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ACADEMIC COUNCIL

AGENDA

A meeting of the Academic Council will be held at 14:00hrs on Friday, 25 May 2018 in the Boardroom, Granton Campus.

		Lead Speaker	**Paper**
1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	Chair	
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Chair	
3	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING *for approval*	Chair	A
4	MATTERS ARISING		
	4.1 Matters Arising Report	Chair	B
	4.2 Student Communications Working Group	N Croft	Verbal
5	EDINBURGH COLLEGE BLUEPRINT 2017-22	J Buglass	Verbal
6	'HOW GOOD IS OUR COLLEGE?' UPDATE **Attached**	J Buglass	C
7	STUDENT EXPERIENCE REPORT		
	7.1 Improvements in Student Experience **Attached**	M Hoenigmann	Presentation
	7.2 Students' Mental Wellbeing and Support Update **Attached**	M Hoenigmann	D
8	COLLEGE SATISFACTION SURVEYS		
	8.1 Learning & Teaching Survey 2017/18 Report **Attached**	L Lyall	E
	8.2 Survey Recommendations Summary	L Lyall	Verbal
	8.3 Induction Survey 2018/19 *approval* **Attached**	L Lyall	F
	8.4 Destination Survey Outcomes **Attached**	L Lyall	G
9	MOODLE OUTCOMES REPORT **Attached**	D McLachlan	H
10	ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS		
	10.1 Review of Committee Operation **Attached**	Chair	I
11	DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TBC		

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FOR INFORMATION			
Meeting	Academic Council		
Presented by	Jon Buglass		
Author/Contact	Jon Buglass	Department / Unit	Executive
Date Created	11.05.2018	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes	

HOW GOOD IS OUR COLLEGE? UPDATE

1. **PURPOSE**

   To update the Academic Council on the latest progress made towards the Edinburgh College Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) 2016/17.

2. **BACKGROUND**

   Edinburgh College Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) 2016/17 is the plan which sets the College's approach to measure 'How good is our College?'

   Edinburgh College has used AY 2016/17 to embed ownership of the new arrangements and develop approaches to evaluation and reporting that are suitable for the regional context and operating circumstances, with support from Education Scotland HMIs and SFC Outcome Agreement Managers.

   In *How good is our college?* SFC and Education Scotland have provided a structure for evaluation and enhancement which colleges, with their stakeholders, can use to identify what is working well and what needs to improve. This structure is based on the following four high level principles (which in turn are underpinned by challenge questions and quality indicators):

   - Leadership and quality culture;
   - Delivery of learning and services to support learning;
   - Outcomes and impact;
   - Capacity for improvement.

3.   ENHANCEMENT PLAN

The College is currently reviewing its progress made towards the 2017/18 plan and has RAG rated outcomes and impact. This is expected to be submitted to Education Scotland in July 2018. Early indications show that the EREP is on track with most areas RAG rated green.

In April 2018 a team consisting of HMIe of Associate Assessors and came to College to observe learning and teaching in all Faculty areas for College internal review, in order to support the evidence base of the EREP.

The Heads of Faculty are now working with Curriculum Managers, Curriculum Leaders and in due course with lecturers through self-evaluation to reflect and improve on enhancing learning, teaching and assessment. Quality managers are supporting this process and providing support as and where needed, and noting best practice where observed for wider dissemination.

A new EREP will be submitted in October 2018.

The main changes for the EREP for the next year are:

1. A 3 year plan will be submitted in order to measure outcomes over a longer term
2. Updates will be expected in many cases to the first submitted plan; therefore it is expected that much of the 2017 EREP will rollover due to the short timescales from submission to review
3. Education Scotland will expect to see evidence of the impact of the first EREP where stated
4. Education Scotland will work with the College and review a different aspect of the EREP in 2018/19. It is possible that these will be areas associated with student experience, which we measure for example through student satisfaction.

4.   BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES
There is an opportunity to embed the outcomes of the 2017 presentations on best practice to the Academic Council into the next EREP.

5.   STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS
The EREP is a key partner to providing the College's strategic aim of providing an excellent curriculum. The College's Curriculum Strategy supports the plan, along with the College's Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy. Self-evaluation, Performance Review and the Summary of targets link closely to all the points contained within the EREP.

6.   RISK
It is important that the College meets its targets as set out in the EREP. Failure to do so would raise the level of reputational risk with Education Scotland and SFC

7.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
None, although points emerging from the plan may have workforce implications.

8.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
Not applicable

9.   WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS
None, although points emerging from the plan may have workforce implications.

10. **REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**
See point 6 above.

11. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**
None, although points emerging from the plan may have equalities implications.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS
To NOTE the progress made towards the Edinburgh College Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP) 2016-17. To AGREE to embed the outcomes of best practice and any suggested areas of development arising from the Academic Council into the next EREP.
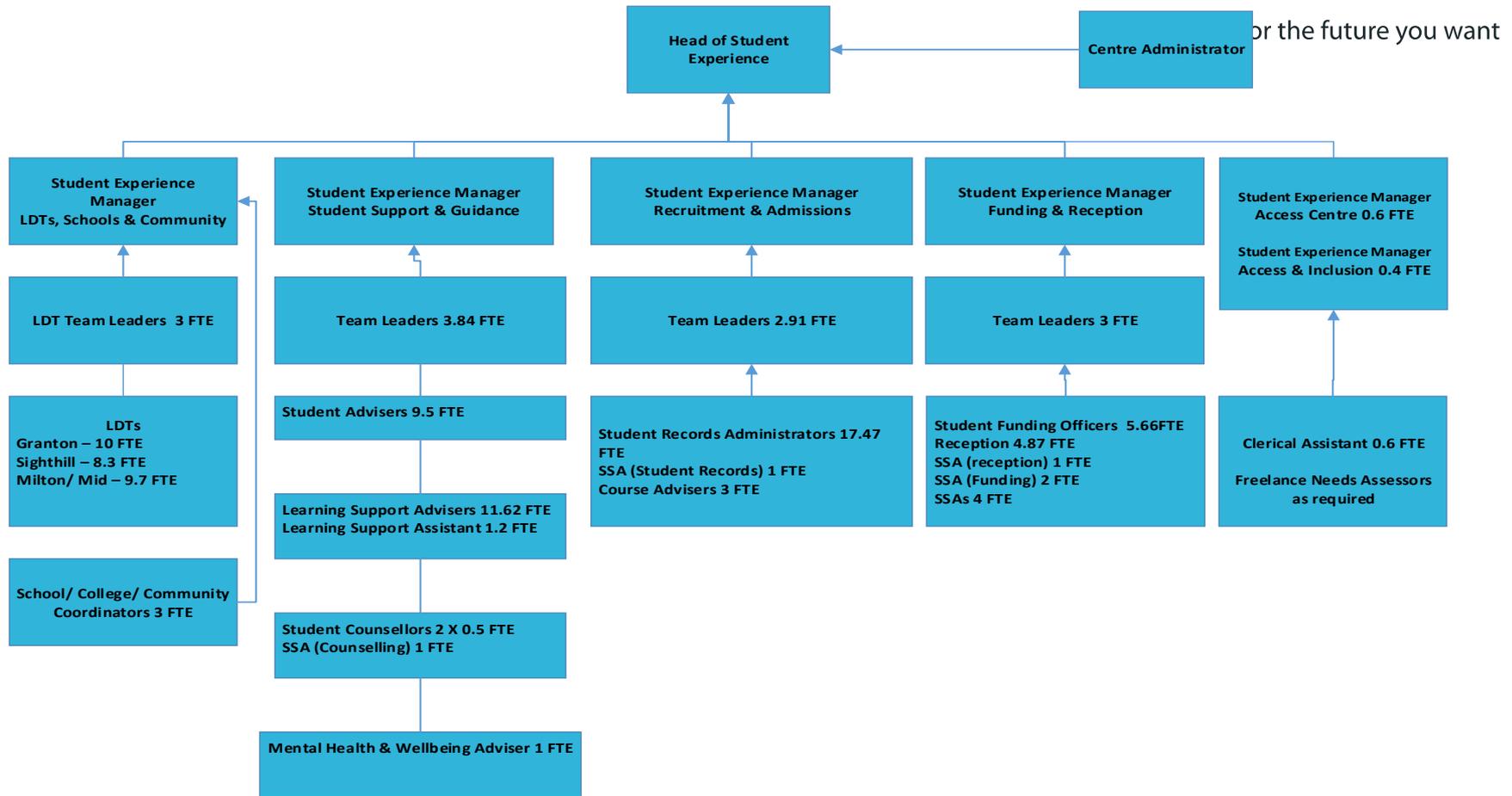
Student Experience

