

Board of Management

Meeting of the Students, Staffing & Equalities Committee

MINUTE OF 1st MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2020 AT 1500 HRS
(SSEC1)

Present	
Alisdair Barron (AB) (Convener)	Paul Hillard (PH)
David Cullen (DC)	May Miller (MM)
Nicolas Garcia (DG)	Audrey Sullivan (AS)
Iona Gibson (IG)	
In attendance	
Paul Clark (PC)	Sheila Lodge (SL)
John Gribben (JG)	
Gillian Plunkett (GP)	Ann Butcher (Minute)
Apologies for absence	
Paul Little (PL)	

Item SSEC1-1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	Apologies were received from PL. SL attended in his absence.	

Item SSEC1-2	Declarations of Interest	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	There were no declarations of interest.	

Item SSEC1-3	Identification of Items to be Discussed Privately	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	None notified.	

Item SSEC1-4.1	Minute of the Students, Staffing & Equalities held on 15 January 2020	
Paper No: SSEC1-A	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Approve
Decision/Noted	That the minute be approved.	
	<p>Matters Arising Corporate Caring Duties 2018-19 GP reported on the higher level of bursary grant provided to Care-Experienced students in FE. Whilst the overall allocation of bursary</p>	

funding for Scottish Colleges has not increased, the number of Care-Experienced students presenting has increased and an overspend in bursary funding is anticipated. AB reported that the Principal has raised this issue with Scottish Government Ministerial contacts.

Admissions Update & Review – August Intake: Integrated Mobile App

SL reported that the College is currently focussed on project managing student laptop delivery, resolving MyCity issues and upgrading College storage within Data Centres. Initial discussions with the Students' Association have been undertaken and a working group will be established to further consider this matter.

Item SSEC1-4.2	Committee Annual Report 2019-20	
Paper No: SSEC1-B	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Approve
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>PC provided the Committee with a brief overview of the Students, Staff and Equalities Committee Annual Report which includes a summary of activities undertaken throughout 2019-20. A few minor amendments have still to be added.</p> <p>The significant improvement in Committee attendance levels from last year (now 81%) was highlighted. AB considered that the facility to attend meetings virtually was an added benefit and should be an option at all future Board and Committee meetings. PC advised that the benefits and challenges of remote governance were highlighted in a recent presentation by Professor Ron Hill, University of Stirling. This report will be distributed to the Board in due course.</p> <p>MM requested an up-to-date copy of the current College organogram. JG confirmed that this is currently being updated and will be circulated over the next few days. DC added that a copy of the Academic Board framework and its standing Committees would also be insightful for members. This will also be circulated by PC.</p>	
Decision/Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the Committee Annual Report 2019-20. • To circulate College organogram and Academic Board framework. 	

Item SSEC1-4.3	Committee Programme of Work 2020-21	
Paper No: SSEC1-C	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Approve
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>The proposed Committee Programme of Work for 2020-21 was reviewed. DC requested clarification on the 'Champion Topics' item and further suggested that a 'Communications Update' be included for consideration at a future meeting.</p> <p>PC explained that Board members were previously encouraged to become involved with Faculties and effectively 'Champion' specific areas of interest. This would allow them to have greater insight on relevant subject areas and share information with other Board members. This work is ongoing with a number of Board members who are in regular contact with appropriate staff.</p>	

The Committee suggested that the role of Board Champions should be made more formalised. It was agreed that Deans and Directors, and Faculties and functions be made aware of this process and members should be re-invited to participate. All Board introductions will be facilitated via PC.

AS advised that informative presentations have been made by senior staff members at recent Learning and Teaching Committee meetings and suggested that these could be video recorded and made available to all Board members. PC will further discuss this matter with C Carney.

It was further agreed that a Communications Update would be provided at the next meeting. The new Communications Director will be invited to attend.

Decision/Noted

- To approve the Programme of Work 2020-21.
- To re-invite Board members to participate as College Champions.
- To consider the provision of Committee presentations (provided by staff members) for all Board members.
- To provide a Communications Update at the next meeting.

