



GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

ACADEMIC BOARD

DRAFT MINUTE

Minute of the meeting of the Academic Board held on 01 September 2023 at 1.30pm via MS Teams

1. **Sederunt**

Robin Ashton (Chair);
 Derek Smeall (Principal);
 Andy Allan (Director of Learning Innovation and Curriculum);
 Tracy Leavy (Director of Community Engagement and Curriculum);
 Peter Brown (Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum);
 George McGuire (SCM, HCCLD);
 James Davidson (Lecturer, BCI);
 Iain Cameron (Lecturer, ECS)
 John Gallagher (Head of Quality)
 Monica McKerlie (Head of Student Support Services);
 Gary Sharp (Student Support Services Manager);
 Sonique Noreiga (President, Student Association);
 Fiona Templeton (Community Learning and Development Manager);
 Katie McAnenay (Team Leader, Library Services)

In Attendance

Debbie Friel (Senior Committee Coordinator) (purpose of the minute)
 John Montgomery (SCM – HCCLD)
 Grant Sutherland (Active Campus Coordinator); and
 Donald Higgins-Durnan (Corporate Support and Administration Manager)

2. **Apologies**

Arlene Sweeney (Learner Engagement Officer);
 Jason Quinn (Director of Digital Services);
 Emma Leslie (President, Student Association);
 Mae Smillie (Head of Student Information Services); and
 Alastair McGhee (Director of Business Development);

R Ashton welcomed and introduced to the group, Grant Sutherland as the new Active Campus Coordinator and Sonique Noreiga as the Student Association President.

3. **Review of the Academic Board Terms of Reference**

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 15 members in attendance.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

5. **Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 28 April 2023**

The minute of the meeting held on 28 April 2023 was accepted as an accurate record of the business conducted.

6. Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meetings held on 28 April 2023
Matters arising

Item 06a – 28 April 2023 – Quality Handbook

R Ashton noted that a review of the Quality Handbook would be brought back to a future meeting of the Academic Board.

7. Summary of Learner Feedback

The Head of Quality informed members that the Stop and Check survey, which was circulated annually to learners during block one in each academic year, had been created using Microsoft Forms and promoted to learners via their course tutor.

He advised that there had been a significant increase in responses with a total of 1,873 responses received. Furthermore, he advised that some of the questions remained unchanged from the previous year, however learners were given the opportunity of leave additional comments at the end of the survey.

He further conveyed that the feedback on college services remains extremely positive, however, he highlighted that Student Support Services had experienced a slight decrease from 96% to 93%. He surmised that this change might be attributed to a shift in the question format and the exceptionally high demand for counselling services, resulting in occasional extended wait times for access.

ACTION: M McKerlie had requested that J Gallagher include a note or caveat in relation to the counselling services, for the paper when it is presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee.

The Principal observed that 58% of respondents strongly agreed that the College Students Association (SA) had a positive influence on change. However, it's worth noting that 38% of students responded with 'Don't Know.' The Principal emphasised that this presents an opportunity for the College to enhance communication about Student Association activities and further improve its impact.

Members discussed the question pertaining to College Facilities. R Ashton highlighted that it was identified through the Class Representatives that students were unsatisfied mainly with the toilet facilities at the College. He added that this issue would be closely monitored.

Members discussed the refectory:

- G Sharp highlighted that S Noreiga had already met with the new catering body to discuss affordable offerings to be introduced.
- G Harkins highlighted that feedback received from his students were that they found the canteen to be too expensive for most. Furthermore, the school students had a lunch voucher to the value of £3.50 which would not cover the average lunch requirement; and
- I Cameron noted his opinion that the service hours were inadequate. The refectory closed relatively early, leaving students with no option other than the vending machines during the early afternoon break.

ACTION: R Ashton, M McKerlie, Student Presidents, G Sharp to investigate the food offering, pricing and service hours.