The point of contact for every part of the student journey

Monica Hoenigmann
Head of Student Experience

Student Experience Structure

Edinburgh College

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Head of Student Experience

Centre Administrator

**Student Experience Manager
LDTs, Schools & Community**

**Student Experience Manager
Student Support & Guidance**

**Student Experience Manager
Recruitment & Admissions**

**Student Experience Manager
Funding & Reception**

**Student Experience Manager
Access Centre 0.6 FTE**

**Student Experience Manager
Access & Inclusion 0.4 FTE**

LDT Team Leaders 3 FTE

Team Leaders 3.84 FTE

Team Leaders 2.91 FTE

Team Leaders 3 FTE

**LDTs
Granton – 10 FTE
Sighthill – 8.3 FTE
Milton/ Mid – 9.7 FTE**

Student Advisers 9.5 FTE

**Student Records Administrators 17.47 FTE
SSA (Student Records) 1 FTE
Course Advisers 3 FTE**

**Student Funding Officers 5.66FTE
Reception 4.87 FTE
SSA (reception) 1 FTE
SSA (Funding) 2 FTE
SSAs 4 FTE**

**Clerical Assistant 0.6 FTE

Freelance Needs Assessors
as required**

**Learning Support Advisers 11.62 FTE
Learning Support Assistant 1.2 FTE**

**School/ College/ Community
Coordinators 3 FTE**

**Student Counsellors 2 X 0.5 FTE
SSA (Counselling) 1 FTE**

Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser 1 FTE

Key Developmental Priorities

1. Student Funding Processes

2. Mental Health & Wellbeing

3. Corporate Parenting

4. Improving student support, guidance and front line services

Student Funding

A campaign designed to target student funding

Student Advisors have made offers to CL's to go into classes to speak to progressing students on funding

- New web pages for students and providers on childcare funding to include flowcharts and FAQ's
- Student Support Assistants to provide additional support to students and childcare providers
- Funding checklists will be emailed to FE/HE students
- Promotion of the online funding tool
- Cams will be updated to send out an automated funding message when students on receive a course offer
- Text message to students 1 month before course start date (funding implications)
- Making a funding video
- Social media campaign
- Summer drop-ins to be advertised

- Welcome Events will reinforce funding messages and staff will be on campus to process these at the events

Funding Evidence Infographics

Funding Evidence Infographics

Evidence of Impact

- 400 more student funding applications received than this time last year
- How many more processed?
- Won silver College Development Network Marketing Award in the digital category for Online Funding Tool

Mental Health & and Wellbeing

- Focus on the development of a cross college Wellbeing Team
- 0.4 fte used to develop cross college training and collaborative working
- Develop partnerships with other agencies
- Identify good practice
- Develop a college Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy with ECSA and Equalities
- Partnership with Nightline to provide 24 hour student crisis support

ECSA

- setting up a student led mental health working group on every campus ECSA plan to offer a mental health related module during the LDT slots
- Anxiety Workshops
- LGBT
- Relaxation Stations/ exam survival packs
- Humans of Edinburgh College Case studies

Impact

- Appointment of 2 part time student counsellors for 2018/19
- Advertisement of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser for 2018/19
- Presentation at College Expo Event in June
- All ECSA members to be trained in Scottish Mental Health First Aid
- Increase in the take up and demand from staff on Mental Health Awareness Training
- All staff Wellbeing Day on 21st June
- NUS Healthy Body Health Minds Award – ECSA hoping to gain 4 stars!

Corporate Parenting

- 0.2 fte to lead and develop Corporate parenting
- Improved work with local authorities and other agencies
- Work on early intervention
- Key workers for care experienced and vulnerable students
- Delivering a summer support programme
- Increased work with Edinburgh Secure Services
- Development of the Hub for Success
- Corporate Parenting Strategy

Improving student support, guidance and front line services

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- Duty model has been adopted across campuses

- Summer drop ins

- Assistive Technologies for students

- Move to new model to employ our own support workers for FE students.

- Development of project work including Job Zone, UCAS talks

- More frontline staff to process a wider range of tasks

Challenges we are addressing

- Realigning services to provide more tailored support
- Complexity of Student Funding
- Increasing number and complexity of student support issues
- Increasing Mental Health issues
- Pressure on front line services
- Providing good/accurate information
- GDPR
- Safeguarding
- ITA
- Rollout of Promonitor
- Better working between faculties and support teams

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FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION			
Meeting	Academic Council 25.05.18		
Presented by	Monica Hoenigmann		
Author/Contact	Monica Hoenigmann	Department / Unit	Student Experience
Date Created	11.05.2018	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes.	

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING REPORT

1.   **PURPOSE**

To inform Academic Council of work currently being undertaken to promote and support positive student mental health and wellbeing.

2.   **BACKGROUND**

The number, and complexity, of mental health related referrals at Edinburgh College is increasing year on year. At the ECSA Class Rep conference in October 2017 mental health was ranked as the second most significant issue faced by students. In AY 2016/17, 11% of full time students with mental health issues withdrew or didn't successfully complete their course.

In the ECSA 'How you Doin' survey November 2017 only 46% of respondents felt their mental health was positive at that time.

