

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
ACADEMIC BOARD
MINUTE

**Minute of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Friday 19 April 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);
Jason Quinn (Director of Digital and Information Services);
James Davidson (Lecturer, BCI);
George McGuire (Senior Curriculum Manager, HCCLD);
John Gallagher (Quality Enhancement & Development Manager);
Gary Sharp (Student Support Services Manager);
Lesley Phee (Organisational Development Business Partner);
Iain Cameron (Lecturer, ECS);
Amrit Bedi (Equalities and Inclusion Lead);
Mae Smillie (Head of Student Information Services);
Sonique Noreiga (President, Student Association);
Calum Campbell (President, Student Association); and
Katie McAnenay (Team Leader, Library Services);

In Attendance

Debbie Friel (Senior Committee Coordinator) (purpose of the minute);
Grant Sutherland; (Active Campus Coordinator);
Steven Donnelly; (Senior Curriculum Manager); and
John Clarke; (Senior Curriculum Manager)

2. Apologies

Monica McKerlie (Head of Student Support Services);
Peter Brown (Director of Apprenticeship, Skills and Curriculum);
Gail Boslem (Community Learning Development Worker);
Alastair McGhee (Director of Student Experience and Enterprise); and
Gerry Harkins (Lecturer, ECS);

3. 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 02 February 2024

The minute of the meeting was accepted as an accurate record of the business conducted on 02 February 2024.

6. Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meetings held on 02 February 2024

Teaching Development Activity Update

Members noted that J Clarke provided Faculty Management with comprehensive information regarding the staff members participating in the teaching development activity projects.

R Ashton requested that J Clarke attend and provide an update on the Teaching Development Activity Projects at the next Academic Board, scheduled in the new academic session.

Item 08 – Review of Implementation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

R Ashton highlighted that he had added to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy a section within the assessment area pertaining to how the College was managing digital AI. Subsequently, this amendment was presented within the report, at the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee convened on 28 February 2024.

Members noted that S Donnelly was present to provide a verbal update on Item 09 on the agenda, the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Item 09 – Student Association Priorities Update

G Sharp confirmed that had shared the “you said, we did” Sway edition from Meet the Mangers Event with J Quinn, for information.

Power BI – Protected Characteristics

J Quinn informed members that Power BI contained data on Protected Characteristics spanning a four-year period. He advised that this information is housed within the Quality Section of the Dashboard, though it is currently concealed and necessitates appropriate permissions for access.

7. Learner Behaviour Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure

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 highlighted that no significant alterations were necessary but highlighted three additions 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.

T Leavy drew attention to the addition as stipulated on point 3, page one, of the report which highlighted the College's expectation of students to be respectful to the college environment, including the local neighbourhood. She stated that students' behaviour outside the College falls under police jurisdiction and that it would be prudent to avoid formal discipline for issues beyond the College's control. R Ashton assured members that this point would be emphasised in the implementation of the procedure.

G Sharp highlighted that the Student Charter as displayed within the College Website currently highlighted that the College expected students to be courteous and respectful to neighbours. Furthermore, he asked how the Student Charter was included within the student induction process. Following discussion, members agreed that arrangements for promotion of the Charter within the Student Induction process could be strengthened.

J Quinn and G Sharp agreed to move forward with establishing a process to ensure that the Charter is made available to all students during the induction stage.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to approve the contents of the Policy and Procedure following the text changes, as discussed.

8. Student Association Priorities Update

The Student Association President delivered a comprehensive overview of the report, aimed at updating members on the array of activities advanced by the association to date. These activities encompassed initiatives such as organisation of Meet the Managers Event, liaising

with the Active Campus Coordinator to help facilitate the delivery of sports and physical activity on campus, and establishing the Student Mental Health Agreement.

Furthermore, C Campbell advised on their priorities and next steps which included the Role of the Class Representative and the ongoing Student Association Awareness Raising. Additionally, he informed members that he, along with Environmental and Sustainability Manager, S Shea had attended the National Union of Students (NUS) Conference.

Members were informed about the upcoming Elections for the 2024/25 Student Association Sabbatical Presidents roles. C Campbell highlighted that the elections were scheduled for May 2024 and nominations would open on Monday, 22nd April, for a two-week period, with elections held from Monday, 20th May to Thursday, 23rd May 2024.

