

MINUTES

Minutes of the Academic Quality Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11 June 2019 at 3.30pm within the Boardroom, Fife College, Dunfermline.

Present: Shona Cochrane (Chair), Joseph Harney, Hugh Hall, Carol Hunter, Tony Martin, Heather Wray, David C Watt (ex officio)

Apologies: Zoe Thomson

In Attendance: Dorothee Leslie, Iain Hawker, Sue Reekie, Martin Kelly, Marianne Philp

1 **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting: 13 March 2019**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

3 **Matters Arising / Actions Outstanding**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted.

4 **College Activity to Support Mental Health**

John Blakey, Health and Wellbeing Advisor, joined the meeting for this item. An update was given on the Health and Wellbeing Advisor role which had been introduced during 2018-19. Members were advised of how the role links in to other areas within the College – including curriculum areas and guidance – to ensure that student issues can be identified and supported. Mental health and wellbeing is a key area within the role, and a range of support is offered to students, including self-help strategies, referring to partner organisations, providing workshops and training staff to identify and support issues within their areas. A positive impact on student withdrawals had been seen since the introduction of the role. Moving forward, a range of support be made available at touch screen information points for students, training would continue and networks with external partners further developed.

It was confirmed that the College was looking at introducing a Counsellor role for 2019-20. Various ideas were being explored and it was likely that funding would be made available to Colleges to support this. It was noted that a wellbeing day for staff was being held on 20 June 2019.

A suggestion was made that Mental Health First Aid Training could be extended to students as well as staff and that if courses were oversubscribed, more resourcing should be found to support these. Committee members endorsed the view that focusing on a preventative rather than reactive strategy was important.



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A copy of the slides used are available on the [Gateway](#).

5 Curriculum Update Report

The contents of the report that had been circulated were noted. Updates were given on:

- The credit position and academic faculties portfolio
- Performance indicators 2018-19
- Student recruitment 2019-20
- Learning and teaching strategy.

The Principal advised of changes to the CITB contract and confirmed that this was being tackled at a national level, as the new arrangements would have a big impact on costs. It was noted that an update would be included in the Principal's Report to the Board on this issue.

Committee members were advised of changes to the student recruitment process for 2019-10. Members were pleased to note the changes which were more student focused.

It was noted that employer engagement was key to success. The Chair of the Board offered to give advice on the Employer Engagement Strategy and offer feedback.

6 Fife College Students' Association (FCSA) Update

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Updates were given on:

- Sabbatical officer elections
- Class representatives 2018-19
- Student engagement tracker
- FCSA student executive
- FCSA open badges
- FCSA awards

Committee members congratulated Carol Hunter on her re-election as President – Education and Representation. They also commended all those who had been shortlisted for and had won recent awards.

Comments were made about the recent FCSA Strategy Event which was exploring lots of innovative new ways forward for developing and enhancing the work of the FCSA. Committee members were pleased to note the levels of engagement and participation from students involved in the work of the FCSA.

7 Learner Survey 2: Learning and Teaching 2018-29 and SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES)

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that there had been a 6.5% overall increase in response rates for Learner Survey 2, which could be seen across all faculties. The highlights and findings on page 19 of the Boardpack were outlined. It was confirmed that faculties were sharing good practice in their areas to try to improve those areas that had lower response rates.

The Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) had an increase in response rate of 8.9%.

Members were curious as to whether question 10 “The college Students’ Association influences change for the better” was answered more positively by part-time students as intuitively they would have believed this would have been higher for full-time students. It was confirmed that SFC had agreed to look at the wording of this question, and it was highlighted that the biggest increase in positive responses from both categories of students was highest for this question.

It was confirmed that the statistics for the sector would be published later this year, and that a comparison would be undertaken to see where Fife College sits within the sector.

Comments were made that getting the message out that Fife College is improving significantly in these areas to all staff (not just Directors and Managers) was essential in order to promote a culture of being proud of our organisation. The Principal confirmed that he would include this in his end of year staff communication.

Decision: To include improvements in the SSES in the end of year staff communication.

Responsibility: Principal

Deadline: 30 June 2019

8 Inclusion Report

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Attention was drawn to the past two tables on page 30 of the Boardpack. These show Fife College as having a lower performance in all key groups except Care Experience Partial Success. However improvements had been made across 11 of the 15 indicators. It was confirmed that Faculties would be asked to look at the data at course level in order to identify where further improvements could be made.

Members stressed the importance of pulling out those comparisons that best match Fife College, rather than looking at all the groups SFC wished to look at as not all were directly relevant.

It was suggested that, for future papers, having the last two tables first and some narrative contextualising the situation for Fife College would be more useful to Committee members.

9 EREP Report: Update on Progress

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was noted that all actions are on track and there were no issues to highlight. Committee members commented that the format of the report was clear, concise and exactly what they had requested.

It was noted that a full EREP Report would not be required this year, but guidance was awaited on what was required. This would come to the Board around September 2019 for approval.

Education Scotland had visited Fife College in May for a 3 day annual engagement visit, looking at 6 groupings. Feedback had been shared with academic teams.

There was a discussion about staff engagement and how this would be taken forward, and also more effective performance management.



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10 Update from Committees:

10.1 Learning and Teaching Committee

The Committee had not met since 13 March 2019.

11 Self-Evaluation

The contents of the paper that had been circulated. Members confirmed that they felt it was useful to have staff presentations at these meetings.

Members agreed the remit was still relevant and no changes were proposed.

Decisions:

- To move the guest speaker to be the first item on the agenda at future meetings.
Responsibility: Marianne Philp **Deadline:** 30.10.19
- To prepare summary papers for Committee members on key national reports or changes to national policy.
Responsibility: Iain Hawker/Dorothee Leslie **Deadline:** Ongoing

12 AOCB

An update was given on the First Chances Fife Partnership with St Andrew's University where Year 1 students had graduated at an event on 7 June 2019. Funding had been made available by the Robertson Trust, and additional funding for a 3 year project had been confirmed to expand provision from 2019-20. This was £177k per year for Fife College.

13 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 30 October 2019 at 3.30pm, Boardroom, Dunfermline