

**West College Scotland**  
**Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee**

**Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 25 October 2023, via Teams**

<b>Present:</b> G Hunt (Chair) [GH] G Rice [GR] F McKerrell [FM] Jillian Couto-Pheonix [JCP] L Connolly, Principal [LC] W Hatton, Ex Officio [WH] E Cselik (SA VP, Rep) [EC] R Binks, Co-optee [RB] M Hamilton, Co-optee [MH]	<b>In Attendance:</b> S Gunn, Vice Principal Educational Leadership [SG] C MacNab, Assistant Principal [CM] S Rae, Assistant Principal [SR] N Taylor, Director of Communications, Engagement and Student Experience [NT] S McDonald, Governance Manager [SM] (Minutes)
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**LM537 Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from K Perle. E Cselik, Student Association VP was attending to represent the Students Association.

**LM538 Declarations of Interest**

The standing declarations of interests of members, as available on the [Register of Interests](#) on the College website, were noted as current. There were no specific interests declared with regard to the items on the agenda for the meeting.

**LM539 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 29 May 2023 were approved as an accurate record of discussions.

**LM540 Actions from the Meeting and Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the updated actions since the last meeting.

There were no matters arising not otherwise covered on the agenda.

**LM541 Student Association**  
***General Update***

Ed Cselik, representing the Students Association at the meeting, highlighted the following points from the update:

- The successful ***Freshers Week*** recently undertaken across all campuses. He noted that planning was already underway for future events taking into consideration suggested changes following positive feedback from the student population.

- The new **Student Association Website** - <https://www.westsa.co.uk/>. It was noted that students link to this through the My West App. Feedback on the new site would be collated to ensure it meets the needs of the students.
- The **draft revised Constitution and Partnership Agreement** previously distributed, had been submitted to NUS and their endorsement was awaited.
- With one member of the SA elected Team being off ill, the remaining officers were covering the additional hours.
- Collaborative meetings taking place with CQs and Lecturers to increase engagement and assist in the election of Class Representatives, who would become the best way in getting feedback to and from the full student population.
- 'Train the Trainer' training taking place for the Student Association and staff members to enable training of class representatives.
- Teams channel set up for all students as an additional source of communication.

The Committee thanked EC for the comprehensive overview and noted the following:

- The energy of the officers and the exciting ideas being promoted by the new SA Team.
- The amount of work undertaken and the reflective approaches to continue learning and improving.
- The increase in communication channels, including Whatsapp groups; Teams channel; podcast; new website; face-to-face meetings; posters advertising times when Team would be available on campus, etc.
- It was suggested that the Principal, Chair of the Board and the Chair of the LTQC be invited to join podcast sessions. **Action: EC / KP**
- CMacN advised that they were reviewing recruitment for the Student Experience Assistant role, which would provide support to the SA.
- Feedback would be sought through Class Representatives, using 'what works well / even better if' to help increase roles and responsibilities of the Student Association.

The Committee noted the comprehensive update provided and passed their best wishes to the Team member currently off.

The Committee, having reviewed the draft Constitution and Partnership Agreement, agreed to recommend the documents to the Board for final approval, following endorsement from NUS. **Action: SM/KP**

**LM542 Performance 2022/2023:  
Regional Outcome Agreement Self Evaluation & Quality Performance Reports**


CMacN spoke to the papers previously issued and highlighted the following from each:

*Regional Outcome Agreement Self Evaluation*

- The Regional Outcome Agreement Annual Self Evaluation Report summarised work undertaken throughout 2022/2023, as we emerged from Covid-19 period.

- Progress on actions from previous years has been positive in some areas including embedding the Curriculum Strategy actions and use of new systems such as My Conversations and Evolve. This helps to improve staff engagement and re-invigorate approaches to CPD Review and cross campus dialogue through Portfolio Reviews.
- The new centralised recruitment and admissions team and the changes to processes which will be fully evaluated this session.
- Education Scotland's Annual Engagement Visit highlighted areas of positive practice from across the college. The report had been previously shared with the Board.
- Focus of the Educational Leadership Team is in ensuring that curriculum areas remain responsive to changing national and local priorities, including the Tertiary Quality Framework (TQF).
- The new energised Student Association Team now in place.
- Student Outcomes showing improvements in early withdrawal numbers; further withdrawal figures are still showing impacts of Covid, with some information still to be added for 2022-23 due to ongoing EIS members' Action Short of Strike.
- The sections of the Self Evaluation Report format are specified by SFC and the report requires to be submitted along with the Regional Outcome Agreement at the end of October.
- Target setting for this year was proving difficult due to the lack of student final outcome information available. It was noted that the report is shared in advance of submission with the OA Manager, and that otherwise SFC did not generally provide feedback on the reports submitted and that the SE report was not published.

