



**EDINBURGH COLLEGE ACADEMIC COUNCIL**  
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 27 FEBRUARY 2015  
14.00, BOARDROOM, GRANTON CAMPUS

Present: Colin Arthur; Fiona Candlish; Moira Frizzell; Jeroen van Herk; Nigel Kennington; Ray McCowan; Julie McCran; Elaine McMahon; Richard Morris; Nigel Paul (Chair); and Graham Skirving

In attendance: P MacPherson (Clerk)

By invitation: Carol Fyfe; Gary Husband; Myra McCabe; Kevin McGlynn; Lea Ozuna

**1 APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies had been received from Jenni Behan, Zoe Croy, Diane Erasmuson and Ian McKay.

**2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

2.1 The Committee Chair welcomed the Interim Principal to the Academic Council.

2.2 The Committee Chair advised that this would be Moira Frizzell's last Academic Council meeting as she was stepping down from the Board. He thanked her for all her hard work on the Committee and wished her all the best in her future endeavours.

2.3 The Committee NOTED that Jane Richardson had resigned from the Board due to increased work commitments. The Committee Chair expressed his thanks to Jane Richardson for her contribution to Academic Council.

2.4 The Committee NOTED that the new Edinburgh College Board would be approved by the Scottish Government at the start of March and Committee Membership would be reconstituted at the Board meeting on Tuesday 24 March.

**3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

3.2 The Committee APPROVED the minutes of 21 November 2014 as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **4 MATTERS ARISING**

The Committee NOTED that all actions were either carried over or covered in the agenda items.

- 4.1 Head of Centre for Learning and Teaching to present a briefing paper on the essential skills support pilot at the next Committee meeting.
- 4.2 The Imagine Tomorrow report had been discussed at the ECSA engagement meeting and Head of Centre for Learning and Teaching and ECSA VP Education would report on how the actions from this report would be taken forward at the next Committee meeting.
- 4.3 Head of Quality & Equalities to provide a progress report on the Education Scotland action plan at the next Committee meeting.
- 4.4 Vice Principal - Quality, Performance & Student Experience confirmed that an update on the provision of essential skills would be provided at the next Committee meeting.

#### **5 CURRICULUM AWARENESS RAISING SESSION (Tourism & Hospitality)**

Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy gave a presentation to the Committee on the Tourism & Hospitality Academy.

- 5.1 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised Members that tourism and hospitality is an area of growth and expansion at the college. She added that hospitality had been crossed over with retail and events to ensure that the curriculum matches the needs of the industry.
- 5.2 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised that the college's decision to move to an in-house catering provision meant both an improved service and cost savings for the college. The Hub at Granton was already established as an employability hub and this employability model is being recreated at Milton Road. The college is also looking to increase the number of modern and junior apprenticeships. Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy added that their next employability day will take place on 16 March 2015.
- 5.3 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised that students make soup and bread rolls for local lunch clubs connected with food banks. They are also encouraged to enter competitions such as Scothot to gain confidence in their specific disciplines.
- 5.4 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy informed Members that the Treat festival would run again for the second time in May and they hoped to increase on the success of last year's festival which attracted over 25 stall holders and raised nearly £900 for charity.

- 5.5 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised that two first year hospitality students trained in Lausanne, Switzerland with the world's best hoteliers and restaurateurs.
- 5.6 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy confirmed that school pupils attending the East Lothian Tourism and Hospitality Academy can potentially achieve an HNC and go on to study at Queen Margaret University.
- 5.7 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy informed Members that the college's Hair & Beauty department is a centre of excellence. They host the Wella Exposure event every year (a central industry event) and the college is supported by Elemis, Wella and Dermalogica. The college is also hoping to work with Maggie's Centre now that they have the Nioxin clinic in the spa at Granton.
- 5.8 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised that the green sustainable salon at Granton is setting the scene for future growth and expansion. The dry flotation tank saves water and the two dryers allow people with severe asthma to have their hair cut.
- 5.9 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy confirmed that all hairdressing and beauty students take part in employability salons allowing them to develop their communication skills and selling techniques.
- 5.10 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised that travel, tourism and modern languages have a great relationship with International and they are looking to develop projects in partnership with Uzbekistan and Panama. She confirmed that the college are currently working with the Egyptian Tourist Board and are in partnership with People First. They are seeking 'kite' marks for their commercial course material which they hope to market worldwide.
- 5.11 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy informed Members that there is a training aircraft facility at Granton. She added that the college is also looking to expand into the activity and golf tourism market.
- 5.12 Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy advised that languages need to become more important if the college is to increase travel and tourism.
- 5.13 The Committee Chair thanked Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy for her presentation.