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

R Ashton thanked the Presidents for their attendance and informative report. He assured members that he would circulate a communication to all members of staff on the outcome of the elections, once finalised.

9. Update in the Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies in Learning, Teaching and Assessment

S Donnelly informed members that the College initiated a short working group in February 2024 aimed at exploring the integration of AI within teaching. Comprising of 12 members representing various faculties, the group possessed a spectrum of AI expertise. Drawing insights from institutions like Glasgow Caledonian University and University of Glasgow, as well as Government and educational organisation guidelines, the team identified key areas for focus at GKC: staff training, exemplification, student guidance, and quality assurance. Subgroups were formed to address each area independently, with plans to reconvene in May 2024 for collaborative efforts.

Members noted that under Steven Donnelly's leadership, the staff training subgroup aimed to raise AI awareness among all staff, integrate AI into courses, and provide guidance on adhering to SQA guidelines. J Quinn leads the exemplification subgroup, tasked with compiling exemplary AI use cases for lecturers. This includes planning lessons, catering to student needs, and exploring different AI types and costs. J Clarke heads the student guide subgroup, focusing on creating robust guidance for students on proper AI use, aligning with SQA policies whilst emphasising its value as a learning tool for the future. K McAnenay, representing Library services, advocates for hosting these guides to assist students in navigating AI effectively.

S Donnelly further advised that overall, the working group was proactively addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by AI integration in teaching, recognising the importance of comprehensive staff and student guidance alongside exemplification of best practices. By leveraging expertise from diverse faculties and external guidelines, the group aimed to ensure a cohesive approach aligned with GKC's educational objectives.

I Cameron advised that he was a member of J Quinn's subgroup. He spoke about teaching staff lacking initial knowledge on AI and suggested that an interface on the intranet, which could provide AI examples and guidance for reference would be welcomed. Members agreed that this would be beneficial.

J Clarke extended a welcome to any member of the teaching staff who wished to join the Teaching Activity Groups. Additionally, he mentioned that the groups had access to the TeacherMatic application, a user-friendly tool which encompasses a wide range of AI generators. He added that a training session had been organised for Monday, 29th April for those who had signed up on the Teaching Activity Groups.

Members engaged in a lengthy conversation regarding the teaching staff's concerns about the use of AI during graded units and assessments. I Campbell informed members that running assessments through AI checker is not the most reliable form. He added that if there were any concerns/doubt as to the students work, he would suggest speaking to the student on the content of their assessment accompanied by a review of their logbooks. J Clark highlighted that the feedback coming from the AI community in education is that AI checking tools are not always robust. He further agreed with the combination approach of reviewing the students work via the use of their logbook and discussion on content. He informed members that he would look to disseminate guidance in relation to this subject.

G Sharp expressed an interest in joining the AI Working Group. S Donnelly agreed to add G Sharp as a group member.

R Ashton thanked both Senior Curriculum Managers for their positive work within the area of AI and would arrange a further update on AI at a future Academic Board meeting.

10. Report on Implementation of Active Campus Coordinator Role

G Sutherland provided a presentation which sought to update members on his role, as Active Campus Coordinator and on the progress achieved to date. He noted that his position commenced with the College as Active Campus Coordinator nine months prior, in August 2023.

He spoke of the positives, noting an enhanced awareness of campus activities and opportunities, along with strengthened cross-college collaboration and partnership building. He informed members that a total of 676 participants had engaged in campus activities over a 15-week period, including sports like football, basketball, and volleyball, among others. Additionally, he highlighted the positive trend of increased activity levels within the College.

G Sutherland continued to say that they were now keen to establish a working group to gain more engagement and to help drive through some of the proposed projects and events.

R Ashton thanked G Sutherland for the comprehensive presentation and update on Campus activity progress. He invited questions or comments.

S Donnelly queried if there was data showing participation levels with classes running at the end of the College's working day. G Sutherland advised that he recognised that there was demand for the end of the day sessions and that currently ESOL students would take part in activities after college, same with Yoga classes starting on 30th April, running for a five-week period from 4-5pm. He advised that more focus would be given to this should access to campus facilities increase.

C Campbell informed members that the Community Hubs operate on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Springburn Campus, and Mondays and Wednesdays at the Easterhouse Campus, from 5 to 7pm. During these sessions, gym access was available, with sports students offering personal trainer sessions.