ECSA staff, support staff and some lecturers have been trained in Mental Health First Aid but this still does not provide the students with enough support. This upward trend in referrals has highlighted a need to develop new approaches:

- to build resilience in staff and students;
- manage caseloads develop toolkits, and;
- signpost and engage with professional support within NHS Lothian and the voluntary sector.

3.   **DETAIL**

In AY 2017/18 Edinburgh College has undertaken the following new approaches:

- Committed 0.4fte of a Student Support Team leader to work cross-college, with ECSA and outside agencies to consider how we develop a cross college mental health and wellbeing support structure;

- Delivered accredited training to staff and updated the student Mental Health Policy and Fitness to Study guidance;

- Introduced two new posts (Student Counsellor and Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisor) to support students help train staff;

- Developed a cross-college Health and Wellbeing service that sits within the Student Experience team.

4.   BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES
Creating these support mechanisms will help all students maximise their potential.

5.   STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS
These actions meet Edinburgh College Strategic Plan Aim 1: Delivering a superb student experience. They also address a Scottish Government Priority with the publication of the Mental Health Strategy 2017-27.

6.   RISK
Failure to address these issues impacts on the ability of the college to meet the legislation required by the Equality Act 2010 and of the college to implement fair and robust policies to support and make decisions when students' mental health impacts on their ability to study.

7.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
None.

8.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
Not applicable.

9.   WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS
The development of this new approach will see an improvement in the support available in college for students. It will support staff by providing improved student support and staff to deal with issues within college instead of having to refer to external agencies where waiting lists were long and often support was too late resulting in students leaving college before they finished.

10.   REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS
Supporting our learners with a range of support interventions at the earliest opportunity will improve the wellbeing of students and staff and therefore improve retention for students. This and improving our policies will enhance our reputation as an inclusive college supporting widening participation.

11.   EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS
Students with mental health difficulties are protected by the Equality Act 2010. This came into force in October 2010 and combines a number of laws, including the Disability Discrimination Act, into one single Act.

ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS
The Academic Council are asked to NOTE the information provided and DISCUSS these enhancements.

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FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION			
Meeting	Academic Council 25.05.18		
Presented by	Loraine Lyall		
Author/Contact	Loraine Lyall	Department / Unit	Curriculum Planning and Performance
Date Created	17.05.2018	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	*Appendix 1:* Learning and Teaching Student Satisfaction Survey Report 2017/18		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes.	

LEARNING AND TEACHING SURVEY REPORT 2017/18

1. PURPOSE

To bring the results of the Learning & Teaching Survey Report to the attention of the Academic Council and advise on how they will be used to drive improvement.

2. BACKGROUND

Each academic session a Learning & Teaching Survey is carried out to gather information on levels of student satisfaction in relation to key aspects of their experience before starting college and during their first few weeks at the college, including: The Edinburgh College website, choosing and applying for a course, settling into college, their course, and their overall impressions of the college.

3. DETAIL

The survey was carried out between 9th February and 20th March, 2018. The attached report summarises the results received. Overall satisfaction with courses at Edinburgh College is high with 91% of respondents stating that they are satisfied with their course. This is has not changed from last year. Additionally, 94% of students stated that they have greatly developed their knowledge and skills during their studies, the same as last year. Further detail can be found in the report.

4. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The information gleaned from the survey presents opportunities to effect improvements for the future. The data will be used to inform projects associated with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and the Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan. It will be included in the data pack sent to teams in advance of their Self-Evaluation meetings for analysis, discussion and action planning.

5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The College Strategic Plan and Blueprint are designed to deliver a superior student experience and will take into account student satisfaction with their college experience.

6.   **RISK**
     The Quality Team will monitor action plans and their implementation to ensure that progress is being made and actions are having a positive impact on levels of satisfaction.

7.   **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
     Not applicable.

8.   **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**
     Not applicable.

9.   **WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**
     Not applicable.

10. **REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**
     All opportunities to enhance the student experience must be taken to preserve and enhance the reputation of Edinburgh College.

11. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**
     The data gathered will be used to analyse levels of satisfaction of students with protected characteristics, care experienced and SIMD10.

CONCLUSIONS

The Academic Council are asked to NOTE and DISCUSS the attached Learning and Teaching Student Satisfaction Survey Report 2017/18.

Student satisfaction surveys provide the means of monitoring the quality of the student experience. Data gathered is incorporated into the college self-evaluation process to identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement.

EDINBURGH COLLEGE

LEARNING AND TEACHING SURVEY RESULTS—MAY 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Edinburgh College Learning and Teaching Survey is designed to assess students' opinions regarding key aspects of their classroom experience at the College, including: learning and teaching, learning climate, and assessment. The survey was comprised of 26 questions covering the topics listed above, as well as general satisfaction questions and those regarding demographic/diversity information which are standard on every survey the College administers.

The charts in the following pages summarise and compare overall student satisfaction in each of the topic areas across the Granton, Midlothian, Milton Road, and Sighthill campuses.

SCOPE

Over 12,000 full-time and part-time students were targeted for completion of the survey, across Granton, Midlothian, Milton Road, and Sighthill campuses during a 5.5 week period from 9th February to 20th March 2017. The survey was made available to students via a link to the survey website posted on Moodle. Out of the 12,280 students targeted for the survey, 3,087 students responded (25.1%).

RESULTS

The response rate was 25.1% overall, with 3,087 students responding out of the 12,280 students targeted. This is a decrease of 13.2% from last year's Learning and Teaching survey (38.1%) despite the 37.4% increase in the overall number of students targeted. Participation level is down from the Induction survey carried out before Christmas, which had a similar number of students targeted but a response rate of 37.2%.

TABLE 1-LEARNING AND TEACHING SURVEY PARTICIPATION RATES	2015	2016	2017	2018
NUMBER OF STUDENTS TARGETED	11,009	6,681	8,937	12,280
NUMBER OF RESPONSES	4,783	2,976	3,425	3,087
RESPONSE RATE	43.5%	44.5%	38.3%	25.1%

Compared to last year's results, the college-wide satisfaction rates have increased across 11 of 20 comparable questions 16-17 to 17-18, with 6 seeing no change either way. Overall satisfaction with courses at Edinburgh College is high with 91% of respondents stating that they are satisfied with their course. This is has not changed from last year. Additionally, 94% of students stated that they have greatly developed their knowledge and skills during their studies, the same as last year. The satisfaction rates for the questions were relatively high overall, with the highest satisfaction rate being for the statement '*I have developed my knowledge and skills through my studies at Edinburgh College*' (94%). The largest movement

in percentage were for questions 9 and 10 (up 6%) which is important as they were both identified last year as areas for review. Negative movement in the figures has been small.

ANALYSIS

Analysis of the Learning and Teaching Survey 2018 suggests the following key messages, areas for development, and areas for review.