Item SSEC1-5.1

Strategic Risk Review

Paper No:
SSEC1-D

Lead: P Clark

Action requested: Discuss

**Discussion/
Matters Arising**

The scoring of risks closely related to the Committees remit were reviewed as follows:

Risk 1 - *Failure to support successful student outcomes*: In recognition of the continued work to support and engage with students and the efforts made to mitigate potential student retention risks, members agreed the proposed Risk Score of 15 (RED).

Risk 9 - *Failure to recruit, retain, and develop suitable staff*: Committee members raised concern with regard to retaining suitable staff particularly during this challenging time. JG confirmed that staff members leaving the organisation are invited to attend exit reviews. Currently there are a combination of reasons for staff resignations, some of which relate to personal circumstances faced during the Covid crisis. However, recruitment of new staff is strong.

The College has proactively engaged and communicated with staff throughout this period and will continue to maintain this supportive College approach.

Members raised their concerns regarding staff wellbeing particularly over the next 6 month period and stressed the need to maintain current health and welfare support for all staff. SL reassured that staff welfare was a constant focus of discussion at management meetings. The College will continue to support staff and students with care and compassion.

JG further confirmed that a robust Workforce Planning review is currently under consideration. It was agreed that the current Risk Score remain at 4 (GREEN).

Risk 14 – *Negative impact of industrial action*: JG advised that the proposed lecturing staff pay increase has been accepted by EIS-FELA. Support staff negotiations are currently ongoing with no agreement reached as yet. It was agreed that the current Risk Score remain at 12 (AMBER). The MAP narrative will be updated.

Risk 21 – *Failure of the College’s Duty of Care to Students*: GP confirmed that the College has continued to work with care experienced students to ensure their welfare. This has involved the provision of care packages, help with accommodation and hardship funding. She stressed that whilst every effort is made to remain in contact with vulnerable students (through welfare checks), the College is reliant on student response which has proved more difficult under remote conditions. The Committee agreed that the likelihood be increased to 2. The revised Risk Score was increased to 2 x 5 = 10 (AMBER).

Decision/Noted

- To endorse the Risk Management Action Plans (MAPs) and agree the revised Risk Scores.
- To note the latest Risk Register.

Item SSEC1-5.2

Students’ Association Update

Item SSEC1-5.3

Democracy Review

Paper No: SSEC1-E

Lead: I Gibson/N Garcia

Action requested: Discuss

Discussion/ Matters Arising

IG advised that 4 project teams have now been set up relating to the various Vice President roles. The SA is also working in partnership with the College ED&I team to ensure a consistent approach and unified contribution with relevant activities i.e. Black History Month.

Student Parliament elections are currently live with successful candidates to be announced at the end of this month. Student parliament is currently under reform. Faculty rep elections are ongoing with 60% now elected.

Eight clubs are currently active with further plans in place to set up additional societies via online platforms. Approximately 400 student members participating. DC suggested that a ‘walking and talking’ outdoor discussion group be considered.

NG updated the Committee on a current environmental sustainability campaign, with both staff and students being encouraged to reduce energy consumption. Various ideas are being considered.

An advertising package has also been developed for the SA website with the launch planned for early November.

Decision/Noted

To note the update report.

