

**GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
ACADEMIC BOARD
MINUTE**

**Minute of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Friday 02 February 2024 at
1.30pm via MS Teams**

1. Sederunt

Robin Ashton (Chair);
Andy Allan (Director of Learning Innovation and Curriculum);
Tracy Leavy (Director of Community Engagement and Curriculum);
James Davidson (Lecturer, BCI);
Gerry Harkins (Lecturer, ECS);
John Gallagher (Quality Enhancement & Development Manager);
Gary Sharp (Student Support Services Manager);
Jason Quinn (Director of Digital Services);
Alastair McGhee (Director of Student Experience and Enterprise)
Lesley Phee (Organisational Development Lead);
Monica McKerlie (Head of Student Support Services);
Iain Cameron (Lecturer, ECS);
Peter Brown (Director of Apprenticeship, Skills and Curriculum); and
Amrit Bedi (Equalities and Inclusion Lead)

In Attendance

Debbie Friel (Senior Committee Coordinator) (purpose of the minute); and
Ryan Gillien (Team Leader, Advice, Guidance & Learner Support)

2. Apologies

Mae Smillie (Head of Student Information Services);
Sonique Noreiga (President, Student Association);
Katie McAnenay (Team Leader, Library Services); and
George McGuire (Senior Curriculum Manager, HCCLD);

3. Academic Board Terms of Reference

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 14 members in attendance.

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 10 November 2023

The minute of the meeting was accepted as an accurate record of the business conducted on 10 November 2023.

**6. Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meetings held on 10 November 2023
Matters arising**

Item 06 - Review of the Quality Handbook

Member noted that this item was presented on the Agenda.

Item 08 - Active Campus Coordinator/Update on Campus Activities

R Ashton requested that this item be deferred to a future meeting.

Item 12 – Teaching Development Activity Update

T Leavy requested that further information is provided:

J Clarke to confirm to Faculty Directors which members of staff are involved in which projects.

R Ashton advised that in the following academic session the budget for this project would be kept independent from that of the faculty budgets.

R Ashton further advised that J Clarke would facilitate a session in the CPD week with the teaching development leads from Block 2. This would provide the opportunity for staff to learn more on the developments.

Item 13 – Block One Stop and Check

Members noted that the Block One Stop and Check report had been modified prior to being presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting on 22nd November 2023.

7. Outcomes of Education Scotland Thematic Review

The Vice Principal informed members that the report sought to provide members with an update on the findings of the Education Scotland Thematic Review. The review was conducted across the Glasgow College Region from 6th to 16th November 2023.

R Ashton reminded members that the review focussed on examining approaches to ensuring equality, attainment and achievement for all learners. He drew members attention to the Institutional report, attached as Appendix 1. He continued to provide an overview of the report stating that report highlighted a number of areas which demonstrated notable strengths as well identifying four areas for further development. Moreover, he mentioned that the College was scheduled to undergo an Annual Review by Education Scotland in May 2024.

The Vice Principal noted that this was overall a positive report and invited comment or questions.

Jason Quinn observed that the College had undergone two visits from HMIE Inspectors in a relatively brief period, resulting in two consecutive reports. R Ashton mentioned that the forthcoming visit from Education Scotland, anticipated in May 2024, is likely to be a shorter, one-day inspection. Nonetheless, he acknowledged that specific details regarding this visit are still forthcoming.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of report and its appendix.

8. Review of Implementation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2021-24

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement advised members that a refreshed Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) was agreed by the Board of Management in October 2021.

R Ashton drew members attention to the table set out in point 3. of the report which provided a high-level summary of key evidence available to assess implementation of the goals of the LTAS. He added that the majority of evidence was based on direct student feedback, along with student performance data and quality enhancement activity reports. Furthermore, he

noted that good progress has been made across all elements of the LTAS, however there remained four areas where evidence suggested that the College required to progress further. He provided a summary of the four areas as noted within the report.

R Ashton invited comments or questions.

I Cameron queried the section in the report which focused on “improve the profile of metaskills”, he observed that many students were already engaging in this aspect and questioned whether it simply needed clearer articulation.

R Ashton highlighted that management deliberations had addressed this issue, reaching a consensus that the College could enhance clarity regarding metaskills. This he said could involve augmenting course descriptions on the website and raising awareness amongst staff and students.

G Harkins agreed that simplifying the language would be beneficial for some student groups.

J Quinn emphasised that in terms of evidence gathering, it would be important to note that Digital developments were progressing with the setup of an internal working group to look closer at Digital AI and its use in assessments. Additionally, he noted that there was a dedicated training month set for Digital learning.

R Ashton requested that at the next meeting of the Academic Board, S Donnelly be invited to update members on the progress of the Digital AI working group.