Key messages:

- Students are very satisfied with their courses overall (91%), and with the development of their knowledge and skills (94%).
- Students are satisfied with the learning and teaching on their courses. Students feel very motivated to take part in lessons (88%) and feel that the way they are taught is helpful to their learning (87%). Students reported that the teaching materials used are good and can be accessed easily (91%).
- Students are satisfied with certain elements of their learning environment. Students are satisfied with the pace of their lessons (85%), and they report that their classes start on time (91%). The majority of students surveyed feel comfortable asking their lecturers for help and further explanation (91%) and feel that lecturers treat all students fairly and equally (89%).
- Students report consistent satisfaction this year with assessments. 90% of students reported that they know when assessments are due, and students largely feel that the feedback they receive is instructive and helpful (88%).

Areas for development:

Although there was a good improvement to problem areas within the learning climate, some questions still scored only adequately and are areas for development:

- 68% of students feel they can influence the planning and delivery of content on their course (+6%)
- 69% of students reported suitable arrangements are made when a lecturer is away (+4%)
- 70% of students stated that lecturers ask their opinion about learning and teaching (+6%)
- 75% of students report that lecturers talk about equality and diversity when the opportunity arises (no movement from last year)
- 77% of students feel assessments are well-spaced across the course (+3%)

Areas for review:

The questions which scored the lowest were related to support for learning (table 9):
- 60% of students with an LDT tutorial programme felt their Personal Development Review (PDR) had been useful in supporting their learning
- 64% of students with and LDT tutorial programme found their Equality and Diversity sessions useful and interesting

TABLES

Tables 2-5 (below) show the college-wide results for each question in each topic area. There is a comparison with the results for these questions from last year's Learning and Teaching Survey along with the percentage increase/decrease. Satisfaction results were determined by calculating the number of

"agree completely" and "agree mostly" responses out of the total number of responses for a given question. Satisfaction rates falling within the 64%≤ range are identified as areas for review/high risk, and have been highlighted in red. Responses falling within the 65%-79% range are identified as opportunities for improvement and have been highlighted in amber. Responses sitting at 80% and above are identified as positive results and are highlighted in green.

TABLE 2-LEARNING & TEACHING	TOTAL	16-17 TOTAL	% DIFFERENCE
1. I feel motivated to take part in lessons	88%	91%	-3%
2. The way I'm taught helps me to learn	87%	86%	+1%
3. I am given the opportunity to talk about my progress and set goals	83%	85%	-2%
4. The teaching materials we use are good and I can access them easily	91%	90%	+1%

TABLE 3-LEARNING CLIMATE	TOTAL	16-17 TOTAL	% DIFFERENCE
5. I feel comfortable asking my lecturer for help and further explanation if I don't understand something	91%	91%	N/A
6. I find the pace of lessons appropriate	85%	86%	-1%
7. When my lecturer is away, suitable arrangements are made	69%	65%	+4%
8. My classes start on time	91%	88%	+3%
9. Lecturers on my course ask my opinion about learning and teaching	70%	64%	+6%
10. I can influence the planning and delivery of content on my course	68%	62%	+6%
11. My lecturers treat us all fairly and equally	89%	88%	+1%
12. Lecturers talk about equality and diversity where the opportunity arises	75%	75%	N/A

TABLE 4-ASSESSMENT	TOTAL	16-17 TOTAL	% DIFFERENCE
18. I know when my assessments are due	90%	90%	N/A
19. Assessments are well-spaced across the course	77%	74%	+3%
20. Assessment tasks are made clear to me	85%	83%	+2%
21. The feedback I get tells me what I am doing well and where I need to improve	88%	88%	N/A
22. I feel well prepared for assessments	82%	80%	+2%

23. Doing assessments really helps me to learn	**79%**	**78%**	**+1%**

TABLE 5-GENERAL COMMENTS	TOTAL	16-17 TOTAL	% DIFFERENCE
28. I have developed my knowledge and skills through my studies at Edinburgh College	**94%**	**94%**	**N/A**
29. Overall, I am satisfied with my course	**91%**	**91%**	**N/A**

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Learning and Teaching Resources

Students were asked several questions regarding the resources and approaches used as part of their course. Students reported that computers and Moodle were the most frequently used resources (65%) while roleplay scored lowest (only 8%).

TABLE 6-LEARNING AND TEACHING MATERIALS	% OF STUDENTS
Computers	**65%**
Moodle	**65%**
Practical work	**61%**
Handouts/Notes/Worksheets	**49%**
Classes supported by notes	**48%**
Group work	**48%**
Demonstrations	**43%**
Self-directed research/study	**34%**
Interactive whiteboard	**17%**
Invited speakers	**13%**
Visits	**12%**

Roleplay	**8%**

Again this year students have stressed the desire for more practical work and industry visits/talks.

Moodle

Students were asked how often they use Moodle as part of their studies. The majority (60%) indicated that they regularly use it, 26% indicated that they occasionally use it, while 11% claimed to rarely use it and 3% stated that they never use it. Students were further asked to identify any features of Moodle they use. As with last year's results, students mainly use Moodle to upload assignments.

TABLE 7-FEATURES OF MOODLE USED	% OF STUDENTS
Uploading assignments	**77%**
Logging in to student email	**54%**
Obtaining feedback from lecturer	**52%**
Linking to resources (e.g. documents)	**48%**
Using interactive learning materials	**31%**
Accessing study skills and advice pages	**28%**
Completing informal quizzes and tests	**26%**
Linking to external websites	**23%**
Monitoring achievement progress	**22%**
Accessing calendar for assignment deadlines	**21%**
Using Turnitin originality check	**21%**
News/information/resources on homepage	**18%**
Accessing information from support services (e.g. Student Support)	**14%**

Communication with classmates	8%

Essential Skills

Most students (94%) reported that they have improved their skills during their studies at Edinburgh College, with only 4% disagreeing and 2% selecting 'N/A'.

TABLE 8-ESSENTIAL SKILLS	% OF STUDENTS
Communication skills	75%
Working with others skills	58%
Study skills	56%
Problem-solving skills	43%
IT skills	38%
Numeracy skills	30%
Health and wellbeing skills	24%
Citizenship skills	12%

Support for Learning

The support for learning category contained some of the highest and lowest levels of satisfaction for the entire survey (92% and 60%). The responses indicate that students on courses with LDTs felt their LDT was a good source of support and easy to approach, however they expressed some dissatisfaction with aspects of their tutorial programme and accompanying PDR.

TABLE 9-SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	TOTAL
My Personal Development Review (PDR) has been useful in supporting my learning	60%

My Learning Development Tutor (LDT) has supported me	**88%**
My Learning Development Tutor (LDT) was approachable	**92%**
My tutorial programme with my Learning Development Tutor (LDT) is useful, and links in with my chosen course of study	**79%**
I found my Equality and Diversity tutorial sessions interesting and useful	**64%**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION

The Learning and Teaching survey statistics provide us with sound evidence that student satisfaction is for the most part high at the college. However, this is only a broad view and does not account for the individual student experience. The comment spaces within the survey provide further insight into individual experiences.

