

	<p>First week of teaching for most students.</p> <p>FE is looking reasonable, however numbers can be changeable. It will be the latter part of September before we have more accurate numbers.</p> <p>HE could be better, however this is being worked on and will continue to change. Gaps with both new starts and continuing students.</p> <p>We will continue to look at where we can increase numbers including January starts.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that this is the picture across the sector.</p> <p>Chair explained that HE is a real challenge due to the proximity of other institutions and the fact that other institutions have reduced their entry requirements.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Committee Minutes</b></p> <p>Committee <b>NOTED</b> the following minutes:</p> <p>Student Engagement Group – 3 May 2023 – Paper 5  Student Engagement Group – 20 June 2023 – Paper 6</p>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Date of Next meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 15 November 2023, 2 pm</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 and <b>NOTED</b> Paper 7.</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**

DRAFT