

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus on Tuesday 4 December 2018**

**PRESENT:** Andrew Bowie, Sarah Burton, Robyn Kennedy, Helen Miller, Gavin Ross, Tom Speirs

**CHAIR:** Sarah Burton

**APOLOGIES:** Shawna McKinnon, Fiona Neilson, Chris O'Neil

**ATTENDING:** Depute Principal  
Head of Curriculum  
Head of Student Services  
Head of Research Development  
Secretary to the Board of Management

**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 25 September 2018 were **AGREED** as a correct record, were **APPROVED** and signed.

**2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee considered each of the actions and **AGREED** as they had all been completed, they could be removed from the list.

**3. POLICIES****a. Supporting Student Carers**

The purpose of the policy was to ensure that student carers had access to accessible and inclusive support to help them to achieve their full potential. The policy was discussed at Scrutiny Panel (5 June 2018) and then distributed for staff consultation (19 June – 10 July 2018). The policy was then presented to SMT (19 September 2018) and approved for progression to Committee.

The Committee **REQUESTED** that the monitoring of this policy be included within future reports to Committee on the access and inclusion strategy.

The Head of Student Support confirmed that she would seek clarification on whether reference to the Data Protection Act 1998 should be included within the legislative framework.

The Committee **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** the supporting student carers policy to the Board of Management for approval.

**b. Admissions**

The admissions policy was part of a suite of new policies/procedures to be drafted as part of the new UHI common policy environment. This would replace the current Inverness College admissions policy and would come into effect from January 2019 for admissions in the 2019-20 academic year.

The Committee questioned the clarity of wording in section 3.2.1. This would be fed back to the VPFE.

The Committee **AGREED** to **RECOMMENDED** the admissions policy to the Board of Management for approval

**c. Tertiary Learner Support**

The tertiary learner support policy was part of a suite of new policy/procedures to be drafted as part of the new UHI common policy environment.

The Head of Student Services confirmed that staff training on this policy and on the admissions policy would be provided to staff in January and February 2019.

To provide clarification, an amendment was suggested to the wording in paragraph 7.2. This would be fed back to the VPFE

The Committee **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** the tertiary learner support policy to the Board of Management for approval

**4. SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT**

A report by the Head of Student Services set out the number and nature of safeguarding disclosures received and the ongoing partnership working as a member of the Multi Agency Public Protection Group (MAPPA). The number of disclosures was increasing year on year with associated resource implications, both at the disclosure stage and with ongoing assessment, monitoring and feedback.

The Committee **NOTED** the position and **REQUESTED** that the resource implications of the increasing number of disclosures be included in next year's annual report.

**5. GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)**

A report by the Head of Student Services advised that the College's GAP focused on FE provision in a number of curriculum areas as directed by the Scottish Funding Council but enrolment data showed that the College had not made any significant or sustained inroads to re-dressing the severe imbalance.

A whole college approach, to include marketing, employer engagement, advice and guidance to future students and messages to staff and current students was required.

The Head of Student Services referred to the positive steps with the Senior Phase Schools programmes and to the work to be done with employers around apprenticeships. The College also planned to offer two courses – Men into Childcare and Women in Engineering as single gender courses.

The Committee **WELCOMED** the new approach.

**6. STRATEGIES – REVIEW OF PROGRESS**

**a) Research and Innovation**

A report by the Head of Research Development reviewed progress on the research and innovation strategy and reported on mid-year occupational



activity. Overall, the research and innovation strategy was delivering against the strategic objectives. Highlights were:

- Growing numbers of staff with, or working towards, research degrees
- Continued growth in numbers of research students, although there were concerns with regard to future opportunities for funding, particularly as ESIF funding would cease.
- Steady progress on work towards REF and continued flow of publications.

The Head of Research Development made particular reference to the impending retiral of the Director of the Rivers and Lochs Institute and of the Centre for Remote and Rural Studies and to the development work associated with MRes.

The Committee discussed the opportunities as well as the risks of two senior staff member retirals and were pleased to note that both individuals had indicated they would be willing to continue with the college in a fractional position to assist with the REF submission in 2020.

The Head of Research Development indicated that she was working on the taught component for an MRes in Forestry. The timescale for introduction would depend on the amount of taught component requiring development.

The Committee **WELCOMED** the comprehensive report and **NOTED** the impending retiral of the two Directors and the resource required by the Head of Research Development to develop the taught component of the MRes in Forestry and other MRes courses.

#### **b) Access and Inclusion (including 2018/19 target setting)**

A report by the Head of Student Services provided information on the access and inclusion strategy and outlined the holistic support which the College provided to students and in particular for the priority groups: SIMD 10, Care experienced, Disability, Carers and Price Group 5 (Supported Education students)

Progress made against the access and inclusion targets in session 2017-18 were included in the report, which also set out the targets for session 2018-19. An ambitious but measured approach had been taken to target setting for 2018-19 to balance increasing expectations against continued financial restraints.

