

**NOTES OF THE TWELTH MEETING OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING
COMMITTEE
HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2016
THE BOARDROOM, LANGSIDE CAMPUS**

PRESENT:

Gordon McGuinness	Chair
Carolyn Davidson	Independent Board Member
Fiona Godsman	Independent Board Member
Amparo Fortuny	Student President
Stephen Henson	Staff Teaching Board Member

IN ATTENDANCE:

Eleanor Harris	Depute Principal
Brian Hughes	VP, Curriculum & External Relations
Eric Brownlie	AP, Quality & Performance
Cathy McSkimming	AP, Business Information
Gillian Murray	Clerk to the Board (Minute Taker)

16.34 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Susan Walsh.

16.35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

16.36 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2016

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of events.

16.37 MATTERS ARISING

G Murray advised that safeguarding training has been added to the ongoing list of training for board members. E Harris provided an overview of the safeguarding requirement and explained why this was relevant for the College and Board Members.

E Harris provided an update on the board policies advising that Policy 4.2 did not require any further changes. In relation to Policy 4.3, Work Placements, it was explained that significant work was being done in this area and as a result the policy would have to be amended as part of that and E Brownlie would bring this to the next meeting.

EB

16.38 PREDICTED CREDIT LEVELS 2016/17

B Hughes was invited to speak to the paper issued with the Agenda. He reminded Committee members that a similar paper had been presented to the full Board on 26 October. That paper provided members with the projected credits for the AY 2016/17. That paper provided a snapshot of the projection as at 10 October 2016. B Hughes advised that the purpose of this paper was to give a further update.

B Hughes advised that there had been a downward movement in the projections of 10 October as the College removes students who have withdrawn from their courses between their course start date and 1 November. Committee members heard that this was an entirely normal occurrence and were assured that the projections are designed to take account of this.

B Hughes advised that the 2016/17 target remains at 127,091 credits comprising 121,401 of core activity and an additional 5,690 of European Social Fund activity. He explained that the current figures only allow for buffer of circa 3,000 credits. As a result, the decision has been taken to run all of the January start programmes to ensure there is enough of a buffer to meet the target for the year.

In response to a question from the Committee, B Hughes advised that there was no particular curriculum area which was down and no areas of concern. He further explained that the target is an overall target rather than being broken down by faculty.

A Fortuny raised a concern about the new Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requirement for 100% attendance for those students receiving a Bursary. She explained that the implementation of the new system by the College was a concern to many students, particularly those within ESOL and ASL. The concern is that many students have childcare issues and may not be able to meet the attendance requirements. A Fortuny expressed the view that the system implemented by the College does not take account of personal circumstances as the same system applies to all students. A Fortuny questioned whether or not the implementation of this new system, and the impact it was having on ESOL learners, was the reason for the large Variance on Target for ESOL (-21%). A Fortuny highlighted that the Variance on Target for ESOL learners was almost double that of any other faculty and she queried whether or not this was a direct consequence of the College implementation of the new bursary system.

B Hughes explained to the Committee that the College had taken childcare issues and personal circumstances into consideration and so they had implemented a system which allowed students to be absent for a maximum of ten sessions per block (August to December and January to June) without this affecting their bursary. For those ten sessions they would not have to notify the College of their reason for absence. As long as the absence level fell within this parameter this wouldn't affect the bursary. B Hughes explained that this system was working for the majority of the students but the concerns of the mainly ESOL students were being discussed with the Assistant Principal, Curriculum. E Harris explained that a meeting had taken place between the Vice Presidents of the Students' Association and D Marshall (VP Curriculum) and that D Marshall had followed this up today. E Harris advised that she would discuss the latest response with A Fortuny after the meeting.

In response to A Fortuny's query about the high level of Variance on Target for ESOL learners (21%), B Hughes explained that the credit monitoring report gives a snapshot of where each curriculum area is against its credit target on the day on which the report is created. The Variance on Target figure reflects the whole academic year and, since the pattern of enrolment in ESOL is not the same as in other areas, it is not unusual to have a variance of this size (-21%) in the first few months of the academic year as it includes courses that haven't started. The column that shows the "Variance on Started Target", i.e. Courses that are up and running in fact shows ESOL as being +9% i.e. ahead of target at that point.

The committee discussed the concerns raised by A Fortuny about the implementation of the new bursary issue and explored the requirements, noting that self-certification was not required. The Committee acknowledged that the College did not have to offer this leeway in terms of attendance but that the College would continue dialogue with the students about how this leeway is implemented. The committee noted that communication was important.

G McGuinness acknowledged that this was a requirement of the SFC and that it should be implemented and monitored and if need be it should be discussed with the SFC. A Fortuny reiterated that the students are concerned by the system set up by the college, not the decision made by the SFC.

