



For the future you want

EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 11 DECEMBER 2018

14:00 Boardroom, Milton Road Campus

Present: Beth Anderson; Bruce Cassidy; Audrey Cumberland; Ian Diamond (Chair); Lesley Drummond; Sarah Hay; Sam Hogrefe; Ann Landels; Niki McKenzie; Nigel Paul; Fiona Riddoch; Azra Sharif-Qayyum; Judith Sischy; Jeanette Stevenson; Ian Young.

In attendance: Jon Buglass; Nick Croft; Michael Jeffrey; Jonny Pearson; Helen Russell (Audit Scotland); Marcus Walker (Clerk); Alan Williamson.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 No apologies were received.
- 1.2 The Board NOTED that (*further to Minute 8.1.1/18.09.18*) Mike Cowley, Academic Staff Board Member, had reaffirmed his commitment to remain on the Board.
- 1.3 The Board NOTED that Bob Downie, a Non-Executive Member, had informed the Chair on 02 November of his decision to resign from the Board with immediate effect. The Chair advised the Board that a letter of thanks had been sent to Mr Downie, acknowledging his services as member of the Board and its Audit & Risk Assurance Committee.
- 1.4 The Board NOTED that Helen Russell, Audit Scotland, would join the meeting for Item 8.1 to present the External Auditor's 2017/18 Annual Report.
- 1.5 The Board NOTED that it had received a presentation from staff and students within Community-based ESOL and Modern Languages, which showcased the positive work carried out with both departments to implement national strategies. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked Kay Penman (Curriculum Manager) and Caroline Cordier (Curriculum Lead) and their students for the presentation and advised the Board that a formal letter of thanks would be circulated in due course.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Board NOTED declarations of interest from Ann Landels and Ian Young in relation to Item 4.1.1, in light of their position as a members of the Edinburgh College Development Trust.
- 2.2 The Board NOTED a declaration of interest from Ann Landels and Azra Sharif-Qayyum in relation to the consideration of their tenure as a Non-Executive Board Members under Item 8.5.1.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 3.1 The Board APPROVED the minutes from 18 September 2018 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 Actions from the previous meeting were complete, overtaken or on the agenda with the exception of the following:

4.1.1 DEVELOPMENT TRUST PROPOSAL (MINUTES 3.4 / 18.09.18 REFERS)

The Board NOTED that the Edinburgh College Development Trust were in the process of preparing a new business plan setting out its vision and strategic aims for the future. The Vice Chair, through his position as a member of the Development Trust, advised the Board that it was expected that a proposal would be presented to the next meeting of the Board on 19 March 2019.

5. BOARD DEVELOPMENT DAY REPORT

- 5.1 The Board NOTED an overview of matters considered at the Board Development Day on 30 October, and actions arising from the discussions held. The Chair highlighted the main topics of discussion at the Development Day, which included: (i) The future-proofing of the College; (ii) the reshaping of Blueprint 2017-22; (iii) risk appetite and tolerance; and, (iv) the development of key performance indicators for inclusion in the 2018/19 Edinburgh College Annual Report.
- 5.2 The Board DISCUSSED the reshaping of the Blueprint 2017-22, which aimed to ensure that the College delivered on its ambition to 'future-proof' itself. The Board AGREED that amendments to the Blueprint, as agreed by the Policy & Resources Committee on 27 November (*Minute 8.2.1 refers*), should be published on the College website. The Principal advised the Board that a series of staff briefings in December had outlined the direction of travel to become a resilient and agile College with reach and potential to grow.
- 5.3 The Board DISCUSSED the benefits of conducting a staff survey, and AGREED that the Executive Team should consider the implementation of such a survey in the coming academic year.

- 5.4 The Board NOTED that strategic key performance indicators would be included in the Edinburgh College 2018/19 Annual Report and Strategic Plan Update, and presented to the Board in September 2019. The Chair advised the Board that a draft of the proposed KPIs would be presented to the Board at its meeting on 18 June 2019.

6. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION: REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2019/20

- 6.1 The Board NOTED a draft of the Edinburgh College Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) for 2019/20. The Assistant Principal, Curriculum Design and Development, provided an overview of the document, highlighting key areas of consideration and governance.
- 6.2 The Board NOTED that, following discussion between the Executive and the SFC, greater detail had been included on key elements associated with the SFC led 'intensification' programme - including analysis of key performance indicators and evidenced based strategic planning. The Assistant Principal advised the Board that greater alignment was also emerging with the processes designed by the College to manage the Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) and ROA targets.
- 6.3 The Board NOTED challenge questions regarding what resources the College would require to meet its ROA targets over the next few years, and how well the College was placed to achieve key targets. In response to the questions posed by the Assistant Principal the Board DISCUSSED the following:
- (i) The variations across the College relating to ROA targets, and what the College had done to ensure consistency across faculties;
 - (ii) target setting through the ROA and its impact on the College's ability to be flexible to meet demands;
 - (iii) the framing of the College's offer to students and how best students aspirations could be acknowledged;
 - (iv) student satisfaction levels, and the need to address the key concerns of students as highlighted by ECSA and recent student surveys;
 - (v) resource constraints, and the need to get the most of current resources whilst continuing to develop the use of appropriate technologies;
 - (iv) the engagement of the College with stakeholders in Edinburgh and the Lothians, and the need to continue to communicate with students, parents/guardians and employers.
- 6.4 The Board NOTED that the SFC-led intensification of the college sector would mean that restrictions placed on resources would remain constrained. The Board DISCUSSED how limited resources could impact on its targets within the ROA, and AGREED that the need for additional resources should be highlighted in the next draft of the document.
- 6.5 The Board NOTED that a final draft of the ROA 2019/20 would be presented to the Board at its next meeting on 19 March 2019, for approval.

7. EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

- 7.1 The Board NOTED a report from ECSA covering a range of activities at the College since the last Board meeting.
- 7.2 The Board NOTED that the first round of Class Reps Conferences had taken place across all four campuses between 23 October and 01 November. The ECSA Student President advised the Board that a full report on the outcomes of each conference had been considered by the Academic Council, and had provided a detailed insight into the experiences of students throughout their induction period.
- 7.3 The Board DISCUSSED the valuable feedback provided by ESCA, and AGREED that a written response from the Senior Management Team to recommendations highlighted by students should be presented to the next meeting of the Academic Council.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Helen Russell, Audit Scotland, joined the meeting

8.1 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

8.1.1 MINUTES 10.10.18

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 10 October. The Board NOTED that the Committee had approved an Internal Audit Plan 2017/18, and thanked Scott-Moncrieff for delivering their final internal audit annual report - following five years of service as internal auditors to the College.

8.1.2 MINUTES 21.11.18

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 21 November.

8.1.3 ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 JULY 2018

The Board NOTED an annual report from the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, which highlighted areas of activity undertaken by the Committee for the period of 01 August 2017 to 31 July 2018. The Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee informed the Board that the internal and external auditors had commended the College on its achievements over the past year, however, it was noted that the financial sustainability of the College sector going forward remained challenging and would need to be monitored closely.

The Board NOTED the Edinburgh College Annual Report and Financial Statements for the 12 month period ended 31 July 2018.

The Board NOTED External Audit Annual Report for the financial accounting period. The External Auditor informed the Board that Audit Scotland were content to sign-off

the financial accounts, subject to approval by the Board, following their second term as external auditors for Edinburgh College.

The Board DISCUSSED the following matters in relation to the Annual Report and Financial Statements:

- (i) the positive narrative within the annual accounts and the need to communicate the document to stakeholders;
- (ii) the need to reflect on the financial challenges within the sector to ensure the College continues to move forward in a positive manner;
- (iii) the excellent stewardship provided by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, which was commended by Board members;
- (iv) the consensus provided by the annual accounts that the College was moving in the right direction of travel, and that the College's overachievement of its credit target provided excellent value for money;

The Board APPROVED the Annual Report and Financial Statements to 31 July 2018 and the letter of representation, as endorsed by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, for sign-off by the Chair and the Principal.

Helen Russell left the meeting

8.1.4 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board NOTED the Summary Top Risk Register (TRR) to December 2018, and the changes in top level risks since the last meeting of the Board on 18 September. The Head of Corporate Development advised the Board that the Edinburgh College Risk Appetite Statement had been reviewed following the Board Development Day and amendments endorsed by the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting on 21 November.

The Board DISCUSSED the Edinburgh College Risk Appetite Statement, and the College's commitment to a 'three lines of defence' approach to risk, and AGREED to its approval.

