

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE
LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE
MINUTE

**Minute of the meeting held on Wednesday, 10 May 2023 at 5pm
in Room S/09 – Easterhouse Campus**

1. Sederunt:

Dr. Marion Allison (Chair);
Dr. Elaine Clafferty (Vice Chair);
Heather McNeil;
Ian Patrick;
Colm Breathnach;
Dermott Grenham; and
Noma Dube (Student Association President).

In Attendance:

Robin Ashton (Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality Enhancement);
Linda Ellison (Secretary to the Board of Management)
Peter Brown (Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum);
John Gallagher (Head of Quality);
Alastair McGhee (Director of Business Development) and
Debbie Friel, Senior Committee Coordinator (for recording purposes).

2. Apologies

Michael O'Donnell;
Emma Leslie (Student Association President); and
Derek Smeall (Principal).

3. Terms of Reference

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

4. Declarations of Interest

- a) Interest**
- b) Connection (not minuted)**

No declarations of interest were received.

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 8 March 2023

Members accepted the minute as an accurate record of the business conducted at the meeting held on 8 March 2023.

H McNeil, followed by C Breathnach proposed the minute.

6a. Matters arising from the Minute of Previous Meeting held on 8 March 2023

Item 11 – College Counsellors & Funding

In response to a query from C Breathnach, I Patrick, provided an update on the funding situation for Counsellors. He explained that he had attended a meeting at Colleges Scotland on 9th May 2023, along with Graeme Dey, Minister of Higher and Further Education. During the meeting, it was emphasised that it was crucial for the Scottish Government to take action to address the issue. However, he informed members that no guarantees were given at the time.

6b. Learning and Teaching Action Log as at May 2023

Item 10 - Members noted that the SCQF Partnership action had been completed and could be removed from the action log.

Item 13 – Marketing Strategy and New Website item was moved to September 2023 completion date.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee approved the Log.

Risk Register Annual Review

R Ashton reminded members that the Risk Register was due to be presented to the standing committee's once per academic year. He asked members if they were content with this item being circulated via email and for members to provide their feedback. Members agreed.

I Patrick suggested that it would be helpful to include updates that are pertinent to Learning and Teaching within the circular. R Ashton agreed and informed members that he would circulate by email after the meeting.

7. Summary of Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2022-23

The Head of Quality reported that on 6th March 2023, the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES), adopted by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to monitor student satisfaction and engagement began and continued for an 8-week period, until 28th April 2023.

J Gallagher drew members attention to the table on page one of the report and provided members with a detailed overview of the survey results. He highlighted that the College had received 1,295 responses which significantly represented an improvement on 711 responses that were received in the previous academic year. He added that the picture was a positive one and the College was moving in the right direction.

J Gallagher further noted that the report was intended to provide an early summary to members at the close of the survey. *He added that a more detailed report would be provided at the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.*

E Clafferty joined the meeting 5.15pm

The Chair thanked J Gallagher for his insightful report and invited comment or questions.

H. McNeil asked about the industry standard for response rates. J Gallagher mentioned that the response rate was low last year, but the College aimed for a 50% response rate this academic session. He further stated that there had been a significant increase in effort during this session, resulting in an overall return rate of 43%.

H McNeil queried the visibility of the figures and referred to the Student Association question and the overall percentage. She referenced point 13 within the appendix and queried if the "Don't Know" category contained 494, then that would indeed represent a lesser total of 1,295 responses received for that question. In response, J Gallagher noted that the "Don't Know" question was particularly prevalent among part-time students, whereas full-time students exhibited a more favourable profile.

I Patrick acknowledged that there was a considerable amount effort given to produce the data from the survey, but queried how this information could be useful, to which members discussed at length. I Patrick noted that a real positive to take from the report was that the College had nearly doubled the increase in the responses received.

R Ashton informed members that the College had dedicated substantial resources to enhancing the Student Experience over the past two years, and the report clearly indicated a positive response in this area. Furthermore, he emphasised that if the required target was not met, the SFC would exclude the College's results from their national report.

Following a question from the Chair, R Ashton confirmed that the questions were set by the SFC. However, there was an opportunity to add additional questions from the College.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

J Gallagher left 5.25pm

8. Student Association Priorities Update

The Student Association President, N Dube discussed the report, which provided an update on various activities that occurred in 2022-23. These included Student Association clubs and societies, the Meet the Manager Event, Comic Relief's 'Red Nose Day,' the Planet Earth Games, East End Flat Pack Meals, and Class Representative and Student Executive Meetings. N Dube also announced the upcoming Student Association elections for the academic year 2023-24, which will be promoted through M/S Teams, social media, and email.

