



GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTE

Minute of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee held onsite, 08 May 2024, WG1 Springburn Campus at 5pm

1. Sederunt

Dr Elaine Clafferty (Chair);
Derek Smeall (Principal);
Ian Patrick;
Marie Docherty;
Dermot Grenham;
Colm Breathnach;
John McBride;
Calum Campbell
Michael O'Donnell; and
Heather McNeil;

In Attendance

Robin Ashton; Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Enhancement;
Lisa Clark; Director of Estates and Corporate Services;
John Gallagher; Quality Enhancement and Development Manager;
Jason Quinn; Director of Digital and Information Services;
Grant Sutherland; Active Campus Coordinator;
John Montgomery; Curriculum Manager, HCCLD;
Dean McBride; HND Coaching & Developing Sport Student; and
Debbie Friel; Senior Committee Coordinator (purpose of the minute)

2. Apologies

Dr Marion Allison (Vice Chair);
Carol Goodwin; and
Sonique Noreiga;

3. Review of the Learning and Teaching Terms of Reference

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 10 members in attendance.

4. Declarations of Interest

C Breathnach noted a declaration of interest in relation to Item 08, point 3 – Deduction of Pay for Staff.

The Secretary to the Board advised members that Item 08 was not for approval and that no decision would be sought from members.

The Chair enquired whether members had any objections to C Breathnach remaining in attendance during deliberations on Item 08: Risk Management Update paper. No objections were raised.

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 28 February 2024

The minute of the meeting held on 28 February 2024 was accepted as an accurate record of the business conducted.

J McBride, followed by D Grenham proposed the minute.

6. a) Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meetings held on 28 February 2024:

Item 04: Declaration of Interest/Connection: The Chair sought clarification on the minute in relation to the advisory note issued by the Standards Commission and that of its complexity. She queried if L Clark had any further feedback.

L Clark agreed to circulate the relevant information to Committee Members.

The Chair highlighted the following Matters Arising from the minute of February 2024:

Item 09: Admissions Update: This action would be addressed in Agenda Item 14.

Item 11: Student Association Priorities Update (action complete).

b) Learning and Teaching Action List – as at May 2024

The Chair noted that two live actions remained, Items 08 and 10, and these would be carried forward.

7. Learner Behaviour and Student Disciplinary Procedure (for approval)

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that the report presented the updated Learner Behaviour Policy and associated Student Disciplinary Procedure, prepared for approval ahead of the forthcoming academic year. He noted that these documents, previously amalgamated into a single Code of Learner Behaviour, have been separated into distinct policy and procedural documents following the Committee's request during the last review in September 2022. He confirmed that no significant alterations were necessary but highlighted three additions, as outlined within the report. He thereafter drew members attention to Appendix 1 and 2, which comprised of the revised Learner Behaviour Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for his report and invited questions or comments.

I Patrick queried the definition of what the College considered as a “neighbourhood”. He suggested the word neighbourhood could be construed to incorporate a wider scope of the community. The Chair queried the Vice Principal's reasoning for its incorporation. R Ashton referred to recent concerns pertaining to students causing disruption in local residential areas. He clarified that the policy now included a neighbourhood-focussed aspect, which had been integrated into the Student Charter. He further highlighted that the Charter clarified expected levels of behaviour by students.

Members discussed at length the difficulties in enforcing the disciplinary policy effectively, particularly in challenging community environments.

I Patrick raised a question about whether a disciplinary action could be enforced according to the Disciplinary Procedure if it wasn't explicitly stated in the Student Disciplinary Policy. M O'Donnell pointed out that a section later in the policy listed "Unacceptable or improper behavior, which included, but not limited to" indicating that students could be held accountable for actions falling under this category. R Ashton agreed with M O'Donnell, stating that this section provided examples rather than an exhaustive list, empowering the College to determine what justifies disciplinary action.

The Principal advised that incorporating the neighbourhood aspect into the Policy, provided comfort and reassurance to the local residents that the College valued their concerns.