8.2 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8.2.1 MINUTES 27.11.18

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 27 November.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had considered and approved a proposal to reshape the Edinburgh College Blueprint 2017-22, with a view to future-proofing the College going forward. The Vice Chair informed the Board that the Committee also endorsed a Gateway Review of the Blueprint, as proposed by the Principal, and would continue to receive reportage on progress at future meetings.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had unanimously approved a proposal, put forward by the Executive, to accept the tender of Gather & Gather (trading name of Mitie Catering Services Ltd.) as an external catering provider. The Principal

advised the Board that consultation with staff and students would continue to ensure appropriate transition arrangements were in place.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had approved the 2019/20 Tuition Fees. The Vice Chair informed the Committee that part-time course fees would increase by 2% in 2019/20, following a market review against other colleges and local universities.

8.2.2 COLLEGE STRATEGIES: FINANCE, ESTATES AND IT INFRASTRUCTURE

The Board NOTED three Edinburgh College strategies, as approved by the Policy & Resources Committee, which aimed to provide a clear sense of direction over the medium term, regarding the approach of the College to finance, estates and IT infrastructure. The Chief Operating Officer advised the Board that the refreshed strategies were required to demonstrate good practice as per SFC guidance, and internal and external audit recommendations.

8.2.3 RECRUITMENT & RETENTION DASHBOARD

The Board NOTED an update from the Assistant Principal, Recruitment and Retention, on the performance of the College against its 2018/19 recruitment and retention targets. The Assistant Principal informed the Board that the SFC had set the College an activity target of 187,969 for current academic year.

The Board NOTED that in spite of an increase in enrolments there had been a decrease in credits in comparison with the previous academic year. The Assistant Principal advised the Board that the reason behind this was a drop in the number of full-time FE students, which had not been offset (in terms of credits) by an increase in the number of part-time FE students.

The Board NOTED that early withdrawal in the current academic year had reduced by 50% from 2015/16, however, full-time FE withdrawals remained an area of concern. The Assistant Principal advised the Board that early withdrawals were being addressed by the Executive Team through the ongoing Performance Review process. The Board DISCUSSED early withdrawals and AGREED that it would welcome further information on measures taken by the College to reduce withdrawal rates.

8.2.4 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO OCTOBER 2018

The Committee NOTED the financial performance of the College as outlined in the Management Accounts to October 2018.

8.3 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

8.3.1 MINUTES 16.11.18

The Board NOTED the Academic Council minutes from the meeting held on 16 November.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had considered the College's 2017/18 Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) which had been submitted to the SFC on 31 October. The Chair of the Academic Council advised members that approval by the Board (via correspondence) for the submission of the EREP had been granted on 25 October.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had considered students' feedback through a number of sources, including the ECSA Class Reps Conference Report (*Minute 7.2 refers*), the results of the 2017/18 Pre-Exit Satisfaction Survey and a report from the Head of Student Experience. The Chair of the Academic Council commended the commitment of the Student Experience Team in working to address the key issue of student funding, which strongly correlated to student retention and overall satisfaction.

The Board DISCUSSED the commitment of the College to develop the theme of 'positive education' more widely, and the benefits of introducing meta-skills into the curriculum to enhance students' resilience. The Board NOTED that the Academic Council would continue to explore the integration of meta-skills into the curriculum further at future meetings.

8.4 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

8.4.1 MINUTES 20.11.18

The Board NOTED the External Engagement Committee minutes from the meeting held on 20 November.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received a presentation from the Assistant Principal (Income & Product Development) to update members on the COLLAB Group and the development of Scottish COLLAB Strategy. The Chair of the External Engagement Committee advised that Board that Committee would continue to receive regular updates to monitor the return on investment provided through the partnership with the COLLAB Group.

The Board NOTED that the Chair of the External Engagement Committee and the ECSA Student President had met with the Lord Provost of Edinburgh to discuss how engagement with the College around the City Vision 2050 could be maximised. The Student President informed the Board that ECSA were delighted that the Lord Provost had agreed to engage further with Edinburgh College students and would be holding consultation events at the College in early 2019.

8.5 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Ann Landels and Azra Sharif-Qayyum left the meeting

8.5.1 MINUTES 30.10.18

The Board NOTED the Nominations Committee minutes from the meeting held on 30 October.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had endorsed an extension to Ann Landels and Azra Sharif-Qayyum's tenures for an additional three year term. The Board DISCUSSED and APPROVED the proposed extension to both Non-Executive Members tenures, subject to approval by Scottish Ministers.