B Hughes advised that a further update on the credit levels would be given to the Board at its next meeting.

B Hughes was invited to speak to the paper issued with the Agenda. B Hughes advised members that the previous committee had sight of the draft version of the 2016/17 Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) at the meeting of 18 May 2016. The purpose of this paper was to provide current committee members with the final version of the ROA which was finalised on 17th October 2016, noting that it still remains to be signed later this month.

Members had received a copy of the ROA with the papers. B Hughes took them through the document explaining the structure.

The ROA continues to describe actions and associated activities under 4 Priority Outcomes and associated impacts;

1. Right learning in the right place
2. Widening access
3. High quality and efficient learning
4. Developing the workforce

Each section of the document sets out targets to be achieved by the region as a whole and expected contribution towards each target by the assigned colleges.

The recent self-evaluation report of the 2015/16 ROA presented to the Board on 26 October 2016 identified that some of the targets outlined across the 3 years of the outcome agreement were at risk and additional actions would be required during 2016/17 in order to address that position. The Learning and Teaching group of the Glasgow Colleges Group are discussing how this may be achieved.

B Hughes informed the Committee that he had queried whether or not the Board should be approving the final version of the ROA or whether it was sufficient that they saw and discussed the most up to date version. The guidance from the SFC was that the ROA is between the SFC and the Region and that we are only signing up to our contribution therefore it is sufficient that Board agrees the content but not the precise wording.

The Committee discussed the ROA with questions being asked about the process. In response to a question B Hughes confirmed that the ROA is for 3 years. Creation of the next ROA covering the period 2017/18 to 2019/20 is already underway.

16.40 **STUDENT MEMBER LEARNING AND TEACHING UPDATE**

A Fortuny was invited to give an update on the work of the Glasgow Clyde College Students' Association (GCCSA).

A Fortuny advised that the Executive Elections have taken place with 8 executive officers having been appointed. Class

Representative meetings have taken place with an excellent turnout. The Students' Association would like to improve communication and will try to do so by increased use of social media, production of a new GCCSA Handbook, Class Representative Guides, new flyers and pledge badge resources.

A Fortuny outlined some of the Clubs and Societies being run by the Students' Association and highlighted some of the forthcoming projects including the Student Parents Project Crèche, Yoga and Mindfulness classes and Clyde Connecting with Cultural Hubs.

B Hughes advised that the College were aware of the proposed Student Parents Crèche and that they were aware of the potential difficulties in this highly regulated area.

F Godsman queried if the Class Representatives have continued to engage or if there had been a significant dropout in volunteers since the start of the term. A Fortuny advised that the Class Representatives have continued to engage. A Fortuny then explained that the biggest difficulty is in relation to students dropping out if their Bursary is taken off them due to poor attendance (as discussed at 16.38). A Fortuny reiterated her concerns regarding the system being implemented by the College in relation to attendance.

G McGuinness thanked A Fortuny for her detailed paper which set out the positive work of the Glasgow Clyde College Student Association.

16.41 **COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

C McSkimming was invited to speak to the paper issued with the Agenda. Committee Members had received a copy of the Complaints Annual Report 2015/16 with the papers.

The paper outlined the background to the Report, being the introduction of The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act and the resultant extended duties on the College, including recording all complaints and a requirement to publish regular statistics and produce an annual report.

All complaints are recorded and reviewed by complaints handlers who then assign them to relevant staff and monitor and support the process of investigation and response. Staff are asked for lessons learned and complainants receive a follow up survey asking about their level of satisfaction with the process.

The overall conclusions in the report were outlined to committee members as follows:-

- The college employs a robust system to record and monitor complaints which meets legislative and SPSO requirements.
- Complaints are assigned appropriately by Complaints Handlers (Quality Co-ordinators) and written responses are monitored prior to issue.
- Support and advice for those responding to complaints is available through the Quality team and staff development sessions.
- Efforts are made to learn lessons from complaints both at local and college level and there is evidence of changes in processes arising from complaints
- Internal audit is used to identify areas for improvement and results and reports are published on the college website.

Areas for Improvement include:

- Improvement in meeting the recommended time frames for complaints responses
- Further staff development to improve the standard of responses, to ensure that they address all of the issues raised.
- Further analysis is required to identify lessons learned at organisational level
- Improve dissemination of good practice in complaints handling.

The committee discussed the report noting that the report gave a clear overview. S Henson asked for more details regarding the complaint in relation to absence of teaching staff. E Harris advised that the complaint was person specific and so further details could not be given. In summary, the complaint resulted from a failure to put long term cover in place. Each of the students affected had a personal plan put in place. Staff had been redeployed to cover absence. The plan had worked and there was no longer an issue. G McGuinness was satisfied that no further details were necessary as the issue had been resolved and lessons learned.