D Grenham proposed incorporating a phrase to include "*not bringing the College into disrepute*" which he suggested would cover a spectrum of areas, including reputational risk from disruption within local neighbourhoods. I Patrick concurred with D Grenham.

Members approved incorporating the local neighbourhood element within the Policy, furthermore, to include an 18 month / 2-year review. H McNeil noted the importance of communicating the Student Charter to the Students and asked how the College achieved this. R Ashton advised that the students were made aware of the Charter during induction sessions, through traditional posters displayed around the campuses and via digital platforms, such as MyKelvin.

The Chair thanked R Ashton for his report and the Committee for their valued input.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to approve the revised Learner Behaviour Policy subject to the addition of the phrase "*not bringing the College into disrepute*".

8. Risk Management Update and College Risk Register

The Director of Estates and Corporate Services spoke to the content of the report and reminded members that the College's Strategic Risk Register was considered annually by the Board's Standing Committees. She added that the purpose of the report was to ensure that Committee members received the aforementioned annual review.

L Clark highlighted the Risk Audit conducted by Henderson Loggie, noting its request to review the Risk Management Framework. She informed members that this work had begun but could not be finalised until the Risk Appetite session had concluded. Furthermore, she noted that Henderson Loggie recommended linking the Risk Register to its corresponding strategic objectives.

L Clark drew attention to Appendix 1 of the report, which contained a copy of the College's Strategic Risk Register for review. This, she added, had also been presented at the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting in April 2024. She highlighted that R Ashton had appended a section pertaining to the Learning and Teaching related reflections. She invited comments.

C Breathnach thanked members for the opportunity to remain whilst Item 08 was being reviewed.

C Breathnach requested for the minute to note that under point 3 of the report, that the Principal's request to be given the power of pay deduction was deferred, and that members should note that no College in Scotland had to date carried out a deduction in pay.

The Chair informed members that C Breathnach's points of view were welcomed and that his contribution was important to the Committee.

C Breathnach also asked for reassurance that there was no risk to staff or students in terms of the current situation with the Springburn building cladding.

L Clark updated members on the presence of hairline cracks in the cladding panels, attributing them to the panels' expansion and contraction. Despite this, she advised members that it is believed that the cladding remains safe. Furthermore, she has sought guidance from the College's insurance provider, UMAL, and is collaborating with Watts, a Project Management Company, to investigate the issues surrounding the cladding. L Clark proceeded to advise that while funding for Capital Projects was available, an application to SFC was rejected due to insufficient funds. However, she was hopeful that funds from the sale of West Campus could potentially contribute to supporting these works.

C Breathnach enquired if the cladding was being regularly monitored. The Principal noted that the College was taking proactive preventative observations to mitigate any further deterioration.

J McBride asked whether the College had taken into account the Government's National Strategic Risk Assessment (NSRA). L Clark confirmed that while it had been considered by the Risk Management Committee in the past, it had not been recently reviewed. J McBride noted that this publication was updated annually and incorporated inputs from across the country.

L Clark agreed to review the National Strategic Risk Assessment (NSRA).

H McNeil queried the Risk Register Review table mentioned in Point 3, Page 2 of the report. She questioned whether Cyber Risk (risk number 10), which is associated with the Risk Appetite Category: Reputation, should also be linked to the Digital category. She suggested that this might have been overlooked and suggested that it be reviewed.

L Clark agreed to undertake a review of the Risk Appetite Category pertaining to the Cyber Risk (item 10), with the intention of incorporating the link to Digital category.

In addition, H McNeil drew attention to the Risk Register (Appendix 1) and raised a question about the risk grading within the Student Experience category. She proposed an elevation in the risk rating, noting R Ashton's observations in the Risk Review Related Reflections, particularly regarding the impact of industrial action, suggesting that it currently poses a significant risk to the student experience.

L Clark advised members that the Risk Management Committee had discussed this category and it was felt due to the positive results received from the Student Satisfaction Survey, that the category did not require to be amended.