Ann Landels and Azra Sharif-Qayyum returned to the meeting

The Board NOTED that the Committee had confirmed a recruitment process, in line with previously agreed guidelines, to recruit up to three new non-executive members to the Board by 01 March 2019. The Chair advised the Board that once the appointments process had been completed the Nominations Committee would reconvene in March 2019, to consider committee membership going forward. Further to this, the Chair encouraged Board members to contact him directly if they had any preference relating to their own membership of committees.

Lesley Drummond left the meeting

9. PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

- 9.1 The Board NOTED a report from the Principal covering a range of activities at the College since the last Board meeting.
- 9.2 The Board NOTED that national negotiations with EIS in relation to pay had been ongoing and an agreement had yet to be reached. The Principal informed the Board that as a result colleges had received a formal notification from the General Secretary of the EIS that a ballot for strike action had opened in November. Further to this, the Principal advised the Board that the College had contingency plans in place should industrial action take place in January, February and March 2019.
- 9.3 The Committee NOTED a Horizon Scanning Report, which outlined major political, economic, social, technological, legal and/or environmental developments that could impact on the five strategic plan aims of the College.

10. GOVERNANCE REPORT

10.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT

- 10.1.1 The Board NOTED that a call for nominations from non-executive Board members had been circulated on 01 November, seeking a candidate to fill the position of Vice Chair to the Board which would become available from 02 March 2019. The Board NOTED that Ann Landels, a member of the non-executive and Chair of the External Engagement Committee, was the only nominated candidate for the role. The Board APPROVED the appointment of Ann Landels as Vice Chair from 02 March 2019 onwards, until the end of her tenure as Board member.

10.2 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

- 10.2.1 The Board NOTED and DISCUSSED a further amendments to its Standing Orders relating to the number of working days given prior to calling a Board or committee meeting. The Board AGREED that they remained content with the Standing Orders as approved by the Board at its meeting on 18 September 2019.
- 10.2.2 The Board APPROVED amendments to the terms of reference of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, as endorsed by the Committee.

11. NATIONAL REPORT

- 11.1 The Board NOTED that Colleges Scotland had been working with the college chairs and principals to develop a statement of ambition for the college sector in Scotland. The Chair advised the Board that, following the launch of the Statement of Ambition on 05 December, representatives of Colleges Scotland had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Board on 19 March 2019, to discuss the strategic vision outlined for the college sector for the next five years (2018-23).

12. NATIONAL REPORT

- 12.1 The Board NOTED RIDDOR reportable incidents in Quarter 1 of the 2018/19 academic year.

13. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

13.1 STRATEGIC DIALOGUE MEETING WITH THE SFC

- 13.1.1 The Board NOTED that the next scheduled Strategic Dialogue Meeting with the SFC would be held at the college on 24 April 2019. The Board AGREED that the Chair, Vice Chair, Chair of the Academic Council and Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee would act as representatives of the Board at this meeting.

13.2 DEPARTURE OF THE VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

- 13.2.1 The Board NOTED that the Vice Chair of the Board, Ian Young, would be standing down as a Non-Executive Board Member on 01 March 2019. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked Mr Young for his significant contribution to the Board and the development of both its Policy & Resources Committee and its External Engagement Committee.
- 13.2.2 Mr Young thanked the Board and Executive colleagues for their support since he joined the College as a non-executive member in October 2012, and welcomed the significant progress made by the College in recent years.
- 13.2.3 The Board NOTED that Mr Young would remain as Vice Chair until the end of his tenure on 01 March 2019.

13.3 DEVELOPMENT TRUST MEMBERSHIP

- 13.3.1 The Board NOTED a request from the Edinburgh College Development Trust for it to nominate a second member of its non-executive to join the Trust, once the tenure of Ian Young had ended on 01 March 2019. The Chair advised the Board that if any of its members wished to nominate themselves for this role they should contact him directly in advance of the next Board meeting.

14. CLOSED ITEMS OF BUSINESS

14.1 CLOSED MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 14.1.1 The Board APPROVED the closed minutes from 18 September 2018 as an accurate record of the meeting.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 15.1 The next meeting would be held at 14:00hrs on 19 March 2019 at the Milton Road Campus.

Meeting closed at 17:00