

# MINUTES

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**Meeting:** Academic Quality Committee

**Date:** Monday 13 February 2023 at 3.30pm

**Location:** Microsoft Teams

**Present:** Zoe Thomson (Chair), Pamela Dobson, Stacey Fleming, Hugh Hall, Evelyn McPhail, Emma Wallace, Lorraine Wilkinson

**In Attendance:** Wendy Brymer, Iain Hawker, Dorothee Leslie, Marianne Philp

## 1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and introduced Lorraine Wilkinson as a new member of the Committee.

## 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting: 7 November 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

## 3 Matters Arising / Actions Outstanding

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted.

## 4 Curriculum Update Report

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined and noted. Strategic highlights included:

- In-year student recruitment was around 7% better than at this time last year, with 84% of credits realised against the annual SFC target.
- Early withdrawals were higher than expected with work ongoing to identify the reasons for withdrawal and to address any issues.
- Discussions with SFC were taking place about aligning College with University cut-off dates.
- The portfolio offer for 2023-24 had been finalised, and recruitment for 2023-24 was underway.

There was a discussion about significant work going into early withdrawals but with little fruition. One difficulty highlighted was that around 40% of students who had withdrawn had not given reasons and would not respond to college communications. It was confirmed that there was a national campaign looking at a range of open days, face to face discussions, taster events and demonstrations to support the onboarding process. Internal processes were also being reviewed, with the Admissions Team taking over the process for School College Partnership enrolments where withdrawals were high.

It was confirmed that CLPL opportunities were being made for staff, encouraging them to get up-to-date relevant industry experience.

It was noted that there was a downturn in Care/Social Care when this had been expected to be an area of growth. It was confirmed that this was due to courses being mainly full-

time but students requiring to work for financial reasons. There was a focus on trying to change the portfolio to part-time and work-based delivery.

Members also noted the additional curriculum updates as noted within the paper.

#### **4.1 Academic Update: New Campus Board**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that there were two strands of work identified:

- Professional Learning and Relationships for staff
- Skills and Transitions for young people

It was confirmed that there was now a need for clear and realistic projects with leads identified in order to take these matters forward jointly with Fife Council. The Joint Project Board would have a key role in confirming requirements and ensuring clarity in this area.

### **5 Fife College Students' Association (FCSA) Update**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Updates were given on:

- Staff updates
- Class representatives
- Student engagement tracker
- Thank you forms
- FCSA Active Health, Community and Extra-Curricular Work

Committee members congratulated the FCSA for being shortlisted for a Fife College Innovation Award and thanked the student Board member for the comprehensive update.

### **6 Performance Update**

#### **6.1 Learner Survey 1 2022-23**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. An overall response rate of 72.5% (a 2.1% decrease on Learner Survey 1 2021-22) was noted. The highlights of the survey results, as documented within the paper, were briefly outlined.

It was confirmed that course level information was being reviewed by Faculties and action plans would be drafted.

Members were reminded that Learner Survey 2 would be issued in March 2023 and would be open for around 6 weeks.

Members noted that there appeared to be issues around timetabling. It was confirmed that further improvement in this area was required to ensure where one change was required this did not have a knock-on effect on other areas. Confirmation was provided that the College communicates that timetables can be subject to change where required within the prospectus and when issuing timetables.

**Decision:** To provide sample action plans (Faculty and Professional Services) for information at the next meeting.

**Responsibility:** Vice Principal

**Deadline:** 5 June 2023

## 6.2 External Review Update: Education Scotland and SQA

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted.

**Education Scotland:** It was noted that the action plan was largely complete, with a few remaining actions on target for completion. It was expected that Education Scotland would visit for one or two days before the end of the academic year, but as yet the date had not yet been confirmed.

**Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Systems Verification:** SQA were expected to visit on 15 June 2023 with the College submitting a self-assessment around Easter. The process would result in an action plan being agreed between the College and SQA.

**Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Credit Rating Body Review:** a self-evaluation report had been submitted to SCQF in December 2022 and a full response from SCQF was awaited.

It was confirmed that members would receive updates on all of these reviews in due course.

## 6.3 Partnerships: Impact on Curriculum (Product Design, Delivery)

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Updates were provided on partnerships with Schools, Universities and collaborative arrangements.

It was confirmed that Industry Advisory Boards were being established and invitations to the first meetings would be issued before the end of March 2023 to those Board members who had offered to participate. Where members had relevant contacts or leads, these could be passed to the Director: Governance and Compliance, who would refer them on to the relevant staff to take forward.

An error was noted in the numbers of pupils on page 30 of the Boardpack (1212 should read 212). This would be corrected in the final version of papers. It was also noted that the table on page 33 did not include student visits, although those had happened.

It was highlighted that agreement had been reached with Skills Development Scotland and schools to receive anonymised data earlier, in order to inform curriculum planning.

It was clarified that students normally enroll for a degree, and can exit at that point or re-enrol to continue to Honours level. All pathways are designed to enable students have the choice to exit with a qualification or continue to the next level.

## **7 Update on Draft Learning Strategy**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that all feedback received to date from Board members, staff and other stakeholders had been incorporated into the plan.

Members agreed that having consistency across all Strategies was preferable. Feedback was that the Achieving our Ambitions section was not required, and this should feed into a more detailed action plan which would be separate and could be regularly updated. It was noted that there were two sections headed “purpose” and this should be refined in the final version.

**Decision:** To provide any feedback on the draft Learning Strategy to the Director: Governance and Compliance over the next two weeks.

**Responsibility:** All Committee Members      **Deadline:** 27 March 2023

## **8 Review of Meeting**

The Chair thanked staff for the high quality summarized format of papers which helped members ask qualitative questions in support of good governance.

## **9 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 5 June 2023 at 3.30pm