H McNeil queried the definition of Student Experience and the reference to the Student Satisfaction Survey, she suggested that the narrative be reconsidered.

Following observations by both D Grenham and J Quinn, the Chair sought confirmation from H McNeil regarding her satisfaction with the inclusion of her observations in the minutes for future acknowledgment.

The Chair thanked L Clark for her comprehensive report.

Members of the Learning and Teaching Committee agreed to note the comments of this report, appendices and links.

L Clark left the meeting at 17:35

9. Update on Active Campus Coordinator

G Sutherland, Active Campus Coordinator, along with J Montgomery, Senior Curriculum Manager (SCM), and Dean McBride, HND Coaching & Developing Sport Student, presented an update on the progress of College Campus Activities.

G Sutherland told members that he had commenced his position with the College as Active Campus Coordinator nine months prior, in August 2023. Furthermore, he highlighted his priorities, such as enhancing physical and mental well-being throughout the College, for both students and staff. He mentioned working closely with J Montgomery (SCM), and that ongoing collaborations with Sports Scotland for student placements had taken place.

Overall, members noted from the presentation given that there was a significant increase of campus activity and an awareness of cross-college partnerships. Notably, 676 participants had engaged in various sports over a 15 week period, reflecting a positive trend in activity levels.

J Montgomery outlined his aspiration to maintain student-led sports clubs and integrate assessment into the broader project. He mentioned that Sports Scotland had not imposed any requirements for activity statistics but highlighted his eagerness to demonstrate by the second year the positive impact of campus activities and well-being efforts on retention. He expressed hope that these statistics would also illustrate the successful progression of students who engage in regular activities towards successful completion.

The Chair thanked the presenters for their informative presentation and invited questions or comments.

M O'Donnell noted that it was good to see such enthusiasm for this initiative. He enquired whether Sports Scotland, as funders of the project, were also facilitating connections with sports' governing bodies, such as coaches, to integrate them into the project. In response, J Montgomery confirmed that there had been good engagement with some of the sports' governing bodies and highlighted efforts to connect with various associations, particularly for student placements.

M Docherty commended G Sutherland for the successful inroads made within a short period of time. She also noted the importance for the College to be visible within the community and suggested that the student placements could progress this as a project. J Montgomery noted that members would be familiar with the community hub operating within the College and that G Sutherland had agreed to expand sports and wellness initiatives to encompass this community project.

R Ashton reminded members that the Learning and Teaching Committee is highly focused on reviewing and enhancing retention and withdrawal data. He elaborated on the College's efforts to improve the wider student experience, the campus environment, refectory offerings, and student engagement activities, all of which contribute significantly to retention.

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

10. Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

The Quality Enhancement Development Manager outlined the feedback received from students during the 2023-24 academic session and detailed the College's planned actions in response. The Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) for the year saw an increase in responses compared to the previous session, with a total of 1,426 responses received. The survey, which included questions from both the Scottish Funding Council and additional queries from the College, revealed overall high satisfaction levels among students, particularly regarding college facilities. Students additionally commended the supportive environment, quality teaching, and practical aspects of courses.

J Gallagher continued to say that overall, whilst there were areas for improvement identified, the report indicated a positive student experience and provided valuable insights for the College to enhance its services further.

The Chair thanked J Gallagher for the presentation, noting the positive 10% increase in satisfaction rates for the college environment and highlighting a range of other areas of improvement.

C Breathnach enquired if the statistics could be broken down by campus. R Ashton noted that campus-specific data had been collected previously and that he supported the idea of doing so again.

Following a question from M O'Donnell, R Ashton explained that tracking a rolling three-year trend was advantageous for monitoring performance. M O'Donnell further requested that the volume of respondents was added to the reporting details.

R Ashton agreed to bring back to a future Learning and Teaching Committee a detailed Student Satisfaction Survey report which contained a breakdown analysis per campus, additionally detailing the volume of the respondents per campus.

The Chair welcomed the report and stated that it was a credit to all staff involved in realising this positive progression.

