



Board of Management

Learning, Teaching & Student Experience Committee

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 25 February 2025
Paper No.	LTSEC3-J
Agenda Item	5.4
Subject of Paper	Draft Academic Board Minute – 31 October 2024
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Paul Little, Principal
Date of production	October 2024
Action	For Noting

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the Academic Board minute of the meeting held on 31 October 2024.

Meeting of Academic Board

Minute of meeting held on 31 October 2024 at 1000 hrs – City, C.04.044

Present	
Sheila Lodge (SL) (Vice Convenor)	Katie Jordon (KJ)
Chris Colvin (CCo)	Ciara McCarthy (CM)
Andrew Dickson (AD)	Ryan McKellar (RM)
Sharon Fagan (SF)	John Murphy (JM)
Roy Gardner (RG)	Valeria Ramos (VR)
Maddy Green (MG)	Ross Semple (RS)
Karen Hislop (KH)	Vanessa Telfer (VT)
Cameron Johnstone (CJ)	Siobhan Wilson (SW)
In Attendance	
Brian Deeley (BD)	Jacqui Shaw (JS) (on behalf of Alison Bell)
Toby Forster (TF)(on behalf of Chris Keenan)	Jennifer Stevenson (JS) (Minute Secretary)
Cristina Placinta (CP) (on behalf of Deborah Fagan)	
Apologies for absence	
Alison Bell (AB)	Gus Grubb (GG)
Claire Carney (CC)	Chris Keenan (CK)
Melissa Grbin (MG)	Paul Little (PL)
John Gribben (JGR)	Derek Robertson (DR)

Item 1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	Apologies were received from AB, CC, JFG, GG, DF, MG CK, PL, DR.	
Decision	The apologies were noted.	

Item 2	Chairs Business	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new academic year, and in particular the new members: Maddy Green, Ryan McKellar, John Murphy, Ciara McCarthy, Valeria Ramos, and Ross Semple. Members who had stepped down at the end of AY23-24: Karen Hislop, Deborah Fagan, David Finlay, Elaine McKenzie, Stephen McLaughlin, Leo Subido and Josh Taylor were thanked for their valued service.	
Decision	Noted	

Item 3.1	Terms of Reference 2024-25	
Paper No: AB01-A	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	The Terms of Reference for 2024-25 were approved and adopted without amendment.	
Decision	Approved	

Item 3.2	Membership 2025-25	
Paper No: AB01-B	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	The Membership was approved.	
Decision	Approved	
Item 3.3	Programme of Work 2024-25	
Paper No: AB01-C	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	The Chair advised that the Programme of Work for 2024-25 was an updated version of the previous year, it was by no means a definitive list: there would be additions during the year. MG suggested that a <i>Summary of Student Recruitment Plan for next session</i> . be added for the meeting on 8 May 2025.	
Decision	Approved	
Item 3.4	Minute of Meeting (20 May 2024)	
Paper No: AB01-D	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	The minute of the meeting held on 20 May 2024 was agreed as a correct record and approved without amendment. Previous actions were now complete.	
Decision	Noted	
Item 3.5.1	Homologation of Chair's Action: Risk Management Procedure	
Paper No: AB01-E	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	The Procedure had to be submitted to a one of the Board of Management Committees for approval quickly and Chair's action had been taken on behalf of the Board. The homologation of this action by the Academic Board was now sought.	
Decision	Homologated	
Item 3.6.1	New Course Proposals: Cabin Crew & Ground Operations	
Paper No: AB01-F	Lead: S Wilson	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	<p>This course had been offered historically as a City & Guilds qualification, but City & Guilds were now withdrawing their provision, so a replacement course was required. The course doesn't qualify students to be Cabin Crew or Ground Operations staff, but it does increase the likelihood of their being employed by airlines, some of which are partners with the College. Clyde proposed continuing with the units they already had used with NQ credits. The new course was being redeveloped with industry partners TUI and EasyJet. Option 1 was the Faculty's preferred option.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the College could afford to offer this course but was assured that, having met development costs in Year 1, future years would be profitable.</p>	