#### *Quality Performance Report*

- The Quality Report 2022- 23 covers Qualifications Compliance, Student Experience, Performance Data and Professional Standards.
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- Decline in number of students undertaking Nat5 and Higher qualifications in college programmes. These were replaced in many cases with NPAs (National Programme Awards) which are at the same SCQF level. Work continues with partners to ensure parity of esteem with student transitions.
- A summary of the SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey.
- The College Class Representatives are increasingly encouraged and empowered to feedback through the SA on quality of learning and teaching.

The Committee highlighted and discussed the following:

- The impact of not being able to confirm overall success rates due to ASOS (Actions Short of Strike). CM noted that students had been provided with verbal results based on work carried out during the year. It was noted that there had been no

adverse feedback from University Partners on student transitions. Some complaints were noted regarding Apprenticeships programmes due to not having received an official certificate. SG advised that ASOS mandate ended on Friday 13 October and results were now being input to the system. CQLs have been asked to prioritise this task and it was hoped this would be completed by Friday 3 November as the SFC FES (Further Education Statistics) return was due by that date. It was also noted that due to the conditions of the mandate of ASOS, it was not possible for administrators to input student outcome results.

- The need to balance successes and achievements within the current challenging environment. SR noted that SFC had requested practical examples of things that the colleges have not been able to do due to the funding cuts. Narrative to be added to the SE report reflecting on the challenges faced with the level of funding received and the impact this has had on what the college has been able to undertake. **Action: CM**
- A coordinated approach at national level to be considered to ensure a consistent message from the sector.
- Student Outcomes survey – increasing communications to keep people abreast of what is happening both internally and externally.
- The Committee noted it is being asked to sign off on something with no quantitative data. SG advised that following the input of the results data, the current position and what has been reported to SFC would be submitted to the next LTQ meeting. It was confirmed that PIs would likely be available from SFC in January / February 2024. **Action: SG**
- The Professional Standards section was noted as a sector challenge on quality assurance and the evidence required for observations of learning and teaching and performance in FE/HE (difference between lecturers and school-teachers). CM noted the range of measures in place to ensure quality of learning and teaching include observations, Education Scotland Inspections, Associate Assessor Inspections, Peer Reviews, out-with own discipline resulting in recognising issues and sharing discussions and best practice. She noted that part of the review for the SFC TQF collaborative work was ongoing to agree quality indicators. It was noted this practice was now in place for HE institutions, however, not consistent and it was appropriate timing for this to be considered with the TQF work and the move towards GTCS registration for all college lecturers.

With the caveat of the addition of the impact of the funding cuts, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee **approved** the submission of the Self Evaluation Report to SFC. Following a full discussion, the Committee **noted** with interest, the Quality Performance Report.

#### **LM543 Alternative Income Performance & Plans**

SR spoke to the report provided giving an overview of the final alternative income position for 2022/2023, an outline of the targets for 2023/2024 and a general update of alternative income performance and impact.

The following was highlighted:

- [REDACTED]
- The successful delivery of the bespoke, online, NES NHS Diploma in Pharmacy Services which now had students from every Health Board across Scotland.
- The Modern Apprenticeship target was exceeded, supporting c. 1100 apprentices.
- [REDACTED]
- The opportunities and challenges associated with the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) and the College's ability to move quickly in this area once funding is confirmed.
- The continued focus on identifying and accessing strategic funding opportunities.
- Information still awaited on any allocation to Colleges of the Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Funding.
- Ambitious targets set for 2023/2024, taking into consideration any impact from ongoing national industrial action and actions short of strike.
- A recent visit to Northern Ireland showed how the alignment of policy, funding and college ambitions, with investment in infrastructure and leadership from the government showed the economic impact colleges have when funding is available to increase skills.