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

11. SQA Systems Verification Report 2023

The SQA Systems Verification Report, presented by the Quality Enhancement and Development Manager, summarised the outcomes of the verification conducted on 16th November 2023.

J Gallagher highlighted that following the last verification in 2017, colleges were informed in 2022 of the resumption of verification events, prompting a self-assessment during 2023. The College responded with an action plan to address identified areas needing improvement. He went on to say that the verification process evaluated six categories and contained thirty-six criteria, resulting in a 'High Confidence' rating across all six categories. J Gallagher highlighted that this affirmed that the College's Quality processes effectively meets the academic standards set by the SQA.

He summarised on the four amber areas identified within the final report to which the College had agreed actions to address these. He highlighted that the College had since received an email notification from the SQA advising that the amber areas had now been cleared.

He drew members attention to Appendix 1 which provided the Systems Verification - Evidence Report by the SQA.

The Chair highlighted that the report provided members with assurance that the College was meeting rigorous SQA standards.

H McNeil highlighted that it was reassuring that the College proactively identified the amber areas prior to its self-assessment. Additionally, she enquired whether "High confidence" stood as the highest rating. This was confirmed by J Gallagher.

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

12. Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit 2023-24

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that the College has been notified of an upcoming Annual Engagement Visit (AEV) by Education Scotland during the week of 13th May 2024. He explained that this visit is part of Scotland's national quality arrangements for colleges. The AEV will last for one day, with verbal feedback provided at the end of the visit and a draft written report sent to the College for accuracy checking approximately seven weeks later.

R Ashton advised that the Lead Inspector for the visit will be HMle Iain Beach, supported by a team including HMI Margaret Rose Livingston and Associate Assessor Alistair Rodgers. He highlighted that the College was currently preparing a schedule for the AEV, which will address areas for development highlighted in previous engagements with Education Scotland. He drew members attention to Appendix 1 of the report which provided a summary of progress made against the areas for development.

The Chair enquired as to the section of the action plan that highlighted the success rate of learners with protected characteristics and felt that the action suggested that the College needed to place greater emphasis on improving its performance in this area. R Ashton confirmed that that it was important to ensure that the data was accessible to the course teams and to build on the quality arrangements around this data. He informed members that the College's aim is to have this incorporated fully in the quality arrangements prior to the end of this Academic Year. The Chair enquired as to the plan to raise awareness of this to staff. R Ashton noted that this would be incorporated within the Annual Review process.

Members of the Learning and Teaching agreed to:

- i. note the upcoming Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit; and
- ii. requested an update on the outcomes of the visit at a future meeting of the Committee.

13. Scottish Funding Council Indicative College Credit Allocations for AY 2024/25

The Vice Principal of Curriculum informed members that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) recently released indicative college funding allocations for the upcoming academic year 2024-25, following the Scottish Government's Budget announcement.

He highlighted that the attached circular and funding table, as Appendix 1 of the report, outlined the expectations and allocations for colleges. Despite an overall reduction in the college sector budgets, the funding announcement maintains a standstill position concerning learning and teaching, with minimal changes in funding levels and associated flexibilities.

R Ashton continued to elaborate on the key points as stipulated within the report on page one. Additionally, he noted that the indicative funding also does not include any support for digital poverty or mental health counselling support.

D Grenham clarified for understanding, that there was no change in the amount of funding, however that the College expected to produce the same number of credits and was seeing an increase of applications. He asked how these areas linked together. R Ashton noted that the operating plan had assumptions around efficiency improvements and delivering more Credits per full-time equivalent lecturer. D Grenham continued to ask if there was potential that the College would see more applications. The Principal acknowledged that whilst it was likely, there would be limitations in the volume of opportunities the College can offer due to financial constraints and he emphasised that this was not isolated to Glasgow Kelvin College but sector wide.

Members had a further discussion in relation to the Government's approach and the diminishing of real terms funding for colleges. I Patrick highlighting a perceived lack of prioritisation of college funding and pointed out the crucial need for investment in skills and apprenticeships.

