

Learner Experience Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: Learner Experience 2024-25/03

Date: Wednesday 19 February 2024

Location: Boardroom (Braham Room 019)

Members present: Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal (Academic)
Chris Lusk, Board Member
Chris Whatley, Board Member
Alistair Wylie, Board Member
Xander McDade, Student Board Member
Andi Garrity, Student Board Member
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member (from Item 7.4)
David Paterson, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee
Christiana Margiotti, Director of Curriculum
Deborah Lally, Director of Student Experience
David Gourley, Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement

In attendance: Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board of Management

Apologies: Margaret Cook, Principal
Ronnie Dewar, Staff Board Member
Nicky Inglis, Director of Curriculum
Rosalind Bryce, Chair of Scholarship & Research Committee

Chair: **Lorenz Cairns**
Minute Taker: Ian McCartney
Quorum: 7

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Minutes:

Item		Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies Depute Principal, Chairing the meeting on behalf of Principal. welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular new members Chris Whatley and David Paterson, and noted apologies.	
2.	Additions To The Agenda There were no additions to the Agenda.	
3.	Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item No conflicts of interest were declared.	
4.	Minutes of Meeting held on 20 November 2024 The minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.	
5.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes <u>Item 10 – Review of Meeting</u> Clerk confirmed detail around Vice Chair of the Committee.	
6.1	Self-Evaluation & Action Plans (SEAP) Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement presented Paper 2 and highlighted some key areas before open a discussion on the Plan. Board Member noted that it would have been useful to see more reference to areas of outstanding academic excellence as well as in provision of support to students to enable use as a marketing tool, as those academic institutions doing best ae those that are showing their excellence. Depute Principle noted that, while there was benchmarking of courses against a national average, there perhaps isn't amplification of these within the college's marketing to take advantage of this. Board Member queried what references to alternative exam arrangements mean in terms of delivery. Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement advised that awarding bodies are pushing to make assessment procedures easier to implement and be more sensible about how colleges can assess, as well as looking at accessible assessment within the classroom rather than provision of alternative times, etc.	

	<p>Depute Principal (Academic) noted that the most recent Education Scotland visit had been very positive, however there was reflection on the challenges being faced around assessments during the visit, and it had been noted that these challenges were being experienced elsewhere too.</p> <p>Director of Curriculum advised that single-room assessment requests were coming in very late to there needs to be a strategy to deal with this. Student Board Member noted that 40% of schools were seeking similar arrangements and this is therefore going to land in colleges and universities in the near future. Board Member noted potential impacts on attainment of excellence as referred to earlier.</p> <p>Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement advised that some assessments were being redesigned to be more progressive and closer in design to what students aspire. Depute Principal (Academic) noted that the focus needs to remain on getting students to the next level.</p> <p>Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement concluded that there is a need to focus on the tools and techniques to reduce additional requirements in order to progress through college and beyond, to empower students to be prepared for the world of work.</p> <p>Paper 2 was NOTED.</p>	
6.2	<p>Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework</p> <p>Clerk presented Paper 3 for information only, noting that a Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review briefing note for Boards was expected to follow shortly.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 3.</p>	
7.1	<p>HISA Perth Update</p> <p>Student Board Member summarised Paper 4, highlighting the positive levels of engagement with Student Voice Reps (SVRs) and the refresh of the OBI Awards.</p> <p>Board Member queried what was being raised by SVRs as the main issues affecting students. Student Board Member advised that Estates and IT resources were being highlighted as key issues, and it had been helpful for SVRs to have members of PLG attend meetings to provide answers or take issues away for response.</p> <p>Committee discussed issues around certain Travel Cards not being</p>	

