



## **EDINBURGH COLLEGE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING OF 21 JUNE 2016**

**14:00 Boardroom, Milton Road Campus**

**Present:** Colin Arthur; Jenni Behan; Kellie Bradford; Annette Bruton; Sandra Cairncross; Bob Downie; Alan Johnston; Ann Landels; Elaine Lee; Ian McKay (Chair); Niki McKenzie; Nigel Paul; Fiona Riddoch; Robin Stimpson; Jeroen Van Herk; Ian Young

**In attendance:** Neal Black; Jon Buglass; Penny Davis; Marcus Walker (Clerk); Jonny Pearson; Alan Williamson.

#### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Stephen Dunn and Azra Sharif-Qayyum
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Neal Black, the newly elected Student President, to the meeting as an observer.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were received.

#### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 3.1 The Board APPROVED the Minutes from 19 April 2016 as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

- 4.1 Actions from the previous meeting were complete, overtaken or on the agenda.
  - 4.1.1 The Board NOTED that a briefing session focussing on the College's curriculum would be held in 2016/17. The Chair informed the Board that the session would inform future considerations around the strategic purpose of the Academic Council going forward.

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **5.1 POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

#### **5.1.1 MINUTES 03.05.16**

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 03 May.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had approved the revised Business Transformation Plan, but that the resolution of matters relating to the transfer of credits to SRUC would have an impact on financial assumptions in the Plan.

#### **5.1.2 MINUTES 14.06.16**

The Board NOTED the Policy & Resources Committee minutes from the meeting held on 14 June.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had considered the projected student support funds allocation and spend for 2016/17.

The Board DISCUSSED 2016/17 student support funds allocation and recent changes in SFC guidance including:

- (i) the importance of engaging with ECSA on issues of student funding;
- (ii) the regularity and communication of changes to SFC funding guidance;
- (iii) the new student attendance requirements;
- (iv) the need to maintain accurate and up-to-date registers, and the mechanisms in place to flag any issues that may affect a student's funding.

The Board AGREED that the Executive and ECSA should work together to develop a joint communication to inform students on the impact of recent funding changes.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had received an overview of the College's approach to preparing its 2016/17 Budget which would be brought to the Board for approval on 20 September. Budget planning would be aligned with the Business Transformation Plan. The Board NOTED that the College would be entering into the next financial year without an agreed budget and that due to the delayed confirmation of funding from the SFC, a number of colleges had also postponed the finalisation of their budget until the 2016/17 academic year.

The Board NOTED that the Committee had agreed a response to the consultation on the revised Code of Good Governance, which had been circulated to all Board members for comment prior to submission on 17 June.

#### **5.1.3 BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PLAN REPORT**

The Board NOTED that the Strategic Programme Board, chaired by the Principal, had met for the first time on 02 June. The Principal informed the Board that the Strategic Programme Board would meet every 8 weeks to oversee project-level governance of the transformation plan reporting to the Policy & Resources Committee and other Committees as required.

The Board NOTED a letter dated 19 May from the SFC Chief Executive to the Principal which confirmed the SFC's support for the initial phase of voluntary severance to facilitate business transformation.

The Board NOTED an update from the Associate Principal (Recruitment & Retention) on the College's performance against its 2016/17 recruitment and credit targets. As of 21 June, 97% of full-time places offered had been accepted.

The Board DISCUSSED the need for:

- (i) analyses of cancelled offers to determine if any recurring patterns emerged;
- (ii) reassurances around the management of the College's over recruitment;
- (iii) teaching resources available to put on extra classes where demand was high;
- (iv) continuation of recruitment for part-time and international courses;
- (v) regular monitoring of retention rates in 2016/17.

The Board NOTED that the Policy & Resources Committee had requested that a report should come forward to the Board on 20 September outlining the number of students on courses at the start of the year. The Principal confirmed that a follow-up report would also be provided to inform Members of retention rates.

*Paragraph presently exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30, Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs.*

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#### 5.1.4 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO APRIL 2016

The Board NOTED the financial performance of the College, as highlighted in the financial accounts to April 2016.

The Board NOTED that following a review of performance to date within the catering function, together with projections for the remaining months of the session, catering income for the year was forecast to settle £0.2m lower than the previous month's projection. The Chief Operating Officer informed the Board that the reduced forecast would be offset by lower associated catering costs. The Student President raised the matter of pricing and the Board AGREED that the Student President should discuss this further with the Head of Estates Service and the Catering Manager.

#### 5.1.5 FINANCIAL FORECAST RETURN 2016

The Board NOTED that as part of the SFC's financial sustainability monitoring framework, colleges were required to provide a forecast outturn for 2015/16 and the two following academic years. The Financial Forecast Return 2016 had been reviewed and endorsed by the Policy & Resources Committee.

The Board DISCUSSED the financial loss now projected for 2016/17, due to uncertainties around the proposed 2016/17 national pay award, and the implications for achieving a breakeven position. The Chief Operating Officer informed the Board that the SFC had requested a 3-year forecast, despite the

being able only to provide the College with an indication of funding for the upcoming year.

Members expressed frustration with the lack of levers available to Regional Boards to ensure good financial governance. The Board AGREED that Members' dissatisfaction with the increasing mismatch between the expectations placed on the Board by the SFC and Scottish Government and its powers to take appropriate action should be recorded.

The Board APPROVED the Financial Forecast Return 2016 for submission to the SFC by 30 June.

## 5.2 ACADEMIC COUNCIL

### 5.2.1 MINUTES 03.06.16

The Board NOTED the Academic Council minutes from the meeting held on 03 June.