R Ashton thanked J Gallagher for his report and noted that the satisfaction rates are very positive.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

8. Review of 2022-23 Student Activity and Outcomes

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement spoke to the content of the report.

R Ashton drew members attention to the table on page one of the report, he highlighted that the College was close to achieving full delivery of its Core Target and at 98.4% this was within the 2% leeway provided by SFC, within which SFC would not clawback funds. An analysis of withdrawal rates was noted as set out in section five of the report.

Additionally, R Ashton provided an overall summary of the FA Credits, noting a significant shortfall. He emphasised the potential for clawback of FA funds was therefore high and the College had set aside income sufficient to respond to an SFC clawback requirement.

R Ashton further noted the positive steps made by the College by increasing the volume of both students recruited from SIMD10 datazones and those with a care experienced background. A key driver in achieving this has been the re-establishment and expansion of our community delivery, and in particular our Community Hub programmes.

He invited questions or comment.

I Cameron highlighted that his department had recognised a slight drop in numbers within HN and Swap Access courses. He queried if this was perhaps due to the Universities lowering their entrance requirements and running similar access programmes.

The Principal agreed that the Universities were encroaching on Colleges and our traditional areas. He advised members that this has been brought to the attention of the Minister and Cabinet Secretary. He reminded members of the 10% reduction which has been imposed upon Colleges by the Scottish Funding Council.

R Ashton highlighted that University applications had increased by 3,000 across Scotland.

T Leavy provided an update on the Community Hub. She noted that her department had a small delivery team for the community and asked members to think on further support for this area.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- i) consider and discuss the student activity and outcome performance data and the evaluative review presented.

9. **Draft 2023/24 Quality Enhancement Priorities**

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality noted that the following high-level College quality enhancement priorities for 2023-24 have been informed by an evaluation of College-level student performance data, a review of student feedback undertaken and the areas for action identified by Education Scotland. He drew member attention to the table on page one of the report which identified six College-level quality enhancement priorities for learning and teaching in 2023-24. He continued to summarise on how each of these areas would be strengthened and progressed.

R Ashton invited questions or feedback from members on the 6 focussed priorities.

G Sharp emphasised that a huge priority this year was to focus on raising the profile of the student association and a key priority to focus on having class reps and a student executive in place.

R Ashton commented that it was most important to ensure that class reps received more support and guidance this year. F Templeton highlighted that the College had contacted SPARQS to provide training sessions, however it was identified that the uptake in past had been poor, and that she and G Sharp were investigating ways of maximising attendance in this area. G Sharp further highlighted that engagement and keeping momentum going with the class reps was key, moving forward.

M McKerlie emphasised that it was the responsibility for all staff to work in partnership, to improve on our learner engagement. She continued to report on the health and wellbeing and noted that the focus this year was to build on resilience.

G Sutherland provide members with a short presentation, highlighting how he would progress on active campus engagement and on raising awareness throughout all areas of the College.

T Leavy thanked G Sutherland for his presentation and reported that all Colleges within the region had now implemented an Active Campus Coordinator, which was funded by Sports Scotland. She further noted that Glasgow Gladiator trials had commenced for the new school of basketball, with 35 students applying. After the Gladiators have selected their team, the remaining students would be invited to join a recreational basketball club.

J Montgomery addressed the budget allocated for the active campus coordinator's activities and emphasised the current financial constraints. He raised the question of whether the SMT could explore the possibility of allocating additional funds to support one-time events for both staff and students.

R Ashton thanked members for their input.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- i) consider and endorse the proposed quality enhancement priorities for 2023-24.

10. Students Association Progress Update

S Noreiga, the Student President highlighted that this report sought to update members on the recent progress and future plans of the Student Association (SA). The Student Presidents have been actively raising awareness and providing support to students.

S Noreiga updated members as to the various campaigns and events taking place and provided an update as to their focus on the planning and preparation for students returning for academic session 2023/24.