The Committee noted the following:

- Congratulated the Teams on the scale of achievements met within the current economic and funding climates.
- The need to articulate the impact of the cuts to SG and SFC.
- Continued discussion on FWDF and KE&I funding. Awaiting response on letter sent to Minister on allocation of funding.
- The need for ongoing communications with partners on national industrial action and actions short of strike to minimise any impact.
- Showcase examples of what can be done with funding to support SMEs with FWDF. Use the Fraser of Allander Institute report to promote understanding and advocate to SG.
- Continue discussions with Northern Ireland to identify different ways of funding and supporting innovation to further highlight the role colleges play in the economic impact.
- Work with local and Scottish Chambers and Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) to advocate on behalf of their members.

**Action: LC**

The Committee noted the report and **approved** the income targets.

#### **LM544 Student Recruitment 2023/2024 and Forward Planning**

SG spoke to the paper provided giving the Committee an update on the positive August 2023 recruitment. The following points were noted:

- The significant increase in FE numbers, particularly in subject areas of construction, engineering, travel and tourism and computing (due to the rationalisation and focus on cyber security).
- The reductions were in areas mostly associated with females, being hair and beauty, childhood practice, and health and social care. It was to be checked and reported if this was due to a decrease in female student numbers or if they were moving into other subject areas. **Action: SG**
- Larger classes on campus creating a more vibrant student experience. This was also in response to required efficiencies.
- Discussions were ongoing with the ROA Manager on credit guidance implications for this year and involvement in national work around guidance for future years.

The Committee discussed the following:

- Encouraged with the management of the effectiveness of class sizes, adding value to the overall learning experience whilst helping with required efficiencies.
- A copy of the WCS Perception Survey results to be added to the Committee Team channel. **Action: SM**

The Committee noted the recruitment update provided.

#### **LM545 Final Draft Regional Outcome Agreement 2023/2024**

SG advised that the draft report had been submitted and discussed at the Board meeting held on 9 October 2023. At their request, amendments have been made to strengthen concerns and challenges faced around funding. The need to work with other Colleges to ensure a consistent message to SFC was noted.

SG spoke to the National Measures Table which had also been included for the Committee's review. SG updated on the rationale for the figures suggested within the 2022/2023 data, noting the wish for ambitious targets, whilst still taking into consideration the challenges faced, including the ongoing impact of covid and the current cost of living crisis. Particular challenges were noted within success rates for students from deprived areas and care experienced students.

It was asked if targets and stretch targets could be included due to the unpredictable nature of things out with the College's control. SG suggested additions within the narrative as well as looking at the guidance for future ROA model. She further noted that targets were not externally published and used as an internal measure of performance. No national figures benchmarking for last year were available.

CM suggested a more qualitative approach to be added into narrative for moving up quartiles which could also be used to benchmark across the sector.

The Committee **approved** the final ROA and **agreed** the Measurement table targets for 2023-24 and for both to be submitted to SFC.

#### **LM546 Remit, Membership & Dates of Meeting**

GH advised of the updated remit of the Committee, with the main changes being an enhancement to the overview of risk.

Amendments to the Membership were noted, with L Connolly to be noted as a Member and W Hatton as Ex Officio Member. **Action: SM**

The Committee **approved** the changes to the remit which would now be submitted to the Board for final approval. **Action: SM**

**LM547 ELT Update**

The Committee **noted** the update report provided for information.

**LM548 Education Scotland Report**

Having previously been discussed at the Board of Management meeting held on 9 October 2023, the Committee **noted** the report distributed for information.

**LM549 British Council Compliance Report**

With no queries or comments raised, the Committee **noted** the report distributed for information.

**LM550 Quality Standards Committee  
Minute of Meeting held on 5 October 2023  
SMT notification of SQA Systems Audit 2023**

CM noted that she would report back to the committee on the risks noted for the planned audit. **Action: CM**

The Committee **noted** the Minute and report on the SQA systems audit, provided for information.

**LM551 Schedule of Business**

The Committee **noted** the 2023-24 Schedule of Business that would be submitted to each meeting.

**LM552 Any Other Business**

Having reached the maximum time limit for membership for co-opted members, the Committee noted this was the last meeting that Mark Hamilton would attend. The Chair thanked Mark for his attendance and input to the work of the Committee over the last four years.

**LM553 Date of Next Meeting**  
- **Wednesday 29 November 2023, 4pm via Teams**