The Board NOTED outcomes from the Learning & Teaching Survey 2016. Members DISCUSSED the College's continued ranking in the lowest quartile, and the need to respond to this matter swiftly through the Business Transformation Plan. The Principal highlighted issues with current benchmarking arrangements and College's development of a refreshed Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy. The ECSA Vice President (Welfare) informed the Board that through student feedback the number of benchmarking questions had been reduced in this year's survey, as students had questioned their relevance.

The Board AGREED that the Principal, at her next meeting with the SFC, should discuss the relevance of the SFC benchmarking questions included in the survey.

The Chair welcomed the strategic development of the Academic Council over the past year, and suggested members of the Board of Management who were not already Committee members might attend future meetings.

## 5.3 AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

### 5.3.1 MINUTES 02.06.16

The Board NOTED the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee minutes from the meeting held on 02 June.

The Board NOTED that Audit Scotland would be the College's external auditor for the next five years.

The Board DISCUSSED the reduced capital funding allocation for 2016/17 across the sector, and its implication for essential maintenance and investment in IT and estates at the College. The Chair confirmed that the Policy & Resources Committee would continue to monitor the capital funding situation and would report back to the Board as appropriate.

### 5.3.2 TOP RISK REGISTER 2015/16

The Board NOTED the Top Risk Register (TRR) to June 2016, and the movement of the 'loss of senior staff' top risk (TR2) from Green to Amber. The Chief Operating

Officer highlighted that this change was due to the ongoing restructure of senior management through the transformation plan.

The Board NOTED that, at the request of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, future versions of the TRR would ensure mitigated scores took proper account of controls and mitigating actions.

#### 5.4 EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

##### 5.4.1 MINUTES 24.05.16

The Board NOTED the External Engagement Committee minutes from the meeting held on 24 May including a presentation by the East Lothian Partnership.

The Board NOTED the final version of the College's coat of arms had been received from the Lord Lyon.

The Board AGREED that a report on commercial and international development should be brought to the External Engagement Committee once an Assistant Principal Income and Product Development had been appointed.

#### 5.5 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

##### 5.5.1 MINUTES 24.05.16

The Board NOTED the Nominations Committee minutes from the meeting held on 24 May.

The Chair advised the Board that the Nominations Committee would meet in October to consider the need for a recruitment exercise in the context of two Members' tenures expiring in early 2017.

### 6. PRINCIPAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

6.1 The Board NOTED that interviews to appoint Depute and Assistant Principals would take place week commencing 27 June.

6.2 The Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated all staff and students involved with the Glow Festival for producing a series of shows and exhibitions with real vibrancy and impact. The Principal thanked Board Members for their high level of attendance at events.

### 7. EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

#### 7.1 ECSA REPORT

7.1.1 The Board NOTED that the incoming Student President, Neal Black, and incoming Vice President (Welfare), Amanda Clark, had been nominated to serve on the Board of Management for 2016/17.

7.1.2 The Board AGREED a process whereby the incoming Student Members would replace current Members on 1 July 2016, when they took up their

ECSA positions, and then be re-appointed from 1 September 2016 in accordance with legislation.

7.1.3 The Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated ECSA on hosting the ECSA-Illence Awards on 12 May and wished the incoming sabbatical team well in planning such an event next year.

## **7.2 ECSA END OF YEAR REPORT**

7.2.1 The Board NOTED ECSA's activity in 2015/16 and progress against its operational plan.

7.2.2 The Chair, on behalf of the Board, congratulated the ECSA team on their achievements. The Board AGREED that the Report, and the success of the NUS UK and NUS Scotland awards, should be shared with the SFC and Education Scotland to promote the valuable contribution ECSA makes to the College.

7.2.3 The incoming Student President informed the Board that he looked forward to continuing the good work of ECSA in 2016/17.

## **8. GOVERNANCE REPORT**

### **8.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT**

8.1.1 The Board NOTED that a small group comprising the Principal, Governance Director and a Non-Executive Member, Fiona Riddoch, had considered the co-ordination of the various assurance statements that the College is required to provide to its regulators. The Governance Director confirmed that a further report would be brought to the Board on 20 September.

8.1.2 The Board NOTED that an external assessor would be appointed over the summer for the purposes of the Board's self-evaluation and AGREED that the identified group should continue to provide any necessary input to planning of the process.

### **8.2 BOARD AND COMMITTEE CALENDAR 2016/17**

8.2.1 The Board NOTED the Board and committee calendar for 2016/17.

## **9. NATIONAL REPORT**

9.1 The Board NOTED that the Chair, Ian McKay, had been appointed as Chair of the Employers' Association and that the Principal would serve as depute representative of the College.

## **10. RIDDOR REPORT**

10.1 The Board NOTED the RIDDOR report.

## **11. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

11.1 BOARD MEMBERS' DEPARTURE

11.1.1 The Board thanked the departing Student President and Vice President (Welfare) for their contribution to the Board and Committees on which they served.

11.1.2 The Student Members thanked the Board for supporting a level of student engagement to which their counterparts in the sector aspired.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12.1 The next meeting would be held at 14:00hrs on 20 September 2016 at the Milton Road Campus

**13. CLOSED BUSINESS**

13.1 Items of business were considered by the Board as part of a closed session. Closed Items were recorded under a separate minutes (*Closed minutes 13/21.06.16 refers*).

***Meeting closed at 16:45***

..... (Signature of Chair) ..... (Date)