

Item 08b For Information

Glasgow Kelvin College

Board of Management Meeting of 11 October 2023

Principal's Update Report

Report by Principal

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an outline of key activity and events considered by the Principal to be noteworthy or of particular interest to Members of the Board which are not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

This report will cover the five-week period from the last Board of Management (BoM) meeting held on Wednesday 30 August 2023 until Wednesday 04 October 2023.

2. Strike & ASOS update

The result of the recent EIS-FELA ballot has been received by colleges. EIS-FELA has 4,204 members entitled to vote. 2,083 votes were cast or 49.5% of members entitled to vote. Two questions were asked, willingness to take part in strike action; willingness to take part in Action Short of Strike Action (ASOS).

Of all eligible members 49.5% voted. This was below the required threshold of 50%. This means that, at present, EIS-FELA will not have a mandate for further industrial action beyond 12 October 2023 because of this ballot.

However, I believe that EIS-FELA are considering a re-ballot which could take place as soon as possible. This has not formally been confirmed at the time of writing. Also, note that 20 additional votes, regardless of being yes or no for either question would have resulted in a mandate for strike and ASOS being secured for another six months by EIS-FELA.

Unison have informed the college of their intention to strike at Glasgow Kelvin College on 10 October 2023. The College will remain open during the strike subject to Health & Safety requirements being met.

I believe that Unison also intends to ballot their members to extend their mandate for industrial action in the coming few weeks. However, this has not been confirmed formally.

The impact on AY 2023/24 students is disruptive but remains manageable in the longer term. However, that could change depending on any further industrial action.

The impact on AY 2022/23 students of Action Short OF Strike (ASOS) by EIS-FELA in the form of the resulting boycott is considerable. We continue to do our best to ensure

our students' learning journeys or progression to employment are not seriously impaired. However, this continues to be very challenging and there is no guarantee for individual students.

As a direct result of the Action Short Of Strike (ASOS) by EIS-FELA in the form of the ongoing resulting boycott, the College has made the regrettable decision to postpone our students' Graduation ceremony until early in 2024. This has caused distress to many students. We continue to communicate with affected students and keep them up to date with the latest situation.

3. West End Campus update

As notified to the Board on 30 August 2023, all learning and teaching has now been transferred from West Campus to the remaining College campuses, with new spaces created as required to facilitate all the moves associated with the closure. The West Campus building is now closed to all students. Facilities staff remain present in the building from 7am until Noon Monday to Friday to allow access to staff for ongoing clearance work and some temporary storage. Surplus items and items moved from other campuses are temporarily stored at West Campus, with a full clear out taking place during AY 2023/24 in preparation for "disposal".

The Finance and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 26 September 2023, approved an online auction of items stored at West Campus that are surplus to requirements. The auction will be accessible to students and staff.

The College has now received a response from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in relation to marketing the property for lease and or sale, but this is not yet definitive. The College continues to work with the SFC and its agent (Graham and Sibbald) to progress this matter.

4. Audit Scotland – Scotland's Colleges, a Briefing Paper

Key messages from Audit Scotland, courtesy of Colleges Scotland analysis.

- *"Scotland's colleges are vital to learners and local communities. Risks to the college sector's financial sustainability have increased since reported in 2022. Rising staffing costs are colleges' biggest financial pressure."*
- *"The Scottish Government's funding for the sector has reduced by 8.5 % in real terms between 2021/22 and 2023/24, while the sector's costs have increased. Effective, affordable workforce planning is now a greater than ever priority and challenge for colleges."*
- *"Significant changes to how the college sector operate have been recommended by recent reviews. However, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) urgently need to build on their ongoing work to help colleges plan for change now and make best use of available funding so that they are sustainable for the future."*

Reference: *Audit Scotland – Scotland's Colleges 2023 Analysis*; Colleges Scotland: September 2023

<https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/publications/scotlands-colleges-2023#:~:text=Rising%20staffing%20costs%20are%20colleges,the%20sector's%20costs%20have%20increased.>

5. Scottish Government (SG) – Programme for Government (PfG)

Key messages from SG's PfG, courtesy of Colleges Scotland analysis.

"The Scottish Government published its Programme for Government 2023/24 on Tuesday 5 September 2023, with the First Minister setting out the Programme in the Scottish Parliament. The Programme for Government sets out the legislative priorities for the year ahead specifically and the direction of travel generally for the rest of this Parliament.

Headlines on Colleges and Tertiary Education:

- *Lead development of a new funding model for post-school education provision which continues free tuition and improves the parity of living cost support on offer for those wishing to study part time or flexibly, and which continues to promote post-16 education as a positive destination for widening access students.*
- *Scottish Government to launch a new Scottish Education Exchange Programme – building on an initial test and learn project that we are delivering in 2023-24, prioritising placements for disadvantaged groups and further demonstrate our commitment to EU and global partnerships with schools, colleges and universities including through working with these sectors.*
- *Scottish Government to work with colleges to promote good governance, including bringing forward a statutory instrument to ensure trade union representatives on college boards."*

Reference: *Scottish Government – Programme for Government 2023/24 Analysis*; Colleges Scotland: September 2023.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/programme-government-2023-24/>

6. Key Activity & Events

Events:

- Fostering Inclusive Employment Opportunities Conference, brought together by Alastair McGhee, Director of Business Development in partnership India business partners.
- Graduation Ceremony postponed until early in 2024.

Partnership meetings:

- Nominated as member of Glasgow Aligning Local Policy Partnership (GALoPP) Advisory Group.

- Nominated as Chair of Glasgow City Region (GCR) – Skills Group
- Glasgow City Region Partnership meeting.
- Glasgow City Region – Skills Group meeting.
- Glasgow City Region Innovation Action Planning meeting.
- Glasgow Economic Leadership (GEL) HE&FE Workstream meeting.
- Colleges' Partnership West meeting.
- *"Think the Unthinkable"* Convention.
- College Principal's Group (CPG) meeting.
- College Sector Finances Committee meeting.
- Glasgow Colleges Group (GCG) meeting.
- GCRB Executive Director / Principal meetings.
- GCRB Performance & Resources Committee meeting.
- Glasgow East Arts Company (GEAC) Board meetings.
- APUC senior meeting.
- Forth Valley College senior meeting.
- College Principals and Heads of Education meeting.
- New Lanark Partnership meeting.

7. Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications as a direct result of this paper.

8. Impact on Students

The impact on AY 2023/24 students is disruptive but remains manageable in the longer term. However, that could change depending on any further industrial action.

The impact on AY 2022/23 students of Action Short OF Strike (ASOS) by EIS-FELA in the form of the ongoing resulting boycott is considerable. Mitigating against disruption to students' learning journeys, for those who have left the College, and those seeking to take up employment continues to be very challenging and there is no guarantee for individual students.

Graduation Ceremony postponed until early in 2024.

9. Risk and Assurance

Should EIS- ELA be successful in an attempt to re-ballot their members to extend their mandate to pursue ASOS and / or strike action for a further six months, this will present substantial risk of negative impact to student experience, student certification, College income, reputation and staff relations.

10. Equality

No negative impacts on people with protected characteristics have been identified because of this paper.

11. Data Protection

There are no direct data protection implications because of this paper.

12. Environmental and Sustainability

There are no directly related impacts regarding environmental and sustainability issues because of this paper.

13. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- i. Note the contents of this update report;

14. Further Information

Members can obtain further information on the contents of this report from Derek Smeall, Principal dsmeall@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Glasgow Kelvin College
DSm
04 October 2023