



ACADEMIC COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 17 MARCH 2017

14:00hrs, Boardroom, Sighthill Campus

Present: C Arthur; N Black; A Bruton; T Cotton; A Landels; J Harkin; E Lashley-Scott; K Maloney; N Manning; F Riddoch (Chair); J Russell; J Sales; D Tait; C Turnbull

In attendance: J Buglass; J Jeffrey; S-J Linton; G Ritchie; M Walker (Clerk)

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 The Committee NOTED apologies from Iris Aitchison and Jennifer Russell.
- 1.2 The Committee Chair welcomed two newly co-opted academic staff members, Ethelinda Lashley-Scott and Kevin Maloney, and a newly co-opted student member, Tia Cotton, to their first Academic Council.
- 1.3 The Committee Chair welcomed Gill Ritchie, HM Inspector, to the Academic Council to discuss Education Scotland's ongoing engagement with the college.
- 1.4 The Committee Chair welcomed the Head of Creative Industries, Jakki Jeffrey, to the meeting to discuss best practice in the Faculty under Item 5.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were received.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1 The Committee APPROVED the minutes of the Academic Council from 20 January 2017 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:

4.2 LEARNING ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (LEF)

The Committee NOTED that training had been planned by the Head of Performance, Policy & Planning, with Organisation Development and ECSA, for all curriculum leads which included the promotion of the LEF initiative. The Student President informed the Committee that the LEF initiative had been nominated at the 2017 sparqs Student Engagement Awards for its impact on the enhancement of the student experience. The Committee Chair, on behalf of members, congratulated ECSA on its nomination and wished the team well at the prize giving event.

4.3 INDUCTION SURVEY RESULTS

The Committee NOTED that the Head of Performance, Policy & Planning had contacted the College Development Network's (CDN) Quality Lead to ask for the issue of benchmarking to be raised at the next CDN meeting. The Head of Performance, Policy & Planning informed the Committee that a further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Academic Council.

5 CREATIVE INDUSTRIES BEST PRACTICE

5.1 The Committee NOTED that the Academic Council would receive a presentation on best practice from each of the faculties, over its next four meetings, in order to encourage the sharing and embedding best practice at the college.

5.2 The Committee NOTED a presentation from the Head of Creative Industries on current best practice with the Faculty, which included the GLOW Student Festival and the Student Ambassador's initiative.

5.3 The Committee DISCUSSED, in small groups, the best practice highlighted and the potential for its incorporation into other faculties. The following points were feedback to the Committee:

- (i) The resources required to implement the ambassador initiative across other campuses and the need for a degree of caution, as replicating such initiatives poorly could have a reputational implications;
- (ii) the promotion of good practice with regards to Creative Industries Faculty's class reps forums;
- (iii) the sharing of employability information, an areas in which Creative Industries has illustrated good practice;
- (iv) the encouragement of employer engagement and mentorship across the college.

5.4 The Committee DISCUSSED what was meant by best practice and the need to find out more about what was currently happening across the college. The Head of Performance, Policy & Planning emphasised to the Committee the importance of tying best practice to 'positive outcomes', as a means for selecting initiatives to run across all four faculties.

- 5.5 The Committee AGREED that following the four best practice sessions there should be the opportunity to consider practice across the college in a holistic manner.
- 5.6 The Committee Chair, on behalf of members, thanked the Head of Creative Industries for her presentation and engaging in discussions with the Academic Council.

The Head of Creative Industries left the meeting

6 EDUCATION SCOTLAND

6.1 EDUCATION SCOTLAND ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1.1 The Committee NOTED an update from Gill Ritchie, HM Inspector, on the new quality arrangements introduced by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) with Education Scotland in 2016/17. The HM Inspector advised the Committee that the new arrangements focussed on partnership, and outlined recent engagement activity between the college and Education Scotland.
- 6.1.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the level of self-scrutiny the college had undertaken as part of the new arrangements, and the ongoing engagement outlined with Education Scotland.
- 6.1.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the college's self-evaluation processes and the support and training in place for curriculum teams. The Principal advised the Committee that, although the self-evaluation proforma was important, it was the evidence of impact on learners that was the key outcome of the process.
- 6.1.4 The Committee Chair thanked the HM Inspector for addressing the Academic Council, and congratulated the college on the level of engagement demonstrated as part of the new quality arrangements.

6.2 ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

- 6.2.1 The Committee NOTED a summary of recommendations arising as a result of the Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit (AEV) conducted in May 2016. The Head of Policy, Performance & Planning advised the Committee that all AEV actions had been directly linked to the Business Transformation Plan, in order to consolidate workstreams going forward.
- 6.2.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the development of a 'connect group' in January 2017 to take forward issues relating to resources. The Head of Policy, Performance & Planning informed the Committee that the group aimed to ensure the level and standard of resources across the college were appropriate to learners needs.
- 6.2.3 The Committee Chair welcomed positive progress on all points within the AEV action plan, and members NOTED that the Academic Council would receive a further update on progress at its next meeting.

7 LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

- 7.1 The Committee NOTED that the development of the Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy (LTAS) had been delayed and would therefore not be presented to the Academic Council until 02 June. The Assistant Principal informed the Committee that engagement and promotional activities for the LTAS would continue as planned, in order not to hold-up the Strategy any further – once approved.
- 7.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the development of engagement materials relating to the LTAS, including the creation of videos outlining what staff, students and stakeholders needed to know.