Decision	Approved endorsing Option 1
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Item 3.6.2	New Course Proposals: BA International Hospitality Management
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Paper No: AB01-G	Lead: S Wilson	Action requested: Approval
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Discussion	<p>This was a new program to be run in partnership with Edinburgh Napier University. Students could complete Year 3 at City and then articulate to take the Honours year at Napier if they so wished. It also opened options for cookery students to have another articulation progression path. Students would then be qualified to apply to do a PGDE at Strathclyde University.</p> <p>MG clarified that this is a validated degree program and uses associate student places so there were no credits and should be added to Performance's list of Associated Student places. BD asked who would be doing the recruitment? The course would be starting in August 2025, but City's second year was already poor so he questioned whether there would be enough students to fill the benchmark 17 places. Students from other courses could be taken in Year3. SF commented that there was a large cohort in professional cookery from which students could be drawn. Inductions would be held at City with a visit to Napier. Students would apply through UCAS, and City will advertise to promote the programme to our own students, but all the teaching would be done in Glasgow.</p>
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Decision	Approved
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Item 3.7.1	Policies & Procedures: Awarding Body Approval & External Audits Procedure
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Paper No: AB01-H	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Approval
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Discussion	<p>This is an attempt to update our procedures, delivering on our commitment to external partners. SW asked why there was a focus on SQA when there are other awarding bodies. JG stated that this was the default position but acknowledged that the procedure and particularly section 4.1 would be updated to reflect other awarding bodies.</p> <p>MG also said the report implied Student Records held all responsibility for awarding bodies and that this should be devolved to relevant Faculties. JG commented that with the sheer scale of awarding bodies and procedures aspects of responsibilities to remain compliant had to be devolved. Faculty leads were expected to liaise with awarding bodies, with Performance checking that audit actions had been completed. JG noted that it was Performance's responsibility, on behalf of the College, to facilitate and maintain registration with appropriate Awarding Bodies and to make sure that everything ran correctly, avoiding divergent approaches.</p>
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Decision	Approved
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Item 3.7.2	Asset Management Policy & Procedures
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Paper No:	Lead: C Placinta (for DF)	Action requested: Approval
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AB01-I		
Discussion	The only new procedure was the Sale of Assets; the other processes had been in use without a formal procedure. The Policy was straightforward and simple to understand.	
Decision	Approved	

Item 3.7.3	Operational Planning Procedure	
Paper No: AB01-J	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	This version of the Procedure had added three paragraphs on how progress with Operational Plans would be checked periodically throughout the academic year.	
Decision	Approved	

Item 3.7.4	Request for Personal Data Procedure	
Paper No: AB01-K	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Approval
Discussion	There are many policies and procedures relating to Data protection, and this one had now been refreshed and updated by the Data Protection Officer, Morgan O'Neill. It details how requests for personal data (Subject Access Requests - DSARs) should be handled.	
Decision	Approved	

Item 4.1	Interim Report: College Academic Performance AY2023-24	
Paper No: AB01-L	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Discussion
Discussion	<p>The paper summarises academic performance in AY23-24, following the learner journey to see how the College meets the expectation of the students, and compares with others nationally. PowerBi provided the data to support the narrative, which has helped considerably in providing the College with good information about its performance, helping drive decision-making from recruitment to year end outcomes.</p> <p>The Chair found the report to be a helpful and comprehensive report in a good, accessible format where key points are discussed. Members were asked to focus on the key points in 5.11 which highlights the positives for the College and the points where we are not doing so well, namely retention and attainment. The Principal has made these points a key focus for this academic year.</p> <p>The floor was opened for discussion on why, in some indicators we underperform compared to the sector. CC asked if there were any mitigating circumstances and JG commented that the strike had resulted in the loss of 65 teaching days which was mirrored in high levels of partial completion, however long standing underperformance continues across some courses. It is now easier to track underperformance on courses to determine what are the main factors and Performance was asking Faculties review their courses as part of the portfolio review. JG said it was evident that students were less satisfied at City about aspects of</p>	

learning and teaching than those of comparable large colleges. At the recent All Managers' this issue of reviewing ourselves relative to others had been highlighted to help understand what students are experiencing here.