T Leavy thanked G Sutherland for all his efforts in this area and that members could see that there had been a significant uptake on activities over the last nine months. She also observed that G Sutherland could use some support and encouraged volunteers to step forward and assist with any clubs if they could.

Members of the Academic Board noted the content of the presentation.

11. 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 as of 31st March 2024, the college had received 8,345 applications, resulting in 4,034 live offers. He noted that when comparing the data to previous years, this reflected a notable increase in both applications and offers, with a 22% rise in applications received from 2023/24.

However, he further highlighted that there are factors that required to be taken into consideration, which mean we are not comparing exactly like with like, such as excluding year two returners from application data and reducing course availability for 2023/24, affect direct comparison. Moreover, the earlier opening of applications and priority access for existing students in 2024/25 have influenced the higher application volumes and offer rates. Faculty-wise analysis indicates across-the-board increases in both applications and offers, with an overall conversion rate of applications to offers climbing to 48%, a significant improvement from last year's 32%. Despite these contextual nuances, the 2024/25 admissions cycle showcases promising trends with increased applications, offers, and improved conversion rates across faculties.

J Quinn invited comment or questions.

J Davidson reported a notable increase in participation, particularly in the 'keep warm' activity, with up to 12 out of 19 attendees compared to an average of 4 or 5 from his class group last year. J Quinn thanked J Davidson for his observation and highlighted the substantial collaborative effort cross college, encompassing teaching and support areas, noting their collective contribution to the overall success.

M Smillie informed members that there was positive news in that the College had seen over 250 new student enrolments, in the first day of opening.

R Ashton thanked J Quinn for his report and commented that the statistics were encouraging.

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

12. SQA Systems Verification Report 2023

The SQA Systems Verification Report 2023, presented by the Quality Enhancement and Development Manager, summarised the outcomes of the verification conducted on 16th November 2023. The aim was to demonstrate compliance with SQA's academic standards.

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 by 2023. The College responded with an action plan to address identified areas needing improvement.

The verification process evaluated six categories and 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.

R Ashton thanked J Gallagher for the report and commended all staff engaged in the System Verification process, recognising their dedicated efforts towards its completion. He highlighted the importance of integrating information on SQA qualifications and requirements into both student and staff induction processes.

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

13. Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit

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.

He asked members to note that the key themes of the visit would include:

- learner progress and outcomes;
- curriculum learning, teaching and assessment;
- evaluation to facilitate improvement; and
- learner engagement

The Lead Inspector for the visit will be HMIE Iain Beech, 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.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

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

14. 2023-24 Retention Update

The Director of Digital and Information Services informed members that the report sought to provide an overview of Credit delivery and student retention levels up to 18 April 2024. He highlighted that the College set a Credit target of 71,914 for 2023-24, representing a 10% reduction from the previous year. Encouragingly, the College is poised to slightly surpass this target, largely attributed to improved withdrawal rates. Efforts to enhance retention, especially amidst increased withdrawals during the Covid period, have included pre-course activities and raising strong student-staff relationships before teaching commences.

An analysis of withdrawal rates reveals a marked improvement, particularly for full-time programmes, with more effective pre-course engagement likely contributing to this positive trend. However, while part-time withdrawal levels historically remain lower, recent data shows a slight increase in withdrawals for certain months. The College is actively investigating these fluctuations and implementing measures to mitigate further withdrawals, emphasising the ongoing commitment to enhancing student retention beyond the current academic year.

Moreover, J Quinn stated that the report acknowledged the divergence from the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Credit guidance for 2023-24, opting not to fully align with reduced Credit volumes. This decision reflected concerns about potential adverse impacts on students, such as inadequate timetabled guidance for certain learners. Despite this deviation, evidence indicates a decrease in student withdrawals compared to previous years, underscoring the College's dedication to encouraging a supportive and conducive learning environment for its students.

R Ashton reminded members to note that the improvement in retention rates over the past two years stems from a heightened focus on our pre-course warm-up efforts and the commitment

from cross college colleagues.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the update provided.

The Vice Principal thanked all for their attendance and contributions at this meeting and across the Academic Year.

Risk, Equality and Data Protection - Discussion

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. Closure

The meeting closed at 3.05pm

21. Date of Next Meeting

TBC