8 REGIONAL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2017-2020

- 8.1 The Committee NOTED a draft of the College's Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) 2017-20. The Head of Performance, Policy & Planning informed the Committee that key areas for its consideration included: Quality; Curriculum Planning; STEM; Access & Inclusion; and, Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.
- 8.2 The Committee NOTED an infographic provided by the Head of Performance, Policy & Planning, which clarified key priority outcomes and outputs and key credit delivery targets. The Committee DISCUSSED the infographic and AGREED that it should be circulated to members, for reference, and Curriculum Managers for dissemination at future team meetings.
- 8.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the following matters relating to the ROA 2017-20:
- (i) The modelling of attainment against individual departments, in order to calculate the improvements required at a departmental level to meet targets;
 - (ii) The definition of 'positive destinations' as defined by the SFC, and how the Committee might consider this matter in future;
 - (iii) The college's STEM Assured status, and the need to ensure that reference is made to the Art & Design within the ROA;
 - (iv) The need for greater clarification in relation to levels of study within ESOL.
- 8.4 The Committee AGREED that members of the Academic Council should provide any further feedback to the Head of Performance, Policy & Planning by 24 March.
- 8.5 The Committee AGREED to endorse the ROA 2017-20, subject to the minor amendments outlined under Paragraph 8.3 and 8.4. Head of Performance, Policy & Planning informed the Committee that a final version of the ROA 2017-20 would go forward to the Policy & Resources Committee for review on 18 April, and then the Board for approval on 02 May.

9 BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PLAN

9.1 BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PLAN UPDATE

9.1.1 The Committee NOTED an update from the Principal on progress relating to the Business Transformation Plan. The Principal informed the Committee that the Strategic Programme Board, the executive body which oversee the day-to-day management of the plan, continued to meet every eight weeks and report to the Board through the Policy & Resources Committee.

9.1.2 The Committee NOTED progress across the four transformation plan programmes, and the Principal highlighted that a number of areas had moved forward significantly and were now becoming business as usual.

9.2 RECRUITMENT & RETENTION REPORT

9.2.1 The Committee NOTED an update on the College's performance against its 2016/17 recruitment and retention targets and an update on progress on 2017/18 recruitment, as of 01 March.

9.3 CURRICULUM PROGRAMME REPORT

9.3.1 The Committee NOTED a curriculum planning and design presentation from the Assistant Principal, which outlined developing areas of the curriculum for 2017/18. The Assistant Principal informed the Committee of new entry courses for 2017/18, and highlighted the importance of such courses in terms of the college meeting its recruitment target.

9.3.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the following in relation to the developments within the curriculum:

- (i) The progress made on major curriculum changes, included the development of Curriculum Leader roles across faculties;
- (ii) the tools in place to track credits and measure performance, and the effective use of such information by Curriculum Managers;
- (iii) the responsiveness of the college to make curriculum changes going forward.

9.3.3 The Committee welcomed the opportunity to receive updates on curriculum developments, and NOTED the significant efforts of staff to implement these changes.

10 COLLEGE SATISFACTION SURVEYS

10.1 PRE-EXIT SURVEY 2017

10.1.1 The Committee NOTED the content and format of the draft Pre-Exit Survey 2017. The Head of Policy, Planning & Performance advised the Committee that the survey included questions posed by the SFC as part of their National Survey for Student Engagement and Satisfaction.

10.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the survey was scheduled to run from 24 April to 25 May 2017, with the survey to be returned to the SFC by 26 May.

- 10.1.3 The Committee NOTED that the Quality Team had engaged with ECSA, and students directly, to develop the format and wording of the survey further. The Committee DISCUSSED the format of the survey and welcomed the improvements made to ensure that questions were clear and the survey remained easy to use.
- 10.1.4 The Committee DISCUSSED the length of the survey, which included 65 questions, and the content requirements of the SFC. The Head of Policy, Planning & Performance advised the Committee that although the survey was long, it provided important national data for colleges to conduct ROA planning and ensure learners were prepared for work and/or further study.
- 10.1.5 The Committee APPROVED the Pre-Exit Survey 2017 for dissemination on 24 April.

The Principal left the meeting

10.2 SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- 10.2.1 The Committee NOTED a summary of satisfaction survey recommendations arising from the previous academic year.
- 10.2.2 The Committee NOTED progress to date and the timescales outlined for the completion of individual actions. The Head of Policy, Planning & Performance informed the Committee that a further update on progress would be provided at the next meeting on 02 June.
- 10.2.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the response to recommendations relating to the 2015 Induction Survey Report including the following:
 - (i) Delays with student cards due to outsourcing and the actions taken to ensure this was not repeated;
 - (ii) the design of student cards to include key contact information;
 - (iii) the information provided to students in-relation to their funding.
- 10.2.4 The Committee AGREED that it would be useful to receive an update on the funding mechanisms in place for new starters in 2017/18 at the next meeting.

11 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

- 11.1 None.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 12.1 The date of the next meeting is 02 June 2017 at 14:00, in the Boardroom, Sighthill Campus.

The meeting closed at 16:00