# University of the Highlands and Islands
## Inverness College

**Board of Management**

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus on Wednesday 8 March 2016**

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| **PRESENT:** | Louise James, Mick Longton, Helen Miller, Lizzie Munro, Diane Rawlinson, Steve Walsh, John Wilson |
| **CHAIR:** | Louise James |
| **APOLOGIES:** | Ryan MacIntyre, Dominic Thierry |
| **ATTENDING:** | Head of Curriculum |
| | Head of Student Services |
| | College Secretary |

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2015**

   The Minutes were **AGREED** as a correct record, were **APPROVED** and signed.

2. **CORE SKILLS POLICY**

   A covering report by the Quality Officer assured the committee that the revised Core Skills Policy had been through due College Process. Key skills, which included literacy, numeracy and ICT, were now a key element in all FE courses.

   The Committee **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** the revised Core Skills Policy to the Board of Management for approval.

3. **STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

   A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of student recruitment activity for 2015-16, and a summary of student recruitment so far for the 2016-17 session.

   The FE recruitment, in terms of funded activity (credits), was currently 677 above the total credit target of 29,217.  For HE recruitment, the College was currently projecting a total of 1,478.2 FTE against a target of 1,450.6 FTE:  a projected variance of +27.6 FTE.

   The FE recruitment rate was running slightly below the level at the same time last year but online enrolment had only opened mid-January. Further checks had been put in place to ensure that course information was accurate before enrolment opened. HE recruitment was running at about the same level as last year.

   The Committee **NOTED** the current position.

4. **STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT – ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

   A joint report by the Head of Student Services and Student President provided an update on the progress made in the Student Partnership Agreement across the 4 aspects of: -

- Student Representation
- Student Community
- The College Welcome
- Learning and Teaching

The Committee considered the wide range of activities and **NOTED** the very good progress which was being made across the 4 key areas.

5.  **UPDATE ON KEY OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR**
    A report by the Depute Principal provided an update on the key objectives relating to learning and teaching for academic year 2015-16. The objectives ensured that the issues, commensurate with the Committee's remit, which would drive the enhancement of learning and teaching were progressed and monitored throughout the year.

    The Committee **NOTED** the progress being made against the key objectives.

6.  **RESEARCH REPORT**
    A report by the Head of Research and Post Graduate Development presented a summary of key developments in research activity over the last 6 months and proposed a summary reporting format against performance indicators for future reports. The key research activity was in the following areas:-
    - SEAM Research
    - Rivers and Lochs Institute
    - Centre for Remote and Rural Studies
    - Forestry
    - Literature
    - Psychology

    It was proposed that in future, reports would include a brief summary of activity for each of the research centres and developing areas of research activity as well as a table showing research activity against performance indicators. The table would reflect end of year and mid-year progress against these indicators.

    The Committee **NOTED** the considerable progress which was being made in all the key areas of research and looked forward to receiving the performance information in the next report.

7.  **RISK REGISTER ANNUAL REVIEW (LEARNING AND TEACHING)**
    A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of the annual review of risks associated with learning and teaching, namely
    - Failure to meet activity targets
    - College fails to maintain improvement in performance against national targets and outcomes

    It was acknowledged that the risk of failure to meet activity targets was now much reduced but the College was still conveying a sense of caution in recording it as an amber risk. The Principal advised that the SMT had agreed that it would be prudent to wait until the College was above sector levels before removing the second risk on performance from the corporate risk register.

    The Committee **WELCOMED** the position.

8. **CREDIT SYSTEM OF FUNDING**
A report by the Depute Principal provided an overview of the shift from weighted student unit of measurement (WSUM) as the funding methodology for the college sector (or for FE funding for colleges that were partners of the UHI) to the credit system of funding.

The previous Cabinet Secretary for Education had requested the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to review the funding methodology for colleges to ensure it was simplified and made more transparent. As a result, the credit system of funding was implemented for academic year 2015-16. The intention was to ensure a more direct relationship between the credit target for a college, or college region, and the actual hours of learning.

The Committee **NOTED** the new credit system of funding.

9. **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES**
A report by the Depute Principal provided information on the identified quality improvement priorities related to learning and teaching for 2015-16. The priorities were identified through the College's self-evaluation processes. Actions to meet the identified objectives were underway and progress was now monitored via the college's committee structure.

This approach had been adopted in 2014-15 and was effective in supporting improvements in high-level, cross-college issues. The approach had been refined to include the monitoring of progress through the College committee structure, including SMT and AMG.

The Committee **NOTED** the progress in completing the actions against each of the identified quality improvement priority areas.

10. **2014-15 COLLEGE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**
A report by the Depute Principal informed the committee of the publication by SFC of the 2014-15 college performance indicators. SFC published college performance indicators (PI) each January, for the previous academic year, and required each college to publish their own PIs in turn on their own website.

The SFC publication, *College Performance Indicators 2014-15,* provided detail on the PIs for colleges and included PIs for FE and HE. SFC only measured Inverness College UHI against the college sector PIs for FE, as the HE student places were funded through university funding streams.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

11. **CURRICULUM PLAN FOR 2016/17**
A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of the planned student activity targets for 2016-17. SFC had still to confirm the regional credit targets for 2016-17 but the college had planned on the basis of the credit target remaining the same as for 2015-16: 28,569 credits.

For FE there were significant shifts in patterns of enrolment compared to 2015-16 in the following areas:-

- **Construction craft:** less full-time provision due to persistent issues of withdrawal to take up employment, and more conservative part-time enrolment targets for Modern Apprenticeships.
- **Engineering Craft:** less full-time provision as we have not included the collaborative delivery with Nigg Skills Academy, at least until we know our credit target from SFC and have assurances on ESIF.
- **Forestry, Science, Maths and Aquaculture:** increase in enrolments in science Highers and forestry programmes.
- **Care Practice:** increase in full-time provision with 3 new courses introduced.
- **Hairdressing, Beauty and Sport:** Increase in full-time and part-time enrolments.

The College was targeting an increase in HE FTE students for the third consecutive year. As most HE programmes ran over 2, 3 or 4 years, increasing enrolment of first-year students had a cumulative effect over time.

Although the enrolment by headcount for 2016-17 (2002) was projected to be less than in 2015-16 (2137), there was a continuing shift from part-time to full-time enrolments, increasing the FTE year-on-year.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

12. **STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT**
A report by the Student President provided information on the wide range of activities of ICSA in the second quarter of 2015-16.

The Committee **NOTED** the variety and volume of activities undertaken by the Students' Association.

13. **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEES**
The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of the Meetings of the following Management Committees
   a) Academic Management Group – 26 November 2015
   b) Academic Management Group – 21 January 2016
   c) Academic Standards and Quality Committee – 10 December 2015
   d) Equality and Diversity Committee –3 December 2015
   e) ICT Steering Group - 2 November 2015
   f) Research Committee 29 September 2015

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Tuesday 31 May 2016 at 8.30 a.m.

**Signed by the Chair:** _C Louise James_

**Date:** _31 May 2016_