TABLE 10-LEARNER COMMENTS	Number	Percentage
Total learner comments	**792**	
Positive comments	**240**	**30%**
Constructive criticism	**377**	**48%**
Negative comments and/or complaints	**175**	**22%**

Most students offered constructive criticism which shows a real investment in their own learning and genuine desire to see improvements which will continue to benefit the learning experience. There were also more positive comments than negative comments or complaints.

Overall, our students were happy about:
- Enjoyable and informative content on courses
- Getting to have a more hands on approach in their learning
- Knowledgeable and approachable teaching staff
- Meeting students from different backgrounds to their own
- Friendly and supportive LDTs

Some of the positive comments offered by students were:

"All of the staff are really friendly, professional and approachable when you need help."

"I'm pleased I got the opportunity to talk to people from different backgrounds."

"I am absolutely loving my course, and my lecturer makes learning so enjoyable and she is so knowledgeable that I feel I am getting great value from this course."

"I felt like the pace at the start of the course was perfect for me. I had been out of education for many years and I had enough time to pick up new skills and apply them."

"It is amazing how in 6 months I have gone from zero knowledge on the subject to the stage where I am able to create something on my own."

"It's fast paced but I like it, and I feel this pace is good preparation for the industry. I think the teachers are very knowledgeable and I'm honoured to learn from them."

"Overall I have been very impressed with the quality of teaching and the course content. I am treated like an adult and the staff I deal with on a day to day basis I respect completely, I feel they truly care. I am confident next year I will study in university and this course will be the reason why."

Overall, our students were unhappy about:
- Inconsistent feedback amongst teaching staff
- Inconsistent use of Moodle by teaching staff
- Disorganisation
- Timing of assignments and assessments
- Lecturer absences not getting sufficient cover

Some of the negative comments offered by students were:

"A lot of changes have been made throughout the year by SQA which meant my classmates and I have been having to repeat work and has made it discouraging."

"Assessment dates are always very close together or overlapping."

"Feedback can be different between lecturers on specific projects."

"I am not sure what our grades are for the semester. We are getting feedback after assignments. Our grades on Moodle have never been uploaded and I am still not sure what I got."

"When lecturers are off we aren't told until we turn up and are expected to wait about for 2-3 hours for the next class."

Our students gave many suggestions in the form of constructive criticism. The bullet points below summarise some recommendations for further actions:
- There still needs to be an improvement in communication generally between teaching staff and students, but also between teaching staff on the same programmes. Some students highlighted the fact that a lot of disorganisation on courses arose from staff teaching on the same programmes contradicting one another thus creating confusion for students.

- Organisation of timetables and staff cover have improved however still require ongoing work. Although staff absence is sometimes unavoidable, students should be informed well before the class commences.
- Students are still requesting that assessments be better spaced throughout the year and to receive more advanced notice when assessments will be taking place.
- More work is required to provide our students with the levels of feedback necessary to inform their learning experience.
- Where possible and appropriate, students should be encouraged to have more say in what subjects and skills they want to learn and/or improve.
- In certain departments, more and/or updated equipment and resources to support the learning experience should be implemented.
- Teaching staff should be encouraged to share best practice in order to standardise the quality of teaching provided to students not only on a programme-by-programme basis but college-wide. A variety of learning resources should also be utilised as opposed to relying on Powerpoint slides, something our students report yearly in our surveys as being the least motivational of learning resources.

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FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION			
Meeting	Academic Council 25.05.18		
Presented by	Loraine Lyall		
Author/Contact	Lorraine Lyall	Department / Unit	Curriculum Planning & Performance
Date Created	11.05.2018	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	*Appendix 1:* College Leaver Destination Report 2016/17		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes.	

COLLEGE LEAVER DESTINATION 2016/17 REPORT

1.   **PURPOSE**
       The purpose of this paper is to disseminate the results of the College Leaver Destination (CLD) survey carried out during February, 2018.

2.   **BACKGROUND**
       The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requires all colleges to carry out a CLD survey to report student destinations.

3.   **DETAIL**
       The data was gathered from a range of sources including internal Edinburgh College data, UCAS data and through a telephone survey.

       Appendix 1 provides full details of the CLD survey results.

       The number of students surveyed increased by 1% compared to session 2015/16 and the number of positive destinations decreased slightly from 98% to 96%. This is partly due to the slight increase in targeted students but largely because of the increase in overall known destinations - up 331 (6%) since last year.

       The following FE trends have been noted:

       • The number of FE students engaged in further study has steadily increased each year from 2,042 in 2014-15 to 2,556 (+25%)
       • The number of FE students returning to Edinburgh College has increased every year from 1,764 in 2014-15 to 2,236 (+27%);
       • The number of FE students in employment has also increased over the past three years from 75 in 2014-15 to 530 (+607%).

       The following HE trends have been noted:

- The number of HE students at university has increased each year from 577 in 2014-15 to 764 (+32%);
- The number of HE students in employment has increased over the past three years from 93 in 2014-15 to 400 (+330%).

Further to this, of the students who were unemployed/not looking for work:

- Only 13% of students were from SIMD10 areas
- 24% of students had disclosed a disability
- 59% of students were female
- Most students were of Scottish ethnicity (57%)

4.   BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The CLD survey is required to meet SFC requirements and provides the college with valuable data on student progression and success which can be used for a range of management decision making purposes.

5.   STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

CLD data is used to evaluate our performance in relation to our strategic aim of delivering learning that is directly relevant to the world of work and which provides opportunities for articulation to higher education.

6.   RISK

Poor CLD results could have reputational implications for the college.

7.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

8.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

9.   WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

10.   REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Paragraph 6 refers.

11.   EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Trends for students with protected characteristics and students from groups identified in our Regional Outcome Agreement can be identified.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

The Academic Council is asked to REVIEW the CLD data and CONSIDER progress made in supporting student transitions to positive destinations.

2016-17 Edinburgh College Destination Survey Totals	Number	Percentage
Total Number of Students Targeted	5304	
Known Destinations	4598	87%
Unknown Destinations	706	13%
Positive Known Destinations	4413	96%
DESTINATION	Number	Percentage of Known Destinations
Engaged in Further Study	3483	76%
At University	973	28%
Back at Edinburgh College	2371	68%
At Another College	105	3%
At Unknown Educational Institution	34	1%
In Employment	929	20%
Full-time Employment	724	78%
Part-time Employment	205	22%
Unemployed and looking for work	107	2%
Unavailable (ill, unable to work, taking care of family, travelling)	77	2%

Comparison with previous Survey Results	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total Number of Students Targeted	4582	5264	5304
Known Destinations	3038 (66%)	4264 (81%)	4598 (87%)
Unknown Destinations	1544 (34%)	1000 (20%)	706 (13%)
Positive Known Destinations	3004 (99%)	4168 (98%)	4413 (96%)