KJ felt that community spirit was key as this drove engagement. Faculty staff were involved with their students and therefore had an influence in creating a positive environment, though it only took one student with a negative viewpoint to influence the rest.

It was felt that the standard of marking at the College was at a higher level and quality than other colleges who gave remediation at 35% and this could explain some of attainment figures. As the College writes and conducts its own assessments the results are not equal to other colleges if the standard expected is higher.

The Chair said these factors could account for some of the differences but not for our difficulties across the board. VR felt that the community spirit in the College wasn't great; lecturers had a lack of understanding of the impact mental health had on students who were struggling. It was felt that the Counselling team were overwhelmed and an increase in service provision would help.

CM commented that FE care experienced students withdraw as they don't get enough support in class. VR said many students kept on with their course even though they weren't enjoying it as they had ended up on the wrong course, or it wasn't what they thought but they had accepted a student loan and then felt they could no longer withdraw. Guidance during recruitment would be valuable to make sure the students were choosing the right course, knew what it entailed and maybe signposted to other more suitable courses. Students were also given support with an Academic Advisor.

JS said although it was time consuming, all students in their department were interviewed as it was important to meet them and check they knew what the course entailed. It created small groups at an early stage, fostered a sense of belonging and helped with retention. Perhaps Academic Guidance should return to basics with CHs and ADs sharing health checks across the Faculty and revitalising Academic Guidance staff. MG mentioned that since City Attributes were developed, Academic Guidance advisors had received no retraining. Guidance and induction possibly needed to be updated in order to provide better support to students, and clarity on how the program was designed might shed some light on what could be improved. Guidance had been overtaken by City Attributes and perhaps this ought to be better explained and defined as they were different.

	<p>RS said increasingly Academic Guidance was focused on pastoral care rather than academic support. CC thought more investment was needed for Academic Advisors to help build community spirit in classes. CM felt more could be done around guidance on sitting exams: the process and what to expect, with sign posting students to Academic Guidance, who are not equipped to support mental health. Their role should be more academic. Perhaps reframing 'Guidance', which seems to be used interchangeably with Academic Advisors was needed.</p> <p>The Chair said it was important to have a culture of community spirit whereby students going through a rough patch felt supported either via friendship groups or staff care or support. And perhaps this was the way forward. There is no ceiling on the College's aspiration and ambition. She thanked all for their valued input.</p>
Decision	Noted

Item 4.2 Annual Complaint Report 2023-24	
Paper No: AB01-M	Lead: J Gray Action requested: Discussion
Discussion	<p>Positively, the number of complaints had decreased. Three or four years ago around 100 complaints was typical received whereas now it was around 70 per annum.</p> <p>Nothing had changed regarding availability and accessibility of the process, so the reduction can be seen as a positive improvement. Each complaint received is tracked to its completion, and an audit conducted to ensure the actions are completed. The time scale for the two stages are set by the ombudsman:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Stage 1 requires handling within 5 days.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Stage 2 are those complaints of greater complexity and are due to be resolved in 20 days.</p> <p>If the complaint is not resolved in 20 days it extends to another 20 days, even if the resolution is then found on day 22. Guidance had been improved a worry over the escalation of complaints continues. Staff still mistakenly believed a Stage 2 complaint was more serious, rather than that it just requiring extra time to resolve. Members were asked to spread the word about the complaints process.</p> <p>The Chair was pleased to note the reduction in complaints received.</p>
Decision	Noted