Furthermore, she highlighted that their main focus was the freshers events, noting that many organisations were in attendance including, Spike Awareness, Fast Forward, SAMH and the Glasgow Science Centre. This year she explained that the theme had been 'Carnival' and the Student Association had organised entertainment and decorated each campus to suit the theme.

S Noreiga noted that there was a strong team of volunteers to help with the Freshers, which included past and present students of the College. She added that they would be keen to support some form of College recognition for those volunteers.

D Smeall noted that it would be valuable to explore ways in which the College could give a wider recognition to those volunteers.

S Noreiga summarised by highlighting that the Student Association were delighted to announce that they had been shortlisted in the Sustainability in the Learning Experience category by SPARQS and the event would take place on 5th October 2023.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

11. Recruitment Update 2023-2024

The Vice Principal of Curriculum delivered an update on recruitment, noting a slight decrease in all application areas. Additionally, he advised that the College had achieved their 96% of our recruitment target in terms of student enrolment and 88% on our attending enrolment.

A Allan, Faculty Director provided an update as to BCI faculty and reported that Performing Arts, Music Performance and Sound were all over-subscribed. However it was noted that Business and Fashion were low on uptake. The business course was likely to be cancelled as there was competition within this area from City of Glasgow College. He noted failure to recruit for FA's this session and noted that neither Clyde or ourselves had managed to recruit a full group in this area.

T Leavy, Faculty Director, provided an update on HCCLD faculty, noting that the overall situation was very positive. Specifically, Hair, Beauty, Catering, and ESOL classes were in good shape. She mentioned that the Sport program was experiencing a slight recruitment slowdown but was actively working on improving its delivery methods to address this. ESOL classes were at full capacity, with a waiting list of 140 students, and Barbering also had a waiting list of 80. Health and Social Care programs were performing exceptionally well. The only concern was cancellations in Childcare Swap Classes.

R Ashton thanked both Faculty Directors for their input and invited questions or comment.

12. **Update on Action Short of Strike (ASoS) Resulting Boycott**

The Vice Principal Curriculum provided members with an update as to the ASoS and the Resulting Boycott. He noted the following impact:

- 16,736 result entries remain outstanding;
- Of 7,060 completing students, 4,173 have incomplete records representing 59% of all students.
- Among 2,393 full-time only completing students, 1,936 have incomplete records representing 81% of all full-time students.
- just over 4,000 students have not received their full certification from an awarding body.

R Ashton reported that the College continued to liaise closely with universities, employers, and representative bodies and to date have been able to resolve almost all issues. With approximately 300 letters of comfort issued, the College would continue to provide support to students via the email service.

The Principal advised that the Scottish Government have asked Colleges to report on difficulties of student progression as a results of ASoS. He added that the Scottish Government require to recognise that this is a major issue at this time and that actions are required in order to resolve. He emphasised, that at this time, the student journey had not been significantly impacted. Furthermore, he recognised the work of the College staff and their efforts in liaise with employers and universities to lessen the impact of ASoS.

M McKerlie noted that it was important to leave the channels open going into September/October time for those students still wishing to contact the College regarding their certification.

13. **SFC Credit Guidance**

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement informed members that on 12th June, 2023, the Scottish Funding Council published the Credit Guidance which was attached for information, as appendix one of the report.

He advised that the SFC had made two specific changes which would impact substantially on the College's Credits claim for 2023-24.

- Firstly, the SFC have aligned the required minimum student attendance funding dates for full-time students to a shorter period. This means that the College will be able to claim Credits for students who attend 5 weeks of their course compared to previous years where students had to attend for 9-10 weeks before Credits could be claimed. This change, he states was positive and will support the College achieving its Credit target.
- Secondly, the SFC have tightened restrictions on the number of Credits which the College can claim per student, including the removal of guidance time for Higher Education Students. For Further Education level students, the limit is an average of 17 Credits and for Higher Education students the limit is an average of 15 Credits. The impact of this is that both our Further and Higher Education courses will need to be reduced by Credits. This is especially challenging as these courses were planned in December 2022 and the change to the SFC rules has been made almost at the point of course start.