***[Head of Tourism & Hospitality Academy left the meeting].***

## **6 PROJECT WORKING GROUP / DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE**

### **6.1 Overview**

The Interim Principal confirmed that the Development Plan had been submitted to the SFC on 27 February 2015. She confirmed that the plan was centred on the student experience and that it will form the basis of the Curriculum Strategy. The Interim Principal advised that attached to the Development Plan is a request for funding to enable the college to deliver the projects outlined in the

plan. The Interim Principal thanked all those involved for helping put together the Development Plan.

## **6.2 Curriculum**

See item 7 below.

## **6.3 Student Experience**

Vice Principal - Quality, Performance & Student Experience advised that there is a specific section in the Development Plan that looks at support for learning.

# **7 CURRICULUM 2015-16**

7.1 Vice Principal Educational Leadership advised that there had been a decline in enrolments after the merger. However, the structures put in place after the Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) would ensure maximum conversion of applications to enrolments.

7.2 Vice Principal Educational Leadership confirmed that the curriculum looked to respond to Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy by providing more academies and entry level provision for young people. He added that the college is working with schools to ensure that they are not duplicating provision. Vice Principal Educational Leadership advised that employer engagement was a key driver for the curriculum alongside demand for jobs and qualifications.

7.3 Vice Principal Educational Leadership advised that there will be an increased curriculum provision in engineering and construction as there is a projected increase in jobs for those areas.

7.4 Vice Principal Educational Leadership confirmed that community provision would be geared towards employment to help those harder to reach learners take steps into mainstream employment.

7.5 Vice Principal Educational Leadership advised that the college would continue to provide Highers, but not on a full time basis, and would look to stop duplication in other areas of provision. He confirmed that Edinburgh Council are currently looking to build hub-schools (single centres of vocational training) which could duplicate facilities already provided by the college (i.e. engineering facility at Midlothian). He added that previously the college had worked with schools on a one-to-one basis and that we now needed to move towards strategic discussions that looked at the best use of resources.

7.6 Interim Principal advised that students will choose the college if we can provide better courses; flexible approaches and better progression opportunities.

- 7.7 Vice Principal Educational Leadership agreed that colleges need to market themselves better in the education continuum. The Committee Chair confirmed that the formation of Colleges Scotland and the Regional Chairs would help take this forward at sector level.

## **8 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN LEARNING AND TEACHING**

Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager gave a presentation to the Committee on professional development in learning and teaching.

- 8.1 Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager advised that the college needs to provide effective training for lecturers. He confirmed that there are excellent teachers in the college and we should use their expertise to facilitate good practice. He also wants to work closely with the Head of Quality & Equality to share good practice around the college. Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager advised that he is looking to develop a life-long learning structure at the college.
- 8.2 Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager advised that there are currently 40 staff undergoing training at the college.
- 8.3 Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager confirmed that he is conducting research into efficacy of teacher training in FE and has professional contacts and working partnerships with several people including staff from Oxford University, Stirling University and Brunei University.
- 8.4 Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager advised that the recommendations within the paper are required to provide sufficient training provision for the college.
- 8.5 Interim Principal thanked Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager for the presentation and asked for more information on different modes of learning delivery to be presented at a future Committee meeting.
- 8.6 Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager advised that his team are currently investigating the CPD requirements for teaching staff.
- 8.7 Head of Quality & Equalities advised that staff undertake online mandatory training on equality and diversity.
- 8.8 Staff Board Member advised that many new lecturers are not given any proper training before they start teaching and this put new members of staff under an incredible amount of stress. He was happy to support the recommendations in the paper.
- 8.9 The Committee Chair thanked Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager for his presentation and the Committee AGREED to recommend the

proposals put forward in his paper. The Committee Chair added that the college is constrained by the Development Plan and asked the Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager to ensure that his plans linked to the Development Plan.

***[Interim Principal left the meeting].***

## **9 PERFORMANCE UPDATES**

### **9.1 Performance Indicators (Exec Summary)**

9.1.1 Head of Quality & Equalities advised that the PIs show how we compare with other regions in the college sector.

9.1.2 Head of Quality & Equalities confirmed that Edinburgh College had fallen below the sector average in FE Full time success rates but was higher than the sector average for HE Full time success rates.

9.1.3 Head of Quality & Equalities advised that there were high withdrawal rates within the HE PT categories which could have masked performance issues.

9.1.4 Head of Quality & Equalities advised that we have a few subject areas that are performing well and there is a need to review the areas and share best practice across the college.

9.1.5 Head of Quality & Equalities advised that the PI information is shared with the Curriculum Managers. There is a lot of information within the PIs and this information should be used to help impact on programme design and CPD requirements.

9.1.6 Student President noted that over 90% of class reps advised that either course team meetings aren't happening or class reps are not being invited to attend.