2016-17 Edinburgh College Destination Survey Totals (FE Full-time)	Number	Percentage
Total Number of Students Targeted	3671	
Known Destinations	3215	88%
Unknown Destinations	456	12%
Positive Known Destinations	3086	96%
DESTINATION	Number	Percentage of Known Destinations
Engaged in Further Study	2556	80%
At University	209	8%
Back at Edinburgh College	2236	87%
At Another College	82	3%
At Unknown Educational Institution	29	1%
In Employment	530	16%
Full-time Employment	417	79%
Part-time Employment	113	21%
Unemployed and looking for work	76	2%
Unavailable (ill, unable to work, taking care of family, travelling)	52	2%

Comparison with previous FE Survey Results	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total Number of Students Targeted	2931	3664	3671
Known Destinations	2132 (73%)	3018 (82%)	3215 (88%)
Unknown Destinations	799 (27%)	646 (18%)	456 (12%)
Positive Known Destinations	2118 (99%)	2955 (98%)	3086 (96%)

2016-17 Edinburgh College Destination Survey Totals (HE Full-time)	Number	Percentage
Total Number of Students Targeted	1633	
Known Destinations	1383	85%
Unknown Destinations	250	15%
Positive Known Destinations	1328	96%

DESTINATION	Number	Percentage of Known Destinations
Engaged in Further Study	927	67%
At University	764	82%
Back at Edinburgh College	135	15%
At Another College	23	2%
At Unknown Educational Institution	5	1%
In Employment	400	29%
Full-time Employment	307	77%
Part-time Employment	93	23%
Unemployed and looking for work	31	2%
Unavailable (ill, unable to work, taking care of family, travelling)	25	2%

Comparison with previous HE Survey Results	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total Number of Students Targeted	1651	1600	1633
Known Destinations	906 (55%)	1246 (78%)	1383 (85%)
Unknown Destinations	745 (45%)	354 (22%)	250 (15%)
Positive Known Destinations	886 (98%)	1213 (97%)	1328 (96%)

For the future you want

FOR APPROVAL			
Meeting	Academic Council 25.05.18		
Presented by	Loraine Lyall		
Author/Contact	Loraine Lyall	Department / Unit	Curriculum Planning and Performance
Date Created	11.05.2018	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	Appendix 1: Draft Induction Survey 2018/19		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes.	

INDUCTION SURVEY 2018/19

1. **PURPOSE**
   The purpose of this paper is to present the Induction Survey 2018/19 to the Academic Council for approval.

2. **BACKGROUND**
   Every academic session students are given the opportunity to participate in the Induction Survey to enable the college to gather their views on the quality of experience they received prior to joining the college and in the initial weeks of their course.

3. **DETAIL**
   The Induction Survey attached (Appendix 1) shows the questions that will be asked. These are the same questions that were asked during session 2017-18, allowing trends to be identified.

4. **BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**
   Levels of student satisfaction can be monitored and levels of improvement measured.

5. **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**
   Edinburgh College aims to provide an excellent student experience. The survey provides evidence of the levels of student satisfaction across the college.

6. **RISK**
   Not applicable.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
   Not applicable.

8. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**
   Not applicable.

9.   **WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**
       Not applicable.

10.   **REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**
       Gathering this data enables to college to act on student feedback and protect its reputation and a quality provider of education and training.

11.   **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**
       Differences in levels of satisfaction between different groups of students, including students with protected characteristics can be identified and addressed.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS
The Academic Council is asked to APPROVE the Induction Survey 2018/19 (Appendix 1).

1 What is your survey code? *

This is a 4 digit code given to you by your Learning Development Tutor or lecturer.

Oops! Please make a selection

2 The Edinburgh College website contained all the information I needed about the choice of courses available. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

3 The information on the College website was clear about the entry qualifications I needed for my course. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

4 The College website contained enough information about my chosen course (e.g. content, cost, special clothing and/or equipment required). *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

5 College staff gave me the help I needed to choose the right course. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

I did not need help with choosing my course

6 It was easy to get help with my application. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

I did not need help with my application

7 I was made aware of the funding options available to me (e.g. college bursary/EMA, SAAS, Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), discretionary funding): *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

8 I was made aware of the support available to me as a student at Edinburgh College (i.e. through the Student Services team, Student Support team, and the Edinburgh College Student Association). *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

9 I was made aware of further opportunities in education and employment open to me after my course. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

10 I learned I had a place on my course within six weeks of applying. *

Yes   No

---

11 If you answered 'no' to the previous question, how long did it take for you to hear about the outcome of your application?

---

12 I received a copy of my timetable before I started at College. *

Yes   No

13 I found the College Welcome Event informative. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

I did not attend a College Welcome Event

14 If you answered, 'I did not attend...' can you please state here why that was? (e.g. Did not want to attend, did not receive an invitation etc)

15 My tutorials with my LDT (Learning Development Tutor) have helped me settle into college. *

If you do not have an LDT please select 'I do not have a Learning Development Tutor'

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

I do not have a Learning Development Tutor

16 I have been able to connect to the College's Wi-Fi network. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

I have not tried to connect to the College Wi-Fi

17 I was happy with how quickly I received my ID card. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

18 Any financial support I was entitled to was in place at the start of my course. *

Yes   No

19 If you answered 'no' to the previous question, please state why your financial support was not in place at the start of your course.

20 I feel I am studying at the right level. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

21 I feel I am on the right course. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

22 I had a good introduction to the subjects I will study in the course. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

23 The teaching on my course is of a high standard. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

24 The course is well organised. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

25 I feel comfortable with my class group. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

26 If you do not feel comfortable with your class group, please explain why:

27 What method of travel do you mainly use when traveling to and from college? *

Public Transport

Cycle

Walk

Drive (share)

Drive (alone)

Taxi

Other

28 How long does your journey take on average? *

30 minutes or less

30-60 minutes

Over 60 minutes but less than 2 hours

2 hours or more

29 I feel welcome at college. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

30 I enjoy coming to college. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

31 I feel safe at college. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

32 Students behave well when they are in college. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

33 Overall, I am satisfied with the College. *

Agree Completely

Agree Mostly

Disagree Mostly

Disagree Completely

---

34 Please provide any general comments you wish to make about the college or your course (e.g. aspects that have been successful or idea about what could be improved).

We ask for the following personal information so we can understand the experience of students, ensure fairness for different groups within the College, and address the needs of all students. Personal data collected is stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act, and we will not publish any identifying information. Providing this information helps us to better meet your needs-- however, if you do not wish to answer any particular question, please use the 'prefer not to say' option where applicable.

---

35 How old were you on your last birthday?

15 or younger

16-19

20-24

25-39

40-59

60+

Prefer not to say

---

36 How would you describe your ethnicity?

Oops! Please make a selection

---

37 If you answered 'Other ethnic group' in the previous question, please state your ethnic group here:

---

38 What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to, or what philosophical belief do you hold?

Oops! Please make a selection

---

39 If you answered 'Other religion or belief' in the previous question, please state your religion or belief here:

40 Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?