C Breathnach noted that it was welcomed that our College had retained our mental health counselling provision, however it was also disappointing that there was a lack of digital support. He asked what the College's approach to this was. In response, the Principal informed members that a five year Operating Plan would be presented to the Board of Management at its June 2024 meeting. He highlighted that there was a number of financial aspects that would allow the College to compensate in some areas. He concluded that the College would aim to minimise the loss of services.

J McBride observed that several devices had to be financially written off due to a lack of return. Additionally, he highlighted the importance for the College to reassess its commitment to ensuring the return of these devices. The Principal agreed that a more assertive approach needs to be pursued. R Ashton explained that this was an area of concern, however the College had invested in LapSafes throughout the Campuses which provides students with access to the devices without them being removed from the campuses.

The Chair noted the Committee's reassurance that the management's focus on students' wellbeing and addressing digital poverty remained a college priority.

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

14. Update on 2024-25 Admissions

The Director of Digital and Information Services informed members that the report on student recruitment for the 2024/25 academic year at Glasgow Kelvin College revealed significant developments. He highlighted that Applications for academic session 2024-25, opened in December 2023. As of 29th April 2024, the College had received 10,182 applications resulting in 4,225 live offers. He noted that application volumes and student offers were higher than last year, this he said was partly due to the timing of launching the admission campaign and providing early access for our current enrolled students. He added that enrolment for 2024/25 have now opened as of 19 April with 1554 student completing their enrolment so far.

Additionally, J Quinn drew attention to the data added on page four referencing the new website and rebranding. He noted that all metrics show a significant increase in January 2024 compared to the same month in the previous year.

I Patrick, observed that this was positive news in relation to the credit target, with the numbers showing promising results.

M O'Donnell queried and drew attention to the 2nd paragraph on page 4 of the report which suggested that the enhanced performance was due to the new website and rebranding. He enquired about users generated from Google search, asking about the proportion that came

from paid sources versus organic ones. He advised that for future analysis it should be clear that it was digital marketing that was driving the positive results. In response, J Quinn agreed to feedback the comments to the Marketing team.

The Principal reminded members that the website and rebranding efforts weren't just about financial investment. They emphasised the significant contribution made by both staff and students, highlighting their engagement and support in driving this initiative forward.

M Docherty suggested that it would be beneficial to include information on how many individuals that have attended the community hub have progressed onto a course within the College.

C Breathnach asked if it was possible to break down the statistics to course level. J Quinn acknowledged that this could be done via alternative mapping processes. He agreed to feedback the information to the Marketing team.

In a response to a question posed by D Grenham. J Quinn noted that there was no national standard for the submission of admission figures, and that a comparison could not be given at this time. He however, acknowledged that there had been a huge shift in applications this year. R Ashton added that the sector, in general, was very positive about the current application levels.

Members of the Learning and Teaching agreed to note the contents of the report and the most recent admissions data.

15. 2023-24 Credit Activity and Student Withdrawal Update – NIPD

The Director of Digital and Information Services provided a comprehensive account of the data analysis as outlined in the report. He referred to the positive Credit target achievement and noted that the College was on track to slightly exceed the target. He highlighted that a key supportive factor in achieving this has been the significantly improved withdrawal rates which have led to an increased proportion of students being funded. He mentioned that over recent years, withdrawals have had a significant impact on the College's performance indicators, particularly for full-time programmes. During Covid, withdrawal rates increased substantially, and a number of measures have been introduced with the aim of improving retention.

R Ashton advised that the College would continue to closely monitor student withdrawal data, prioritising actions such as the pre-course activity.

The Chair noted that it was a good news report based on significant effort and she thanked R Ashton for his input.

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

Risk, Equality and Data Protection - Discussion

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. 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.

Closure

The meeting closed at 7.10pm

21. Committee Focus Group Self Evaluation – Members Only Session

Members of the Committee remained to have a further discussion on the Group Self Evaluation.

22. Date of Next Meeting

TBC