Item SSEC1-5.4	Student Recruitment and Admissions Review 2020-21	
Paper No: SSEC1-F	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>GP reported that the admissions process was well underway at the time of College closure on 23 March. Applications for FT courses commencing August have decreased by 3% compared to last year however this has been experienced throughout the sector. The College continues to attract a high number of school leavers with a ratio of approximately 2.7:1 applications received to places available.</p> <p>Conversion from application to enrolment was up on last year with early indications noting that enrolment targets have been met. The College's main focus currently remains firmly on student retention.</p> <p>A survey of all applications was undertaken at July 2020 to ascertain customer satisfaction levels with the College admissions service. The results show a slight dip in satisfaction levels which may be attributed to the buildings closure and the move to home working. The overall satisfaction levels have been maintained.</p> <p>The student application and enrolment data at September 2020 by protected characteristic was also submitted for review. GP confirmed that the College continues to ensure that the admissions process offers fair access to all protected groups.</p> <p>Information on applications for care experienced students shows a slight increase with enrolments remaining the same as last year. Enrolments from students residing within the most deprived postcode areas were also provided for information.</p> <p>MM considered the review to be positive however raised some concern with regard to ongoing retention rates. GP advised that the VP Student Experience has prioritised students support in their use and interactivity with the College digital systems. The College has provided access to laptops for students which are currently being distributed in a controlled and organised manner, however uptake has been slow.</p> <p>As previously reported, online societies and activities have been developed to engage with students and lessen feelings of isolation which in turn helps to maintain student mental health and well-being. Small campaigns have also been undertaken on Social Media platforms which help address student concerns such as funding issues.</p> <p>The various difficulties and challenges in relation to the current blended learning model were discussed. DC advised on the excellent staff development training courses and webinars provided however considered that uptake had not been consistent. He suggested that upskilling of staff for remote teaching should be regularly promoted and revisited. GP added that digital skills training for students is also required. This is currently being developed and will be introduced next year. NG further reported that the Digital Steering Group is currently reviewing the performance and capability of the current VLE platform to support the delivery of the digital curriculum.</p>	

	<p>PH enquired on the possibility of providing benchmark figures on ED&I and SMID data across the sector. GP advised that Regional Outcome Agreement data for Glasgow Colleges is available and a report will be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>GP advised that data the next planned 'My Student Experience Survey' will be analysed and made available on the Dashboard by early December. The information received will help inform and refresh the Student Experience Strategy. An update on progress will be provided at the Board Planning event with the updated Strategy expected to be completed by January 2021.</p>
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.

Item SSEC1-5.5	Corporate Care Duties 2019-20	
Paper No: SSEC1-G	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>GP updated the Committee on the actions taken to ensure the College meets its statutory duties relating to the care of students ie Prevent, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting. The KPIs for the duties, which are reported to SMT every 6 months, were reviewed. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the exception of Prevent (which has remained the same), the number of employees completing MyCity Corporate Care modules has increased. PC reported that due to the Covid crisis, delivery of the interactive Prevent workshop has been paused. A previously developed online module was not considered satisfactory. • The number of safeguarding incidents including Prevent were noted. • Retention and Success of Care Experienced Students have just been made available and a significant drop was reported. Reasons for this reduction are currently being investigated 	
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.	

Item SSEC1-5.6	Developing the Young Workforce – Senior Phase Update	
Paper No: SSEC1-H	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>GP advised that as a result of Covid-19 and the need for social distancing, DYW programmes have been significantly reduced in 2020-21. A decision was made by SMT to prioritise 'on campus' provision for FT students with a high practical content. The Health and Safety of school pupils on campus was also a priority.</p> <p>Following consultation with Local Authorities and SDS the main focus is firmly on maintaining Foundation Apprenticeship provision particularly for those continuing on to work based learning in Year 2. Workarounds are being deployed to allow for delivery of the full qualification.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.	

Item SSEC1-5.7	HR Metrics Report	
Paper No: SSEC1-I	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>The high level summary of key HR management PIs were presented.</p> <p>JG reported on discussion at a recent meeting of LNC. The need to regain the confidence of staff during this challenging time and increased effort to further support the health and wellbeing of staff was the main topic of discussion. An in-depth Staff Survey based on the psychological and physical wellbeing of staff is under development and will be further subject to TUs engagement.</p> <p>The College has facilitated the safe transition to on site working arrangements. The extensive work undertaken to address many challenges, including the completion of over 129 risk assessments and 977 transition questionnaires, was noted. The considerable amount of work involved in resourcing staff to facilitate home working was also highlighted.</p> <p>AB referred to the number of Occupational Health Referrals, particularly relating to mental health issues, and requested information on the level of voluntary services being accessed. Recognising the confidentiality of this information, additional detail will be provided where possible. Data on the uptake of workshops and seminars (e.g. Charlie Waller wellbeing seminars) will also be provided.</p> <p>AB commended the report, noting the significant improvement in comparison to previous reports.</p>	
Decision/Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide additional information as agreed. • To note the update report. 	

