

# Board of Management

## Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Committee

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Tuesday 25 February 2025</b>
<b>Paper No.</b>	<b>LTSEC3-E</b>
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Subject of Paper</b>	<b>Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Update</b>
<b>FOISA Status</b>	<b>Disclosable</b>
<b>Primary Contact</b>	<b>Dr Claire Carney/Dr Derek Robertson</b>
<b>Date of production</b>	<b>14 February 2025</b>
<b>Action</b>	<b>For Discussion and Decision</b>

### 1. Recommendations

1.1 The Committee is asked to note and discuss key elements of Learning, Teaching and Student Experience update.

### 2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on progress on Learning, Teaching and Student Experience and highlight key developments in relation to the Student Academic Experience Strategy (SAES).

### 3. Consultation

3.1 The contents and substance of the paper have been developed, discussed and reviewed with the Student Experience Group (Deans and Director of Student Experience).

#### 4. Key Insights

The following sections highlight key Learning, Teaching and Student Experience updates and developments:

**4.1 Student Success:** The focus this academic year (24/25) across the College is enhancing student success and attainment and faculty staff are pleased to return to 'normal business' without disruption and focus on ensuring that students achieve the best they can whilst at the college. The work on the Student Success Framework is timely and like other strategic developments in the Learning and Teaching area is being developed in consultation with staff and students across the college to ensure embedding and ownership of framework across curricular teams. The Framework also positions college well regarding the new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework.

**4.2 Student Recruitment 25/26 and Retention 24/25:** The college has a credit target of 158k to achieve over the course of academic year 25/26 equating to approximately 177 courses and 294 cohorts. The portfolio was agreed as part of the portfolio review exercise conducted in November 2024. The application portal opened in Dec for internal applicants and 15 January 2025 for external applicants. At this point in time applications are up 12% on first choice applications compared to the same time last year.

It is pleasing to note that Early Withdrawal figures (those who leave before end of September) have much improved since last year, 1.9% compared to 2.6% (113 vs 162 students) and Further Withdrawal until end of Dec has also declined compared to last year, 10% compared to 13% (608 vs 866 students). These are continued positive signs at this point in the year and as indicated in 4.1, the focus is on the complex task of improving student success. In addition, student satisfaction (as measured by the My Student Experience Survey, Item 4.4 on agenda)) has improved this year across all questions with overall satisfaction with the learning and teaching experience improved by over 10% to 92%. It is pleasing to note that nearly all areas have improved since last year with 50% of scores above 90% with remainder above 79%. These is a hugely positive response, however it is recognised there are areas for improvement and each area (faculty/directorate) will address these through monitored actions plans.

**4.3 SAES: City Attributes:** As noted previously, the Vice Principal Student Experience and Dean Alison Bell made a successful bid to the Arm's Length Foundation in October 2024 to provide funding (£99k) to continue the development and implementation of City Attributes (CA). A dedicated working group has been constituted with representation from across the college and the following progress has been made:

- Unit Specification for CA @ SCQF Levels 3.4.5.7 and 8 have been written and currently undergoing a credit rating process. In conjunction a supporting workbook with video guidance (for staff and students) has been completed.
- Feedback on the user experience has been undertaken and suggestions/improvements have been actioned. Further refinements of the current course have been actioned and will go live for session 25/26.
- Mapping of CA into current workshops across Student Experience Directorate is underway to identify any gaps. This will be actioned in March 2025.

All areas of the project are on track with the next phases focusing on marketing, web page build and course design in SCQF Levels 5.6. and 7.

**4.4 SAES: Learning and Teaching Fund:** The Learning and Teaching fund 24/25 was launched in September 2024 and aims to support innovative practice in course development and design and to improve student success and learner experience. Twenty-seven applications were received from across all four faculties and nine were funded. Projects were selected for funding based on their enhancement of the student experience and potential impact beyond the project period. The projects cover:

- Cutting & Colouring Coiled Hair
- Self-driving vehicle technology
- Online course development in Nautical
- Sports Injury Clinic
- Online Course Development in Strength and Conditioning
- Supporting Women Ages 40+
- Digital Recipe Book
- Scottish Opera Partnership
- Haptics Technology for Jewellery Design.

Work on all projects has begun and is being supported by the LTA. Projects are due to complete in May 2025 and it is an expectation of funding that participants will share their practice on a College Learning and Teaching Academy portal, present at the Learning and Teaching Conference, conduct workshops for staff (where appropriate) and present externally at appropriate events.

**4.5 SAES: Annual Learning and Teaching Conference:** A key aspect of the SAES is to deliver an annual 'sector leading' Learning and Teaching Conference. Our fifth conference took place on 21 January 2025 under the general Theme of '*A Celebration of Learning and Teaching*'. The conference is intended to allow College staff and external speakers to share practice and to learn from their colleagues and contributors from across the sector. As per the SAES, our ambition is for the conference to be the premier L&T conference in the college sector in Scotland.

This year's event was a resounding success, bringing together educators from across the sector, students and alumni of the college. Dr Emily McIntosh provided a well-received keynote presentation on *Going Tertiary: A New Frontier for Student Success in Scotland* and skilfully used an Everest analogy to highlight the challenges and opportunities for influencing student success, offering attendees a fresh perspective on the ever-evolving student landscape. The breakout sessions were a key highlight of the day, offering a wide range of themes and workshops. Attendees engaged in sessions on supporting learners, focusing on priority groups and strategies to enhance productivity, as well as practitioner development, which included exploring lecturer pathways and innovative teaching approaches such as 'CEP-tacular.' We also had meaningful discussions on inclusion, with sessions on designing for accessibility and applying universal design principles in courses, as well as examining real-world pedagogies like industry engagement and impactful teaching techniques. Other notable sessions delved into trauma-informed practices, exploring AI tools for education, and utilising vulnerability for curriculum innovation—providing valuable insights for educators to take back to their institutions.