	<p>accepted by Stagecoach and therefore having an effect around student finance/attendance. Committee were advised that HISA Perth has raised the matter with both Stagecoach and Perth & Kinross Council to look at solutions.</p> <p>Paper 4 was NOTED.</p>	
7.2	<p>Induction & Early Student Experience (ESES) Survey</p> <p>Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement presented Paper 5, noting that the report summarised results from the Early Student Experience Survey conducted at Perth College in October November 2024.</p> <p>Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement further noted that the ESES was targeted at all students up to Postgraduate level, however response rates were 12% lower than in the previous year. Overall satisfaction rates were down by 15, but still very high (FE = 98%; HE = 94%).</p> <p>Committee were advised that the key drop was around students with physical impairments and mobility issues, however this is likely to be mainly linked to the ongoing Brahan lift issue.</p> <p>Board Member noted that the satisfaction rates are the kind of positive results that need to be promoted.</p> <p>Board Member queried why there was such a large drop in response rates around degree students. Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement advised that the survey had been conducted in the same way as the previous year, which had seen a record response rate, however responses will be examined at a granular level to help understand this.</p> <p>Director of Curriculum highlighted that the reduction in staffing is likely to have had an impact, particularly around PATs, as the focus group/survey double up last year appear to have helped to drive up response rates.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Academic) noted that the NSS Survey was currently open, and this will be reported back to a future LEC. Director or Curriculum advised that a number of degree students focused on NSS rather than other surveys.</p> <p>Student Board Member noted there were significant differences in terms of inductions received by FE and HE students, and suggested that a level of standardisation needs to be delivered following the loss of staff. Depute Principal agreed, noting that the focus should be on</p>	

	<p>achieving the right balance between core and bespoke inductions.</p> <p>Board Member queried current tensions around how to deal with AI, and whether this requires more in-house or observed assessments. Director of Learning Teaching & Quality Enhancement noted that AI being passed off as original work was definitely an issue and there is a need to look at authentic assessment methods to address.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 5.</p>	
7.3	<p>SFC Benchmark Report on KPIs</p> <p>Director of Student Experience noted that SFC have not yet released the benchmarks, therefore there no update has been provided to Committee. No timescale for when these would be produced (normally published in December or January each year). Delay has been linked to industrial action impacting on statutory returns.</p>	
7.4	<p>Annual Corporate Parenting Impact Report</p> <p>Director of Student Experience presented Paper 6 for information, noting that the Paper provides a summary of responsibilities, that the Strategy Plan to address has been published on the website, and that the Report provides a snapshot of activities, including some beyond the definition of “looked after children”.</p> <p>Director of Student Experience also noted that data around drop-in success rates had been captured and was being examined by a Special Interest Group on the subject.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether any information had been generated from Exit Interviews. Director of Student Experience advised that reasons for leaving are recorded and disclosed to the relevant PAT and investigated. This data had not yet been fully analysed in granular detail, but mental health appears to be the main issue for all students.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 6</p>	
8.1	<p>Student Recruitment Update</p> <p>Director of Student Experience provided the latest update regarding student numbers for 2024/45, predicting a shortfall of approx. 200 full-time HE, with FE still on track to meet the credit target.</p> <p>Director of Student Experience noted that Semester 2 recruitment was slightly ahead of expectations and numbers will be crunched to arrive at a final figure.</p>	

	<p>Board Member queried what conversion rates were being achieved, and what factors were affecting applications. Director of Student Experience advised that conversion rates differed for different courses and depends on the level of the course, and further advised that analysis was being conducted to better understand the increase in applications in comparison with previous years and this would be brought back to committee at a future point.</p> <p>Depute Principal (Academic) noted there were different approaches around unconditional acceptances around the sector, however the final arbiter for student numbers is enrolment rather than applications or acceptances, and a more cautious approach has been adopted this year around targeting.</p> <p>Director of Student Experience advised that 2025/26 targets had been made based on greater intelligence than previously utilised, therefore targets were more realistic.</p> <p>Director of Student Experience confirmed that that following targets for 2025/26 had been submitted to UHI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22,050 FE credits • 1,528 HE FTE <p>Director of Student Experience advised that work will be conducted with Sector area to determine conditionality levels, or where there was a need for tests/performances within the process, and the Admissions Team will always try to schedule and interview as soon as possible in the process. When interviews have taken place, follow-ups to determine decisions take place and are then uploaded to the system, with weekly reporting to senior managers to monitor progress against targets.</p>	Director of Student Experience
9	<p>Committee Minutes</p> <p>There were no Committee Minutes supplied for information</p>	
10	<p>Date of Next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 23 April 2025 	
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** ☒