I Patrick highlighted that the College had received recognition for its involvement in the Planet Earth Games and had been accredited as one of the top five UK colleges. He commended the College for this achievement and credited all the staff involved. The Chair highlighted that this was good promotion material for the College and congratulated the student presidents for their work in this area.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

9. Update on 2023-24 Admissions and Pre-Course Engagement Activity

The Director of Planning, Performance, and Curriculum presented a detailed analysis of the data from the report. He highlighted that, as of 25th April, 2023, the College had received an increase of 600 applications, bringing the total to 7,255, and live offers had risen by 300, reaching 3,904. He noted that although the College had received fewer applications (a 25% decrease compared to previous years), there had not been a proportional decrease in the number of offers made. Consequently, he stated that the contributing factors for the decrease in applications were due to a reduced curriculum moving into next academic session. He continued to explain that the number of offers had increased steadily over the past two years, with a 27% increase seen compared to April 2022. Therefore, he highlighted that the College had potential to meet its recruitment targets.

P Brown highlighted that to improve on retention the College had taken various measures to keep new students engaged and informed until their course commenced in August 2023. Furthermore, he noted that as part of this initiative, a new Pre-Course Activity Group, comprising representatives from different departments, had been formed to coordinate these actions and assess their impact.

The Chair thanked P Brown for his comprehensive report and invited comment or questions.

H McNeil noted that the report was overall positive. She enquired about the 25% decrease in applications and sought clarification on the portion attributed to the year two cohort. P Brown responded, indicating that approximately 5% of the decrease could be credited to the year two cohort.

I Patrick expressed his agreement and emphasised that he found the "keep warm" activities to be highly worthwhile and beneficial. Furthermore, he stated that it would be of interest to see the level of engagement come from this. He also enquired about the College's course offerings, asking if there had been a reduction in the number of courses available. In response, R Ashton explained that there had been some changes in course offerings, and that in some cases the College would run courses at level 6 and 7, but not at level 5. However, he emphasised that this was a minority of cases.

E Clafferty queried the method of communication during the "keep warm" activities, enquiring whether the College would utilise the students' College or private email addresses in order to contact them. P Brown clarified that it was more probable for the College to use their personal contact details initially, as provided by the students on their application form. When further questioned by E Clafferty, P Brown confirmed that using their personal details would not raise any data protection concerns.

D Grenham suggested that the College should consider presenting an overview of the curriculum to members of the Learning and Teaching Committee during a future meeting. This overview would include information about the courses currently being offered, their popularity, and the curriculum plans for the future. The Chair added that it would also be of interest to find out if the College had received any applicants via the route from the community outreach work and that of local partnerships.

R Ashton agreed that this could be considered at a future meeting.

Members of Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to:

- i note the most recent admissions data; and
- ii consider and endorse the 'keep warm' engagement activity intended to support improved retention.

P Brown left 5.45pm

10. Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) Report

The Director of Business Development informed members that Glasgow Kelvin College had overseen the management of the Glasgow consortium, in which the three Glasgow colleges collaborated to deliver a regional FA program. He emphasised that the consortium was dissolved in July 2022 and each college assumed responsibility for delivering its own FA frameworks.

A McGhee provided members with updates on the latest data outlined in the reports from SDS (Skills Development Scotland) and SFC (Scottish Funding Council). This included information on current enrolment figures and subject areas within the FA program. Additionally, he shared the gender distribution within the frameworks offered by Glasgow Kelvin College, revealing a clear gender imbalance. He went on to highlight that the College had partnered with a total of 20 employers and had recently attracted three new major employers for collaboration in 2023/24.

The Chair thanked A McGhee for his in-depth report and invited comment or questions.

C Breathnach suggested that it would be valuable for members to observe the percentage levels of SIMD 20 in relation to the intake of FAs in East Dunbartonshire Schools. He added that the gender discrepancies were massive and that this was very much a national picture. He suggested that the College look at what measures could be taken to improve on this at a more local level.

I Patrick expressed his opinion that whilst the SFC report was interesting, it would be more beneficial to focus on our own statistics regarding the success rates of FAs. In response, R Ashton clarified that the SFC report was the first national report of its kind to be published and therefore useful to see national comparator data.