Item SSEC1-6.1	ED&I Current Priorities: Update	
Paper No: SSEC1-J	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>PC reported that an extension to the deadline for the review and revision of the PSED Action Plan and Mainstreaming reports has not been offered. The reports, including publication of Equality Outcomes, and Gender Pay Gap Reports, must be published by April 2021. There is a dependency upon good quality staff equalities data being made available.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To note the summary update on ED&I priorities for 2020-21.	

Item SSEC1-6.2	Student Destinations 2018-19	
Paper No: SSEC1-K	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	<p>GP reported that the data will be utilised to promote the College as a first choice destination and will underpin the College's role in supporting economic recovery.</p>	

	Faculty Deans will present an annual analysis of student destination data and its use to inform decision making at future Learning and Teaching Committee meetings.
Decision/Noted	To note the report.

Item SSEC1-6.3	My Student Experience Survey June 2020	
Paper No: SSEC1-L	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	Feedback received from students relating to their student experience immediately after lockdown was submitted. AB highlighted the need for sustained communication with students. GP advised that SMT has agreed to the realignment of the Student Experience Directorate to create a communication officer post.	
Decision/Noted	To note the report.	

Item SSEC1-6.4	Student Induction and Transitions 2020	
Paper No: SSEC1-M	Lead: G Plunkett	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	To note the report.	

Item SSEC1-6.5	Staff Awards	
Paper No: SSEC1-N	Lead: N Garcia/I Gibson	Action requested: Note
Discussion/ Matters Arising	An update on the Students' Association Staff Awards launched during academic year 2019-20 was submitted for information. Engagement numbers, nominees, shortlist information and a breakdown of staff winners were noted. It was suggested that a dedicated page including winning staff profiles be provided on the SA website. AB praised staff members on their awards.	
Decision/Noted	To note the report.	

Item SSEC1-7	Disclosability of Papers	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: P Clark	Action requested: Agree
Decision/Noted	It was agreed that the disclosability status of papers as described on respective cover sheets be retained at present; however these may change over time.	

Item SSEC1-8	Any Other Notified Business	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Convener	Action requested:
Decision/Noted	None	

Item SSEC1-9	Date of Next Meeting	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	Wednesday 27 January 2021	

The meeting closed at 1755 hours.

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
SSEC1-4.2	Committee Annual Report 2019-20: Circulate College organogram and Academic Board framework	PC/JG	ASAP
SSEC1-4.3	Committee Programme of Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To re-invite Board members to participate as College Champions. To consider the provision of Committee presentations (provided by staff members) for all Board members. To provide a Communications Update at the next meeting. 	PC	ASAP
SSEC1-5.7	HR Metrics Report: Provide additional data as agreed.	JG	27 01 21

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
SSEC4-9	Corporate Caring Duties 2018-19: Highlight Committee's concerns regarding additional funding support with the SFC.	SL/GP	ASAP Complete
SSEC4-10	SE Annual Review 2018-19: Consider student brief and reference documents.	GP	Ongoing
SSEC4-13	Staff HR Metrics Report: Provide CPD uptake data.	JG	15 01 20 Complete
SSEC4-13	Staff HR Metrics Report: Consider update of College Values and Behaviours.	JG	Ongoing
SSEC2-11	Admissions Update & Review – August Intake: Progress integrated mobile app.	SL/ST/GP/BA	Ongoing Superseded - Complete
SSEC2-12	Staff Sick Absence Report: Put appropriate initiatives in place to reduce current absence levels and provide update reports.	ST	Ongoing Complete