R Ashton agreed that he would edit the assessment area of the report to include how the College was managing Digital AI.

R Ashton noted that he would progress the LTAS over the remainder of academic session with a further review to be undertaken in October 2024.

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

9. Student Association Priorities Update

The Student Support Services Manager spoke to the content of the report that sought to provide members with an update on the Student Association (SA) activities and progress to date.

G Sharp advised members that the full-time Student Association Representative was no longer with the College and that Calum Campbell had been employed as a replacement, as a part time Sabbatical President. Members noted that C Campbell would commence in this position as from Wednesday, 14th February 2024.

G Sharp informed members that the Student Association had been busy raising awareness and ensuring that the SA was available to students on campus and online. Additionally, he provided an overview of the activities that the SA had participated in, and provided an overview of the following:

- Block 2 Stop and Check Survey was now open, encouraging classes to engage.
- SPARQS Training, further mop up sessions have been organised in the coming weeks.
- Meetings organised with Class Representatives, to provide support.

- Meet the Managers Event, a further event taking place on 21st February 2024.
- Executive Committee, now have 11 volunteers.
- Gail Boslem was the replacement for Fiona Templeton, until the return of Arlene Sweeney.
- Continuing to work closely with the Active Campus Coordinator with the Bridge Challenge.
- R Gillen will deliver a presentation on the Mental Health Agreement today, for which the Student Association has made a substantial contribution to its development.
- Better relations within the refectory area. Now meeting staff/management on a regular basis and forging good partnership to benefit the students.
- Progressing on raising awareness of the Student Association, making more visible to students, via social media and promoting in areas throughout campuses.

R Ashton thanked G Sharp for the report. He mentioned that it was good to see the progress on raising the SA profile as this was one area which had been identified for improvement by Education Scotland. He invited comment or questions.

Following a question from J Quinn on Meet the Managers Event, G Sharp noted that prior to the event questions would be gathered from students on discussion topics. Thereafter a collation of "You Said, We Did" would be populated.

G Sharp agreed to share the "You Said, We Did" SWAY edition from Meet the Managers Event, with J Quinn, for information.

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

10. Student Mental Health Agreement 2023/25

The Team Leader of Advice, Guidance and Learner Support informed members that the College alongside the Student Association (SA) were committed to working collaboratively to help and support all students to develop resilience and positive mental health.

R Gillen briefed members on the draft Student Mental Health Agreement, which was collaboratively developed by the Student Association representatives along with himself, Gary Sharp and Jane Dickson. He provided a concise overview of the report, mentioning the constructive feedback received from 'Think Positive', and emphasised the urgency of launching the 2023/25 Bi-Annual Agreement at the earliest opportunity.

R Gillen elaborated on the College's commitment to enhancing awareness regarding the advantages of positive mental health and overall wellbeing. He drew members attention to the snapshot of College Commitments as mentioned within page 2 of the report.

He invited comments or questions.

M McKerlie, Head of Student Support Services, thanked R Gillen for his thorough report and for the significant work involved in developing the agreement.

G Sharp echoed M McKerlie comments, highlighting a college-wide approach, with notable improvements made to enhance the agreement's content. Additionally, with members' approval, it was decided to forward the agreement to the Marketing Department for its launch.

R Ashton thanked all members involved in producing the Agreement and acknowledged that it sought to generate significant positive impacts over the next couple of years.

11. Glasgow City Region College Innovation Network

The Director of Student Experience and Enterprise informed members that the report summarised the recent successful multi college bid, led by Glasgow Kelvin College, to the Further Education Innovation Fund (FEIF) which resulted in an award of £1.2 million to support businesses to become more innovative.

A McGhee highlighted that the Further Education Innovation Fund was administered by Innovate UK, which is the UK's national innovation agency. Innovate UK helps UK businesses to grow through the development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services.

A McGhee explained that Glasgow Kelvin College formed a partnership of the six regional colleges and secured agreement to place a single bid for this fund. Moreover, the College secured agreement from the partners that the fund would be split equally, with a slightly larger amount for Glasgow Kelvin College to cover the administration costs associated with being the lead college. There was a very short time period, around 5 weeks, in which to form the partnership, agree and write the proposal for submission. However, this was achieved and, in late 2023, the partnership was awarded the full £1.2 million.

A McGhee welcomed questions or comments.

R Ashton highlighted the positive nature of the report, informing members that it would be interesting to observe the development of this initiative and that the College was very keen to play an important role within this project. Furthermore, he noted that an update on the project would be provided within the new academic session.