The Chair thanked members for their input.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

A McGhee and N Dube left 6.15pm

Industrial Relations

R Ashton provided members with an update as to the national wage negotiations dispute with both EIS and Unison. Members had a lengthy discussion as to the impact of possible strike action and Action Short of Strike (ASOS) and the potential implications this could have on resulting/certificating students and on External Verification with SQA.

R Ashton informed members that a further update would be given at the Board of Management meeting scheduled for 12th June 2023, should the industrial disputes continue.

The Chair noted that the situation would be monitored and thanked R Ashton for his update.

11. Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment in Scotland: Interim Report

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that in 2022, the Cabinet Secretary for Education commissioned a Review of Qualifications and Assessment in response to pandemic-related issues in Scottish Education. He highlighted that the Independent Review Group recently published an Interim Report focusing on learners aged 15-18 in all educational settings. The review primarily concerned school and college qualifications in the Senior Phase, with the extent of impact on college delivery yet to be determined.

R Ashton continued to provide a detailed overview of the key elements pertaining to the new qualification and assessment model. He concluded to say that the feedback would be sought on these interim proposals, with a particular focus on their practical application.

R Ashton responded to a question from I Patrick and highlighted that the College had responded to Colleges Scotland on the College sector response.

The Chair expressed her displeasure with the report, highlighting that its main objective was education reform. However, she pointed out a weakness in the report, which was its exclusive focus on school education, lacking representation from adult learning and having limited representation from colleges.

I Patrick noted that the consultation was now at phase three and that the consultation period was due to finish at the end of May 2023.

The Chair thanked R Ashton for his report.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to:

- i. note the attached interim report; and
- ii. consider the direction of travel outlined in the report and discuss the potential impact on wider college education.

12. SFC Indicative College Credit Allocations for AY 2023-24

The Vice Principal of Curriculum spoke to the contents of the report and highlighted that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had published indicative college funding allocations for AY 2023/24, as referenced in the appendix to the report. He provided an overview of the key elements from the report and highlighted that there was a significant reduction in the credit targets which saw most college regions reducing by 10%. He added that the College target had always been in the region of around 80,000 and will now be reduced to around 72,000.

C Breathnach expressed his extreme disappointment with the Scottish Government's decision to retract £26 million in funding for the sector. He added that hopefully there would be some form of budget given to support the counsellor services.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to:

- i. note the SFC announcement; and
- ii. discuss the implications for the College curriculum.

13. Scottish Funding Council Regional Tertiary Pathfinders

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) were developing two Regional Tertiary Pathfinders in the North-east and South of Scotland. This report provides an update on activity to date and the potential wider implications of this pilot activity.

R Ashton informed members that a National Advisory Board had been established to oversee the Pathfinder work and the College is represented on this. A Skills Alignment discussion paper considered by the National Advisory Board is attached (as an appendix to the report) to highlight the early focus on the group and the potential for the work to impact on long-term approaches to national and regional skills planning.

The Chair commended the well-written paper and emphasised on the need for deeper contemplation.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to:

- i. note the development of SFC Pathfinder activity and the approaches to Skills alignment outlined in the attached SFC report.

14. Education Scotland Progress Visit

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that Education Scotland had scheduled to conduct a Progress Visit at the College on 17th – 19th May 2023, led by Barbara Neilson and Sarah Halliwell. He advised that the visit would focus on reviewing progress on areas for improvement identified during last year's visit.

I Patrick asked, what form of feedback could be expected to be given to the Board of Management by Education Scotland. R Ashton noted that a brief verbal report might be given at the Board of Management meeting scheduled for 12 June 2023 if agreed by Education Scotland. Additionally, a more comprehensive written report would be submitted to the Learning and Teaching Committee during its meeting in September 2023.

15. 2022-23 Credit Activity Update - NIPD

The Vice Principal of Curriculum provided an update as to the Credit delivery for the current academic year as calculated in April 2023. He noted that the report showed a slight improved position and added that there was no clarity, as yet, on clawback of funds.

16. SFC College Statistics 2021-22

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that the SFC report sought to provide members with an overview of college sector statistics from 2021-22 in the context of historical trend data. He noted that the report was for information only.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the contents of the reports for items, 14,15 and 16.

At 7.05pm, the Secretary to the Board asked the members if they were willing to extend the time limit in accordance with the Standing Orders and proceed with the Board Evaluation session. Members agreed.

Only members of the Learning & Teaching Committee remained for the evaluation session, all other participants left the meeting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

20. Closure

The meeting closed at 7.05pm

21. Date of Next Meeting

TBC