The afternoon programme was just as engaging, with a focus on student lives and experiences. A panel of City Student Association presidents, both past and present, shared their insights on the importance of student leadership, followed by an impressive performance by HNC/D

students, who delivered a vibrant medley of *Unwritten* and *Don't Stop Believin'* complete with some fabulous backflips. The day concluded with an inspiring alumni panel, hosted and interviewed by current Media & Communications' students Viktoriia Hunko and Scott Smith featuring Diane Scott from Sports and Fitness, Josh Kerr from Hospitality, Ewan Denny from TV and Film, and Holly MacMillan from Construction. Each panellist reflected on their time at the College and shared how their experiences have shaped their successful careers in their respective fields. The outstanding contribution of our HN Television students truly showcased the strength of student partnership throughout the day. Their exceptional work in filming, coordinating audio and lighting, and capturing valuable delegate insights through vox pops added immense value to the event. Their professionalism and dedication were instrumental in bringing the conference to life.

Initial feedback from a survey of participants suggests that they are happy with the format of the conference, find most value in the elective sessions (with between 75% and 85% saying that they got ideas for developing their practice) and with 88% giving it an overall rating of 4 or 5 stars.

The committee is asked to note the 6<sup>th</sup> LT conference will be held 20 January 2026.

**4.6 Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework:** Scotland's Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) is our tertiary education sector's new approach to quality assurance and enhancement for colleges and universities. The College is well placed as the VPSE has held a strategic role as part of the Tertiary Quality Steering Group and in leading development of the new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) method. Being involved from the outset has ensured that the colleges quality systems and processes are aligned and are 'TQEF ready'. The College has also been successful in having 3 members of staff and our student president accepted as future TQER reviewers. The VPSE has been appointed a member of the Institutional Review team for the first review to be held in April 2024. In addition, Dr Robertson has recently been appointed to a key role leading the Scottish Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) alongside one other colleague from the University Sector and two student members. STEP is a cross-sector activity enabling colleges and universities to work together to improve and enhance learning, teaching and the student experience. The college has nominated Alison Bell and Valeria Ramos as the respective staff and student representatives on the STEP network, the group that is developing collaborative enhancement projects in partnership with college and university colleagues. STEP follows a four-year cycle – we are currently in year 1, where projects are identified. Years 2-4 will involve project implementation and evaluation. The theme for this cycle is 'Supporting Diverse learner Journeys', with sub-themes of:

- Supporting transitions and navigating pathways
- Strengthening engagement, community and belonging
- Developing skills and capabilities for learning
- Delivering tailored, targeted and personalised support'

A further aspect of the TQEF is the Self Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP) which the college submitted in December 2024 (See Item 5.1). Further to this a meeting will be held with SFC and subsequently the QAA to discuss the SEAP, progress and plans. This will happen on an annual basis until our cyclical external peer review is conducted in academic year 2027/28.

**4.7 SAES: Learning Spaces project:** As per the SAES (2.2), the aim of the Learning spaces project is to progressively develop our learning spaces across the college. A 4-year project plan for the progressive development of learning spaces across the College is in place – the project is being managed by the College's Project Management Office and a Project Board is being created with representatives from Faculties, students and service areas. We are currently in Year 1 of the project, which involves the pilot development of 14 learning spaces (10 classrooms and 4 specialist spaces). This work is currently in the procurement phase. Evaluation of this pilot in semester 1 of AY2025-26 will inform developments for years 2-4. The project aims to transform our learning spaces into innovative learning spaces that support Active, Blended and Connected learning and Teaching but we are mindful of the challenges of delivering within the restricted capital funding available.

**4.8 LTA update:** A new Head of the LTA, Dr Vic Boyd, joined the College in December 2024. Vic's appointment completes the restructure of the Student Experience directorate. Vic brings with her a wealth of experience in lecturer development and learning technology having previously worked in roles at UWS, GCU and GSA. In line with the SAES action (2.9) to create opportunities for learning and teaching staff to be seconded to the LTA to develop and share practice across the College, the LTA is currently hosting two staff members on secondment. One secondee (0.2FTE) is working on supporting practitioner enquiry into effective learning and teaching practice, including setting up a practitioner network and overseeing the development of projects funded from the Learning and Teaching Fund. The other secondee (0.8 FTE) is supporting work around the development of the Student Success Framework and is updating guidance on assessment and feedback practice.

**4.9 SAES: Student Success Framework:** The pilot of the new Student Success Framework (SAES 3.2) is now underway. One curriculum team in each Faculty is working with the LTA using the SSF as a tool to review activity within the four themes for the framework: access and retention; curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment; support and resources; and community. Separately, work is continuing with the Performance team to consider how the SSF will fit in with our internal review requirements under the new quality framework. We are also in the early stages of developing an enhancement project looking to use the SSF as a means of understanding the causes of lower levels of successful completion among care-experienced students.

**4.10 Lecturer Development:** The College's has begun discussions with the University of Strathclyde on renewing our contract with them for delivery of the TQFE programme. We are currently considering potential updates to the Memorandum of Understanding that we have with Strathclyde with a view to continuing the one-day-a-week secondment to the programme team of a lecturer from the LTA and supporting collaboration around the development of teaching and learning.

The PDA Teaching Practice in Scotland's colleges for academic year 2025-26 is now open for applications and a new Learning and Teaching Development Policy and Procedure is awaiting final internal approval before coming to the next meeting of this Committee.

## **5. Impact and Implications**

5.1 Continual enhancement of L&T is a key aspect of the SAES. A key impact is improving the student learning experience.