Female

Male

In another way

Prefer not to say

41 If you answered 'In another way' for the question above, please state how you would describe yourself:

42 Is your current gender (or sex) the same as the gender (or sex) you were born with?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

43 Do you identify, or have you ever identified, as transgender?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

44 Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

Bisexual

Gay Man

Gay Woman/Lesbian

Heterosexual/Straight

Not sure

Other

Prefer not to say

---

45 Are you an international student (i.e. were you offered your place by the International Team? This usually applies to students from outside the EU)?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

---

46 Do you consider yourself to have additional support needs?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

---

47 Do you consider yourself to have an impairment, health condition, or learning difference?

No impairment or condition

Deafness or serious hearing loss

Blindness or serious sight loss

Learning impairment (e.g. Down's Syndrome)

Learning difficulty- specific (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, or dyscalculia)

Social/communication impairment (e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorder)

Physical impairment or mobility issue (e.g. using a wheelchair or crutches)

Mental health condition (e.g. depression, anxiety disorder, or schizophrenia)

Long-term illness, disease, or condition (e.g. cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, epilepsy)

Other impairment or condition not listed above

Prefer not to say

---

48 Are you a Care Leaver (a person who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who was in care on their 16th birthday)?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

---

49 Do you have caring responsibilities?

No

Yes- for a child/children under 17

Yes- for a disabled child/children under 18

Yes- for an adult/adults over 18

Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Submit

Never submit passwords! - Report abuse

For the future you want

FOR INFORMATION			
Meeting	Academic Council 25.05.18		
Presented by	Jon Buglass		
Author/Contact	David McLachlan	Department / Unit	Learning Technologies and Resources
Date Created	11.05.2018	Telephone	-
Appendices Attached	None		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes	

MOODLE USAGE REPORT 2017/18

1. **PURPOSE**

    To provide the Academic Council with a statistical overview of usage, access and engagement with the college's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Moodle in 2017/18, and a summary of planned developments for the 2018/19 academic year.

2. **BACKGROUND**

    The College uses Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) as its VLE. This online educational platform provides custom learning environments for students. It can be used to create lessons and host assessments, manage courses, upload materials, and as a communication medium.

    The College Moodle is a key element of the Learning and Teaching Assessment Strategy (LTAS) and is used for cross-college support areas linked to Learning and Teaching and the student experience. It incorporates a Staff Area designed to assist teaching staff develop their own online learning practices, and for all staff to engage with compliance training.

3. **DETAIL**

    On 25 May, the Academic Council will receive a presentation from David McLachlan, Learning Technology and Resources Manager. The presentation will outline the growth, volume and type of usage, curriculum area engagement, developments of related VLE activities, e-portfolios and digital formats within the VLE by staff and students.

4. **BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

    To ensure resources, awareness and practices are optimised and opportunities for engagement are identified and acted upon. The Moodle platform has tremendous potential for commercial, international, learning development and the Staff Academy as a vibrant digital location and online environment as well as continuing to be a key component of learning and teaching.

5. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Effective use of technology for learning is a key component of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and will also impact on various areas of the college Blueprint.

6. RISK

Not applicable.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

9. WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

10. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee are asked to NOTE a presentation outlining the volume and increased engagement with the college Moodle as part of learning, teaching and assessment.

Edinburgh College

For the future you want

REVIEW OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL OPERATION 2017/18

FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION			
Meeting	Academic Council 25.05.18		
Presented by	Fiona Riddoch		
Author/Contact	Marcus Walker	Department / Unit	Governance
Date Created	16.05.18	Telephone	Ext. 67048
Appendices Attached	*Appendix 1:* Review of Committee Operation Form 2017/18		
Disclosable under FOISA		Yes.	

1. **PURPOSE**
   The Committee is asked to review its annual operation as part of the Board of Management's annual evaluation activity.

2. **BACKGROUND**
   The attached Review of Committee Operation Form was designed to align with the key principles of the Code of Good Governance: Oversight; Strategy-setting; decision-making and relationships.

3. **DETAIL**
   The attached Review of Committee Operations Form is split into two parts.

   Part 1 focuses on whether the Committee's operation has been compliant with its terms of reference and the Standing Orders over the course of the year, and is for more in-depth discussion on an exception basis should Members have matters they wish to raise.

   The twelve questions in Part 2 seek to focus Members' thinking on how the Committee currently performs in relation to its performance monitoring and strategic roles, the effectiveness of its decision-making and its key relationships, with a view to feeding its findings into the whole-board evaluation and identifying areas where practice may be improved.

   The same approach will be used for all committees, although some Part 2 questions may be less applicable to the Nominations and Remuneration Committee.

4. **BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**
   The Review of Committee Operation provides an opportunity for committees to reflect on their practice and consider improvements going forward.

5. **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**
   All committees of the Board are required to review its operation/performance annually.

6.   **RISK**
See 'reputational implications' below.

7.   **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
Not applicable.

8.   **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**
Not applicable.

9.   **WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS**
Not applicable.

10.   **REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**
Failure to ensure that good governance procedure are in-place may have reputational implications.

11.   **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**
Not applicable.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS
The Committee is asked to DISCUSS the checklist and questions provided. If appropriate, members may choose to RECOMMEND actions to enhance the Committee's operation.

Review of Academic Council Operation 2017-18 - Part 1

Membership	Y/N	Comments
Has the Committee's membership been compliant with its terms of reference during the past year?	Y	The terms of reference states: *"There shall be six core members of the Committee, three of whom must be Non-Executive Members. The further three members will include the Principal, the Academic Staff Member and a Student Sabbatical Officer"*. The non-executive membership of the Academic Council currently consists of Fiona Riddoch (Chair), Jeanette Stevenson and Ann Landels. The Principal, the Academic Staff Board Member and the Student President are all members of the Committee.
Are there any skills gaps that the Committee would bring to the attention of the Academic Council?	N	No skills gaps were noted, however, members felt it would be beneficial to invite external agencies and experts will be invited to future meetings, as and when required, to support the Committee in effectively monitoring performance.
Meetings		
Has the committee met in accordance with its terms of reference and often enough to fulfil its remit?	Y	The Academic Council has met four times in 2017/18, in September, November, February and May. The Committee is required to meet on a quarterly basis.
Have all meetings been quorate?	Y	All meetings have had at least two non-executive members, one representative from ECSA, one member of the Executive Team and two members of College staff.
Administration		
Have pre-meetings assisted in the planning of Committee business?	Y	The Committee Chair, Executive Lead and Governance Advisor met to consider and agree agendas for each of the Committee meetings in 2017/18.
Have papers been issued sufficiently in advance of meetings?	Y	Papers are normally circulated five working days in advance of the

		Committee meeting.
Have minutes and actions been distributed in good time after meetings?	**Y**	The minutes and actions of the meeting are monitored as a matter of course within the Committee cycle.
Are there any other points Members would like to raise?	**Y**	The Committee agreed that at least one Head of Faculty should be invited to each meeting of the Academic Council. The Committee welcome the opportunity to focus on key development / policy areas, including: (i) strategic blueprint; (ii) access and inclusion; (iii) widening participation; (iv) corporate parenting; and, (v) mental health.