The Principal informed members that the College was challenging this decision with the SFC and had a strong opinion that the responsibility for determining time allocation guidance should rest with the College.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the report and the attached SFC Credit guidance.

14. SFC Guidance to College and Universities on Quality

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that the document sets out the SFC's refreshed expectations on quality enhancement approaches and activity for both colleges and universities over 2023-24, with a particular focus on the shift to a single quality system for the tertiary sector.

He further noted that the refreshed guidance builds on a single set of guidance provided last session for the tertiary sector by enhancing the shared elements across both colleges and university. He continued to provide an elaborate overview on those enhanced elements.

The Principal remarked that although the practice of submitting self-evaluation reports was familiar to colleges, it seemed to be transitioning toward adoption to the university system.

A Allan queried if it would be similar to the EV system, but queried how this would be funded. Additionally, he noted that it had the potential to impact on Learning and Teaching, in releasing staff would result on hours being taken from deliver time. R Ashton commented that he thought that the associate assessors would be responsible for the organising of this.

The Principal queried whether there was clarity regarding the future of Education Scotland, whether it would remain as is currently or undergo reform. R. Ashton commented that the situation was currently uncertain.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report and the attached SFC guidance.

15. Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Update

The Head of Quality informed members that the SQA had introduced a decision tree during the each of the years affected by the covid outbreak. The purpose of the decision tree was to assist college staff to reach assessment decisions using alternative methods when it was not possible to do so using the pre-existing arrangements. He added that those arrangements were no longer in place and college staff must ensure that the College's normal assessment and verification processes are adhered to during the current session.

He further advised that the SQA would be conducting a Systems Verification on the College. He added that a team had been tasked with collating the evidence for the audit in order that a self-assessment could be made. This self-assessment would be returned to the SQA in late September with a follow-up visit expected before the end of 2023.

R Ashton thanked J Gallagher for his report.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

16. Complaints Handling Annual Report

The Corporate Support and Administration Manager provided members with an update in relation to commendations and complaints received over the Academic Year 2022-23.

D Higgins-Durnan advised that the Commendations and Complaints Annual Report for 2022-23, referred to as Appendix 1, once approved, would be uploaded to the College website as per the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman (SPSO) guidance.

He informed members that a total of 9 commendations had been awarded in A/Y 2022-23, marking an increase from the 6 commendations granted in the previous A/Y of 2021-22. Furthermore, he reported on the complaints received, and noted a slight decrease of 37 recorded in comparison to the previous session of 43 complaints received.

He continued to provide a comprehensive overview of the complaint categories as listed on page two, point 2iii. of the report.

R Ashton reference the comparison from 2021-22, with 25 complaints were seen to be resolved and in 2022-23 only 2 complaints were resolved. He queried further insight into why this would be. D Higgins-Durnan commented that the past academic session had seen some complainants involved in the process had been quiet challenging and resulting in less resolutions being made. He further commented that there was a possibility with two complaints possibly being referred to the SPSO.

Members of the Academic Board are recommended to:

- i) note the contents of this report and its appendix;
- ii) note that the College complaints procedure in place is in line with the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman guidance as far as it possibly can be;
- iii) note the publication of the report (Appendix 1) on the College website following approval at the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting of 13 September 2023; and request that the Corporate Support and Administration Manager bring forward an annual report for session 2023-24 to an appropriate future meeting of the Academic Board.

R Ashton thanked D Higgins-Durnan for the comprehensive report and to members for their input.

Risk, Equality and Data Protection - Discussion

17. Impact on Students – Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items.

Members agreed that no issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

18. Risk Management – Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

Members agreed that no issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

19. Equality Management – Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items.

Members agreed that no issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

20. Data Protection – Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

Members agreed that no issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

21. Environmental and Sustainability – Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

Members agreed that no issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

22. Closure

23. Date of Next Meeting

10 November 2023 – MS Teams