Item 4.3 Operational Plans 2024-25	
Paper No: AB01-N	Lead: J Gray Action requested: Discussion
Discussion	<p>JG presented an update on the planning process, and suggested this should reassure members that plans were read and interpreted to inform activity across the College. All Directorate and Faculties produces plans,</p>

	<p>presented in a consistent format, which are visible to ELT and SMT to support delivery of outcomes. The whole College, through this process, was now more aligned to effective collective working.</p> <p>The Chair agreed the process was multi-layered, moving from Strategic Planning to Operational Planning in Directorates and Faculties, and then to P&DR where individual targets should align with the Operational Plans, so providing constructive alignment both from the top down and from the bottom up.</p> <p>The process needs the P&DR to be used for staff to align themselves with the plans of their area. Assurance would thereby be provided that individuals were working on what the College wanted and needed, while qualification and training needs would be identified and met to enhance staff capabilities.</p>
Decision	Noted

Item 4.4	Recruitment & Admissions Update	
Paper No: AB01-O	Lead: B Deeley	Action requested: Discussion
Discussion	<p>Applications open in December 2024 for internal applicants, and for External applicants in January 2025 for the August 2025 intake.</p> <p>The information we provide for admissions v target numbers was available and reported weekly, for Faculties to discuss courses which were not recruiting. There was work to be done with some Faculties here. Table 1 shows how we did last year, when we had 105% enrolments, accounting for approx. 80% of our full-time credits,</p> <p>Year 2 information was a little more complex as it covered both returning students and new external applicants and was impacted by industrial action.</p> <p>Conversion to enrolment was at 105% which was similar to last year; first choice applicants were up showing a three-year trend. If we take account of the 10% reduction in credits, we are on par with 20/21 application figures.</p> <p>There was a decrease in 3% in offers made, but January to May shows more offers had been consistently made than in other years. Offers were made early, and interviews held earlier.</p> <p>BD felt the College needs to be better at bringing new students in to see the College, attending informal and integration sessions so they are familiar with the campus before the semester starts.</p> <p>104 courses achieved enrolment target both years; 13 didn't achieve their target in either year; and all but three were improving although they didn't achieve 100%. The annual admissions survey revealed the applicants</p>	

viewed Student Services favourably and had increased satisfaction in every area of the survey.

There was feedback from some curriculum areas on the admissions review, survey and conversion report, however, the report has now been sent to all curriculum teams for discussion.

The Chair endorsed getting to know the students and bringing them onto the campuses. If departments were not interviewing, then they needed to bring the students in to start building relationships. It's important to remind them why they applied for the course. Keeping in touch with the students was key, along with showing them the facilities, putting out information early enough for open days. TF commented that at the moment there was not sufficient notice in advising parents of upcoming open days, The Communications team needs to be advised of timings required.

MG asked if there was data to show the impact of holding interviews on retention. MG also pointed out that although the recruitment and enrolment data was detailed and very useful, she wanted to point out that sometime these reports differ from her data. There are reasons that the data does not always match e.g. Admissions look at enrolments and do not take into account cancellations. Student Services and Student Records Data was just looking at different points of the student journey and MG thought this would help explain the confusion.

VR commented that informal events could be better advertised. One was shortly being run on the library and would help shift perception of its function. Open days could be very useful for such sessions.

RM felt interviews helped sort direct entries, ensuring quality candidates on the right course. Although time consuming and tiring, they are worthwhile. Students could be redirected to the right courses on the spot. Interview also started the process of creating a relationship with the students and provided an opportunity of sorting out a line of communication.

The Chair concluded that having met other students at interview meant at the start of the semester students were no longer strangers and a start had been made in creating a positive environment already.