Review of Academic Council Operation 2017/18 - Part 2

Performance Monitoring Role

1. Is the Committee monitoring the KPIs it needs to in line with its remit or is there a need for review or change?

    The following key measures of success of the Academic Council are outlined in its terms of reference:

    - *The achievement of targets in the Outcome Agreement.*
    - *The College makes a more effective contribution to the region through joint working with partners to meet Community Planning Partnership objectives.*
    - *The improvement of retention, attainment and positive destinations for all students.*
    - *The high quality student experience across all campuses evidenced by increased levels of student satisfaction.*
    - *The creation of more places and opportunities at the College for 16-19 year olds.*
    - *The curriculum is characterised by greater innovation in learning and teaching methods.*
    - *The curriculum is refreshed annually with courses that will better address skills gaps and shortages in the regional economy.*
    - *The curriculum is informed by more and better engagement with priority employers and employer organisations that reflect the College's regional, national and global ambitions.*
    - *The College works more effectively with its regional university partners to improve progression opportunities for all HE programmes.*

    At its September, November and February meetings the Academic Council received report on Edinburgh College KPIs - prior to their publication by the SFC in February 2018. These reports included updates on the achievement of targets against the Outcome Agreement and recruitment /attainment. The Academic Council continues to monitor improvements in attainment closely.

    Strands of the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan 2017-22 and Blueprint, which fall within the remit of the Academic Council, were reviewed by the Committee in November, February and May. Updates included reference to projects aimed at improving recruitment/retention, curriculum development, employer and partner engagement.

    A standing item on the Academic Council agenda, the Committee continues to monitor progress towards the development and implementation of the Edinburgh College Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan (EREP).

    Presentation on best practice within faculties were discussed at the September and November meeting of the Committee, following presentations from Head of Faculty. Examples of best practice will be included in the EREP report and the Academic Council has agreed to continue to monitor the dissemination of best practice across the college.

    In terms of student feedback, the Academic Council has approved the dissemination of the following student satisfaction surveys and reviewed related performance outcomes:

    - *Induction Survey*
    - *Learning & Teaching Survey*
    - *Pre-Exit Survey.*

At its meeting in May, the Academic Council reviewed results of the annual Student Destination Survey and noted the positive performance of the college in this area.

2. Does the Committee receive the information it needs to monitor performance effectively?

    Yes.

    The Chair of the Academic Council will continue to consider further developments to the Committee agenda with the Executive Lead and the Clerk to ensure that appropriate performance monitoring information is received. Further to this, the Committee will continue to invite external speakers and Heads of Faculties to meeting to update on key aspects of performance.

3. Have there been any areas where the Committee has not been able to exercise its performance monitoring role effectively or where practice could be improved?

    As above, the Committee shall invite Heads of Faculty and/or appropriate members of the management team to provide updates on key areas of performance. External agencies and experts will also be invited to future meetings, as and when required, to support the Committee in effectively monitoring performance.

    The Academic Council noted at its meeting in May 2018 that the Quality Team would be reviewing their approach to student satisfaction surveys in the new academic year. The Committee looks forward to receiving updates on improvements to this important area of its work.

    The Academic Council will continue to consider and develop its performance monitor role further in coming academic year in consultation with its members.

Strategic Role

4. How would the Committee define the key strategic issues within its remit?

    Strands of the Edinburgh College Strategic Plan 2017-22 and Blueprint, which fall within the remit of the Academic Council, were reviewed by the Committee in November, February and May.

    The main strategic aims within the Academic Council's remit focus on the 'delivery of a superb student experience' and 'providing an excellent curriculum'. Whilst projects with the Strategic Blueprint are yet to be finalised, the Curriculum Excellence Programme and the Student Experience Programme will include projects such as: (i) curriculum strategy; (ii) learning, teaching and assessment strategy; (iii) digital inclusiveness; (iv) school/college partnerships; (v) 24/7 College; (vi) core skills; and, (vii) student experience.

5. In what ways has the Committee influenced strategy in its area of remit in the last year?

    The Academic Council receives updates on relevant aspects of the Strategic Blueprint at each meeting. As Blueprint project concepts are finalised the Academic Council will continue to review their development and implementation going forward.

    The Chair of the Academic Council provides active reports to the Board (alongside the minutes of the meeting) on a quarterly basis, which highlight key aspects of the

Committee's work and emphasise critical points to ensure that the Board takes the curriculum and student experience fully into account. Further to this, the Chair of the Academic Council continues to promote the work of ECSA at Board-level to support further developments in key areas such as student funding and mental health.

6. Are there particular areas in which the Committee might improve practice in relation to its strategic role?

   The Academic Council aims to become more forward looking in relation to its strategic role, through the development of 'horizon scanning' reports, whilst maintaining its monitoring function. It is hoped that through the new horizon scanning report information will be gathered from all areas of the college and brought to the attention of senior management, the Committee and the Board.

Decision-Making

7. Has decision-making been "transparent, informed, rigorous and timely[1]" in the past year?

   The composition of the Academic Council, with its various members and co-opted members, draws together a wide range of experience from within the College and externally. The Committee is also attended by members of the College's senior management who may be asked to join the meeting for specific items of business, for instance, both Heads of Faculty have attended meetings in September and November to discuss best practice within their areas.

8. Are there ways that the Committee could strengthen its practice in relation to decision-making?

   The actions required by the Academic Council is clearly stated on the cover sheet to Board/committee papers.

9. Are there examples that show how the student experience has informed and been central to the Committee's decisions?

   Four representatives of the Edinburgh College Students' Association (ECSA) are invited to attend meetings of the Academic Council.

   The Head of Student Experience attends meeting of the Academic Council to advise on matters related to student support.

   The Academic Council has considered student communications on a number of occasions in 2017/18, and a working group has been developed (with student representation) to put forward a student communications plan for the college going forward. The communications plan will be reviewed by the Committee at its next meeting.

   The Academic Council remains cognisant of the impact of financial restrictions, as the college aims to achieve a balanced budget, on the student experience and considers feedback from its student and staff members on such matters.

---

[1] This is a definition of effective decision-making given in the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges.

Relationships

10. Has the Committee's relationship with the Board been effective in the past year, and are there any examples of where it could have been more effective?

    The Committee, through its Chair, reports its minutes to each Board meetings along with papers on key items of business which the Committee wishes to bring to the Board's attention.

    The Clerk of the Board shall provide the Academic Council with a URL link to the minutes of the previous Board meeting for information.

11. Has the Committee's relationship with the Executive been effective in the past year, and are there any examples of where it could have been more effective?

    The Principal is a member of the Academic Council, whilst the Assistant Principal (Curriculum Design and Development) also acts as Executive Lead.

    The Assistant Principal meets with the Chair of the Academic Council and the Clerk to the Board in advance of every meeting to discuss upcoming business and confirm an agenda.

12. Has the boundary between governance and management been effective in practice in the past year or are there examples of where it could have been more effective

    Yes, however, the Chair of the Academic Council and the Assistant Principal will consider this matter further at their pre-meeting in advance of the next meeting of the Committee.