12. Review of Quality Handbook

The Quality Enhancement and Development Manager informed members that there had been many changes to quality practices over recent years which were mainly due to new practices introduced during the years affected by covid, and more recently by the new procedures put in place during the current session to strengthen the College's approach to quality. These have necessitated a number of changes to the Quality handbook and drew members attention to the specified changes as noted within page 1 of the report.

R Ashton informed members that feedback had been received from a number of Senior Curriculum Managers and that members can take comfort that the feedback has been acknowledged and integrated into the handbook

Members approved the Quality Handbook.

13. 2023-24 Student Withdrawal Rate

The Vice Principal addressed the Student Withdrawal report's findings whilst presenting a live Power BI report.

He highlighted that over recent years, early withdrawals have had a significant impact on the College's performance indicators, particularly for full-time programmes. During Covid, early withdrawal rates increased substantially and a number of measures were introduced with the aim of improving early retention.

He highlighted that the Power BI report compared historical actual withdrawal rates from 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 against a current estimate of withdrawal in 2023-24 within a similar timeframe. This he explained indicated improvements overall in student withdrawal levels, with particularly significant reductions in the full-time withdrawal rates. Across the four mode/level categories, there were only a few months within the Part-Time data which showed a poorer position compared to previous years' data. However, over the four-month reporting period total withdrawal numbers were still below the overall historical levels.

Furthermore, R Ashton highlighted that the mid-year data provided evidence of potential improvements in outcomes for students across all four mode/level categories should these positive trends continue.

M McKerlie queried if the data could be broken down further to show figures pertaining to that of the protected characteristics. She also noted that this may be an area of interest for the Equality Committee to consider areas for improvement.

J Quinn suggested that Power BI currently retained information on protected characteristics, however he agreed to raise this further with Aaron Watt.

14. 2023-24 Block 2 Stop and Check Survey

The Quality Enhancement and Development Manager informed members that the Power BI report provided an overview of the responses received from the survey to date. He highlighted that there had been 1,564 responses gathered with significant efforts from the Student Support Services in chasing these responses.

He continued to provide a comprehensive overview of each of the questions set out in the survey and provided some examples of the responses given.

He highlighted a Question *“if the College could do one thing to improve on your learning experience at the College, what would that be”* he noted that the responses to this question are available to college management and the information from this could be beneficial for individual course groups.

J Gallagher noted that the responses overall painted a very positive picture. He advised members that focus groups would meet next week to review the information further.

R Ashton thanked J Gallagher for the report and noted that there was a substantial amount of positive and helpful feedback from Students. He highlighted that he would be keen to explore ways to ensure that all staff can access this information.

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

15. Update on 2024-25 Admissions

The Director of Digital Information Services informed members that the report sought to provide an update on recruitment for 2024/25 academic year. Applications for academic session 2024/25 opened one week earlier than normal, on 10th December 2023. He reported that as of the 29 January 2024, the College had received a total of 4,078 applications resulting in 1,513 live offers. He noted that this was positive improvement and an encouraging start for this academic year.

He continued and drew attention to the data table on page one of the report, he noted that compared to academic year 2024/45, analysis of the 2023/24 and 2022/23 metrics, at that same point in the admissions cycle showed:

- The number of applications received at this time of the year was up 32% on 2023/24 values and down 13% on 2022/23 values.
- To date the College has 1,513 live offers. When compared to previous years, this represents a 58% increase on January 2023 values and 10% increase in January 2022 values.

J Quinn informed members that application volumes and student offers are higher than last year, in part due to the timing of launching the admissions campaign and providing early access for our current enrolled students, giving them the opportunity to secure their place in time for the new session. Members should note that overall, each faculty had a higher conversion rate of applications to offers than that of the previous two years.

R Ashton thanked J Quinn for his report and highlighted that this was the 2nd year that the College had used the new website which proved to operate much smoother than the previous version.

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

16. College Leaver Destinations 2021-22

The Quality Enhancement and Development Manager informed members that in February and March 2023, the College conducted a College Leavers' Destination survey as part of the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) national survey. The purpose of that survey was to identify the next destination for successful full-time college leavers who completed a college course during session 2021-22. Glasgow Kelvin College had 1434 successful full-time leavers in June 2022. The College achieved an 83.4% return which has since been ratified by the SFC. He drew members attention to the SFC summary which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

R Ashton thanked J Gallagher for his report and noted that a substantial amount of work had gone into the report. The report provided valuable insights, particularly regarding students' transitions to positive destinations, with a noteworthy proportion advancing to university.

J Gallagher noted that a substantial amount of information was gathered from faculty staff as they possessed greater insight into their students' destinations. This observation led to a reduction in the workload associated with gathering information via telephone calls.

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

The Vice Principal thanked members of the Academic Board for their contributions and attendance.

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

The meeting closed at 3pm

23. Date of Next Meeting

19 April 2024 - MS Teams