16.42 **EXTERNAL AWARDING BODY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

C McSkimming was invited to provide a summary of the outcomes of external verification activity carried out in Glasgow Clyde College during the 2015-2016 session

The paper with the agenda explained that the college carries out a process of Internal Verification activity throughout the year to ensure the maintenance of standards, to drive improvement and to sample assessment decisions. In addition, the College is subject to external verification visits from various awarding bodies

to ensure that we meet their individual requirements and to verify standardisation of national qualifications and standards.

The scale of verification activity by SQA, City and Guilds and VTCT decreased during 2014-2015, with the total number of visits from all awarding bodies falling from 95 in 2014-15 to 84 in 2015-16. Outcomes of external verification show that standards remain high, with the college being considered fully compliant in external verification by all awarding bodies and overall there has been a 30% reduction in the number of reports resulting in action plans / holds / not accepted decisions

E Brownlie advised that there would be a full systems verification visit by the SQA in January. This is the first in a number of years.

16.43 **STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

C McSkimming and E Brownlie were invited to provide a summary of the outcomes of the student satisfaction surveys carried out in Glasgow Clyde College during the 2015-2016 session.

E Brownlie explained that student feedback is a key component of the college quality framework and annual surveys which are made available to all students in October and April/May are part of a suite of measures which include focus groups, local level questionnaires, audit, curriculum meetings and Student Association activities which contribute to providing evidence and information which is used to enhance learner engagement and improve quality. Results are collated and fed back to teaching and support areas at class and unit level and used to inform self - evaluation and identify areas for improvement.

Committee Members had received a copy of the Report with the Agenda. The Results identify

- Overall student satisfaction levels remain very high
- The majority of survey results have improved or remained almost static over a 2 year period
- Survey responses for the April May survey have increased by over 50%, although further improvement is still required
- Lower levels of satisfaction in a small number of areas, e.g. wireless network access are a high priority for the college and further actions are planned
- Comments and individual responses are used to inform improvement and there is evidence of this through self – evaluation in both teaching and support areas.

E Brownlie explained that the SFC are now more involved in the annual survey in April/May and that they have 9 standard questions which are asked by all Colleges. This will allow a move towards benchmarking. He advised that the teaching teams have the data from the survey (including detailed comments relating to their area) and that the staff include this in their self-evaluation.

C McSkimming thanked A Fortuny and the GCCSA for their help and support in achieving student engagement with the survey.

16.44 **EDUCATION SCOTLAND FRAMEWORK UPDATE**

E Brownlie was invited to provide committee members with an update on planned changes to the Education Scotland Framework for Quality.

E Brownlie explained that new quality arrangements for the college sector are being introduced and 2016-2017 is seen as a year of development to develop the new processes and to allow colleges and Education Scotland HMIs to support change through training and awareness raising. The revised framework places greater emphasis on themes and involves self-assessment and grading although it is not yet clear what these might mean in terms of evidence. It is expected that further information due in December 2016 will help clarify this. B Hughes and E Brownlie have had sight of the latest version of the draft framework and they explained that there is some cross-reference with the student framework. An early draft of the framework had been included with the papers for Committee members to consider.

E Brownlie took committee members to the draft framework and outlined the four overarching principles. He explained that Colleges will be required to self-assess and grade the principles on a six point scale on an annual basis. He advised that there will be no more Annual Engagement Visits and that the next year will focus on development. He suggested that the Committee might want to meet with Gill Ritchie, HMI as she will offer support and challenge. The College is required to produce its first evaluative report and enhancement plan in October 2017. Gradings will have to be created and endorsed by Education Scotland but will not be published in this first year.

The Committee discussed the new framework and the differences from the old. C Davidson viewed the new framework as very subjective and noted that it may be difficult to develop baseline evidence. E Harris advised that there would be grading illustrations to support the process.

In response to a question from A Fortuny, E Brownlie advised that the evidence from class representative meetings would be fed in

to support the grading as would the opinions of staff across the College.

16.45 EQUALITY IMPACT OF DECISIONS MADE

N/a

16.46 REVIEW OF PAPERS (INCLUDING DISCLOSABLE STATUS)

G McGuinness thanked those who had submitted papers, acknowledging the clarity within.

It was agreed that all papers should be disclosable.

16.47 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

G McGuinness made the Committee aware of three current consultations which were of relevance:

- A STEM Education and Training Strategy for Scotland
- A Blueprint for 2020: Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland Consultation
- Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve excellence and equity in education: A Governance Review

G McGuinness advised that he would send E Harris a link to the third Consultation. GMcG

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place at 4.30pm on Wednesday 15 February 2017, The Boardroom, Langside Campus