The Committee AGREED that this was an issue that needed further investigation.

### **9.2 Public Sector Equality Duty April 2015**

9.2.1 None.

### **9.3 Monitoring Our Performance**

9.3.1 Vice Principal - Quality, Performance & Student Experience advised that the college sector is currently moving over from WSUMS to credits and that she would be able to provide a much clearer picture on targets at the next Committee meeting.

- 9.3.2 The Committee Chair raised his concerns that the Committee had not received a report updating them on targets at this half way point through the year.

***[Quality Enhancement Officer entered the meeting].***

**9.4 Induction Survey 2014-15 (Results)**

- 9.4.1 The Quality Enhancement Officer advised that the response rate was slightly lower than last year (52%) although it was still significantly higher than the Pre-Exit Survey (25%).
- 9.4.2 The Quality Enhancement Officer confirmed that satisfaction rates were good (although slightly lower than last year) and first impressions of the college were really good.
- 9.4.3 The Quality Enhancement Officer advised that the college had received low satisfaction rates for financial assistance.
- 9.4.4 The Quality Enhancement Officer confirmed that the college scored in the lowest quartile for 15 questions (last year – 18 questions). She advised that overall rates are lower but that the college is improving in benchmarking and financial assistance.
- 9.4.5 The Board asked if any lessons had been learned from the responses to the questionnaires. Head of Quality & Equalities advised that the information goes out by course level to all teams across the college and helps to form the basis of their self-evaluation and programme plans.
- 9.4.6 Student President confirmed that that statistics are poor for financial support and this could have a negative financial implication for the college if students drop out of courses.
- 9.4.7 Staff Member, Creative Industries, Design Media and Computing advised that most of the negative areas within the questionnaires relate to advice, induction and timetables. He asked if the Learning & Teaching Professional Development Manager could run a workshop for lecturers on how to run a good induction programme.
- 9.4.8 Vice Principal - Quality, Performance & Student Experience advised that there are some very low satisfaction figures for Midlothian and Milton Road Campus. Head of Quality & Equalities advised that his team have focused on the high risk areas identified in the questionnaires. He confirmed that information from the student reviews are now being passed on to teams.

## **9.5 Pre-Exit Survey 2014-15**

- 9.5.1 Head of Quality & Equalities confirmed that the survey had been updated with changes requested by ECSA and the sub-groups. He agreed to meet with the Student President to confirm one further change to the wording of the pre-exit survey.
- 9.5.2 The Quality Enhancement Officer confirmed that the survey would be run earlier than last year to ensure that more students are able to complete the survey before they finish their course.
- 9.5.3 The Committee APPROVED the Pre-Exit Survey 2014-15.

***[Quality Enhancement Officer left the meeting].***

## **10 UPDATES**

### **10.1 ECSA Update**

- 10.1.1 Student President advised that ECSA have a new group of ten reviewers who will look across eight subjects starting 23 March 2015. He added that ECSA have requested to run their own student review process for Education Scotland.
- 10.1.2 Student President raised concerns about SAM and compassionate leave forms. Head of Student Services advised that the college has put in place a clear framework for students and agreed to meet with the Student President after the meeting.

### **10.2 Sub Group Reports**

- 10.2.1 Staff Member, Quality Support Officer advised that there was still an issue with communications as they were unable to send out the quality bulletins. The group felt that QUELTM should be included in the quality bulletin as a lot of staff didn't know what it meant. Staff Member, Quality Support Officer to meet with Vice Principal - Quality, Performance & Student Experience to discuss the College's Comms plan and the possibility of a quality bulletin.
- 10.2.2 Staff Member, Lecturer: Creative Industries, Design Media and Computing advised that the sub-group chairs had met with IT to discuss various issues including WiFi and a lot of progress had been made in this area.

10.2.3 Staff Member, Food and Hospitality reported that his group had discussed issues around UCAS applications. The group had also discussed LDT access and the induction process.

10.2.4 Staff Member, Lecturer Institute of Construction & Building Crafts advised that Envision could be used as a way of communicating updates from Quality & Equality. He added that his group had discussed the need to upgrade whiteboards at the college.

10.2.5 Head of Quality & Equalities advised that his team would run the part-time destination survey through QDP (telephone survey).

## **11 FOR INFORMATION**

### **11.1 Outcome Agreement Self-Evaluation Report 2013-14**

None.

### **11.2 Framework for Developing Strong and Effective College Students' Associations**

None.

### **11.3 Outcome Agreement – Workshop with ECSA**

None.

## **12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

## **13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is now scheduled for **Friday 29 May 2015** at 2pm in the Boardroom, Milton Road Campus.

The meeting closed at 1645 hrs.