Decision

Noted

Item 4.5

Financial Update

Paper No:
Verbal

Lead: A Dickson

Action requested: Discussion

Discussion

For the year ending July 2024, there was a surplus of £100k, a significant change from budgeted £2.0M deficit. The College's financial position has been turned around over the last few years. Audit is midway through, with the audit closure meeting at the beginning of November, with a view to signing off the accounts at the Finance Committee on 27 November. The

24/25 budgeted deficit of £500k showed the College has turned the corner but still faces financial challenges. The quarter 1 forecast will be updated to the end of October to show the current position.

The UK Budget had been delivered yesterday and the Scottish budget is due to be announced at the beginning of December. It is likely there will be an impact on funding for AY2025/26. When asked what had made the material difference in operation surplus AD responded staffing costs with voluntary severance.

RG commented that commercial and international income for AY 23/24 was £5M from commercial income and £3.2M from international income. All activity is non-government funded from a range of projects; however, these figures do not include income from lets, catering, and Halls of Residence. The target for AY 24/25 is £9.4M.

The Minister for Higher & Further Education had recently visited the College and was particularly interested in this area. RG explained that new commercial ventures were being explored and that the College had the pedigree and structure to attract business.

The Chair said anyone with ideas should put them forward to RG. JM felt that in his department there was scope to market further courses with little development needed and he would discuss this with RG.

The Chair was keen that lessons learnt from controlling costs were not forgotten. The college had made conscious decisions regarding new courses and posts and as a result had been able to make a vast improvement in its position and avoid a deficit.

Decision

Noted

Item 5.1		Course Approval Updates
Paper No: Verbal-	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted	
Item 5.2		Articulation Agreements 2024-25
Paper No: AB01-P	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.3		New Quality Arrangement (TQEF) & Quality Cycle draft Self Evaluation Action Plan
Paper No: AB01-Q	Lead: J Gray	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted	

Item 5.4.1	Standing Committees Annual Reports: Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee	
Paper No: AB01-R	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted	
Item 5.4.2	Student Academic Experience Committee	
Paper No: AB01-S	Lead: C Carney	Action requested: Note
Discussion	This paper had not been submitted.	
Decision	To be submitted at next meeting.	
Item 5.4.3	Support Services Committee	
Paper No: AB01-T	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.5	Ethics Committee Annual Report 2023-24	
Paper No: AB01-U	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.6	Data Protection Report 2023-24	
Paper No: AB01-V	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.7.1	Approved Minutes: Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee Minute 9 May 2024	
Paper No: AB01-W	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.7.2	Student Academic Experience Committee Minute 13 May 2024	
Paper No: AB01-X	Lead: C Carney	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.7.3	Support Services Committee Minute 7 May 2024	
Paper No: AB01-Y	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Note
Discussion	This paper was noted.	

Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.8.1	Faculty Board Minutes 2023-24 Creative Industries	
Paper No: AB01-Z	Lead: A Bell	Action requested: Note
Discussion	This paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.8.2	Education & Humanities	
Paper No: AB01-AA	Lead: V Telfer	Action requested: Note
Discussion	This paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.8.3	Hospitality & Leisure	
Paper No: AB01-AB	Lead: S Wilson	Action requested: Note
Discussion	This paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 5.8.4	Nautical & STEM	
Paper No: AB01-AC	Lead: C Keenan	Action requested: Note
Discussion	This paper was noted.	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 6.	Any other Business	
Paper No: Verbal-	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	<p>The Chair reminded all present that there were several papers marked non disclosable and they should be treated as such.</p> <p>She encouraged all to read the papers and to keep colleagues up to date with discussions that had occurred at this meeting. Communication and understanding within the organisation were key to creating community.</p> <p>She appreciated everyone's hard work and thanked them for the valuable discussion at the meeting as it was very helpful.</p>	
Decision	Noted.	
Item 7.	Date of Next Meeting	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: S Lodge	Action requested: Note
Discussion	The date of the next meeting will be 5 March 2025.	
Decision	Noted.	

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

31 October 2024

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
3.3	<i>Summary of Student Recruitment Plan for next session.</i> be added for the meeting on 8 May 2025.	PL	08.05.2025