

Final Version

## MINUTES

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Minutes of the Academic Quality Committee meeting held on Wednesday 10 November 2021 at 3.30pm via Microsoft Teams.

**Present:** Shona Cochrane (Chair), Lynn Davis, Pamela Dobson, Hugh Hall, Zoe Thomson, Emma Wallace

**Apologies:** Evelyn McPhail

**In Attendance:** Dorothee Leslie, Iain Hawker, Wendy Brymer, Marianne Philp

### 1 **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

### 2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting: 9 June 2021**

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 **Curriculum Update Report**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined and noted. The three bullet points in the Executive Summary on page 8 of the Boardpack were highlighted.

It was noted that the credit targets report was as at 25 October 2021 and was changing on an ongoing basis. This was being monitored at Faculty level and steps would be taken to adjust targets to ensure the overall credits target was met for the year end. Whilst the target was noted a -24.7% under the overall target, this was only 6% below the position reported at this time last year and credits would be picked up later in the year. The credits target was reflected in the F1 budget which would be presented to Finance, Commercial and Estates Committee and the Board of Governors. Other Colleges were in a similar position and collectively would raise with SFC in order that support could be requested.

There was a discussion about the current situation and issues such as Covid and university entry requirements reducing which were impacting on the position. It was confirmed that steps had been taken to look at solutions to replace bubbles as a result of student feedback, but this was dependent on class sizes.

It was highlighted that the College had 90% of students going on to a positive destination, and this was well ahead of sector average. Response rates were similarly well above average. It was noted that destination statistics would be included in a future business report update.

Following on from the Board Development Day, updates would be provided on research activity and how it is being embedded in College activity.

Student activity supporting the foodbank in Kirkcaldy was outlined, and it was noted that there were pockets of activity that needed to be captured and reported on within the College to encourage further engagement and share good practice. A more co-ordinated approach would be beneficial and internal discussions were taking place regarding this. Using CDN resource to publish research activity was a potential way forward.

## **5 Fife College Students' Association (FCSA) Update**

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

- Class representatives
- Student engagement tracker
- Student executive
- FCSA open badges
- Awards and sharing best practice

There was a discussion about how to attract class representatives by explaining the role and things that had been influenced in changed in previous years. A query was also raised about gender balance of representatives and it was suggested that it may be useful to look at statistics in this regard.

Committee members thanked the FCSA for continued good work and for the valuable support being provided to learners.

## **6 Complaints 2020-21 and Early Student Feedback 2021-22**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that the number of complaints received had reduced this year, and the number of those that were upheld had also reduced. There was a discussion about feedback or concerns versus complaints and how these were actioned and recorded. It was confirmed that the FCSA helped students find answers to their queries and occasionally would then support them to make a complaint; however the majority of queries were easily resolved with communication with the relevant teams. It was agreed that dealing locally with issues before they became complaints was key.

The SFC had published its annual report and it was noted that Fife College had the highest response rate in the whole of Scotland for learner survey 2. Fife College had a 67% response rate with the sector average being 35%.

## **7 Learner Voice Framework**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Members agreed that the framework was comprehensive and it was noted that feedback started from day 1 for a student.

The importance of Lecturers routinely asking for feedback was raised to increase empowerment, engagement and performance indicators.

It was highlighted that online information is available showing “You said, we did” activity to ensure learners know their feedback has been taken on board and has made a difference.

## **8 Student Performance Data**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. The key observations as detailed on page 25 of the Board pack were outlined. The PI data was also discussed and it was noted that 35% of students had withdrawn with many related to the pandemic situation.

Committee members were reminded of some of the changes that had been made to curriculum design and to monitoring attendance and it was noted that this had been successful previously and would be used to return to an improving PI situation moving forward.

## **9 School / University Partnerships**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was noted that the trends on page 30 and 31 of the Boardpack were generally positive and that the pandemic had had a positive impact on this area of activity. Information was being gathered on whether school/college partnership learners were more likely to enrol on a college course after leaving school. There were discussions taking place with schools to find guaranteed progression routes without interviews and to undertake joint curriculum planning to support this.

It was noted that there was a good number of university articulation routes in place and that these were being monitored to ensure they were in line with labour market trends. The benefits of SWAP programmes were briefly discussed.

## **10 Education Scotland Visit Update**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was noted that Janet Campbell would attend a future Committee or Board meeting to provide feedback on the visit. Committee members wished the College well with the visit and looked forward to receiving the feedback in due course.

## **11 Inclusion Report (Update from June 2021)**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that sector data had been into the report circulated at the last meeting. The table on page 42 of the Boardpack showing improvements and declines was outlined, and attention was drawn to the actions detailed on page 43 of the Boardpack.

There was a discussion about the barriers faced by learners, which was often linked to finances and having to make choices between food, heat and travel. As much support as possible needed to be provided by the College for learners facing this type of hardship. It was confirmed that professional services were involved in student induction so that the range of support available to learners could be outlined and individuals could be signposted to relevant support.

**12 Academic Update: New Campus Project**

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

**13 Key National Reports / Changes to National Policy**

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. Updates would be circulated to members monthly via Teams, as had been agreed at the last meeting.

**14 Review of Meeting**

Committee members agreed that the papers circulated within the Boardpack were useful and contained good quality information. The Chair thanked everyone involved for the time spent preparing these.

**15 Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 16 February 2022 at 3.30pm