The Committee **AGREED** the targets for 2018-19 as set out in the report.

### **7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SURVEY**

A report by the Depute Principal referred to the pilot Stakeholder Engagement Survey, which was conducted in June 2018. The revised Education Scotland quality framework, "How Good is Our College?" had placed an emphasis on colleges evaluating the impact of their partnership working with key stakeholders.

The response to the survey was very low (6%) and a third of the respondents did not wish to be part of any further similar survey. The findings collated indicated a fairly high level of satisfaction overall. However, due to difficulties with the methodology and the low interest from respondents, this type of survey



would not be repeated. Other existing and emerging practices, including an employer engagement framework developed by the Business Team, would be utilised to collect systematically the views of stakeholders.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

## **8. CURRICULUM REVIEW – PROGRESS REPORT**

A report by the Head of Curriculum provided details about the process and the progress of the curriculum review currently being undertaken. The curriculum was being reviewed using a holistic approach, considering the connections between subjects, teaching methods, engagement with stakeholders and all aspects of learning that created a learner's educational experience. At each stage of the process, information was being considered that gave an understanding to regional, national and international factors that affected both the FE and HE sectors.

The Chair thanked the Head of Curriculum for a very useful report, which provided clarification on the structure of the review.

It was **AGREED** that

1. the rationale for changes proposed for 2019-20 be reported to the next meeting in March 2019
2. it was important that the review consider each of the key strategic risks and that stress testing and scenario planning was undertaken as part of the review process.

*Gavin Ross left the meeting during consideration of the following item.*

## **9. STUDENT EXPERIENCE 2017-18 & EARLY 2018-19**

A report by the Quality Manager referred to the two elements, which made up the student experience report, namely SSES 2017/18 headline report and early student experience survey report 2018-19.

Overall, increased satisfaction levels had been recorded across most of the categories within the two reports.

The Committee **NOTED** the reports.

## **10. STUDENT RECRUITMENT 2018/19 – UPDATE**

A report by the Depute Principal provided an update on student recruitment in 2018-19. The current student activity indicated that:

- FE recruitment should achieve the 2018-19 credit target of 29,211. The total current FE enrolments for 2018-19 was 3,217 generating 25,016 credits
- HE recruitment (FTE) was likely to be slightly below the funded undergraduate target of 1,618 FTE. As at 26th November the FTE, counting by module attachment was 1,568 FTE.

A number of initiatives were underway with e.g. Inverness Caledonian Thistle and Ross County youth teams and with Scottish Rugby and with secondary schools to increase the number of FE credits.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

**11. EARLY STUDENT RETENTION/WITHDRAWAL 2018-19**

A report by the Depute Principal provided an analysis of the Early Withdrawal (EW) rates for students on full-time programmes in 2018-19.

Improving early retention/reducing early withdrawal on full-time FE programmes was the focus of the college's participation in the Scottish Government's College Improvement Project: a target of 5% EW by 1 November 2019 had been set.

The Committee **NOTED** the generally improved position and looked forward to receiving a report on the impact of the College improvement project to the next meeting in March 2019

**12. CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN - ANNUAL REPORT**

A report by the Head of Student Services reminded the Committee that the College had published its first Corporate Parenting report in April 2018 and this had summarised the progress made since the publication of the Corporate Parenting Plan in October 2016. The draft report submitted for consideration provided a summary of progress; the impact of actions taken; and a flavour of the intended future priorities.

The Committee **NOTED** the positive list of future priorities within the draft report, and that it would be updated before submission to the Scottish Government in March 2019.

**13. STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

A joint Report by the Head of Student Services and the HISA Inverness President provided an update on developments around student partnership, including student representatives, HISA Inverness Volunteer Executive, SRC and Course Committee meetings.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

**14. HISA INVERNESS - REPORT**

A joint Report by the Student Association Coordinator and the HISA Inverness President provided an update on the activities of HISA Inverness, which included information on class representatives, events, volunteer elections, student partnership, staffing and upcoming events.

In response to a question raised at the last meeting, it had been ascertained that as HISA was a regional organisation, liability for health and safety would lie with the University Court and the Partnership Council. HISA had insurance policies in place for all constituted clubs and societies. For any event, which would be held on Inverness Campus, a risk assessment had to be completed before approval was granted. However, should a group be operating with the support of Inverness College UHI staff in their working capacity, this was for the college to investigate their own liability.

The Committee **WELCOMED** the report, especially the detailed information on the question of liability.



**15. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

A report by the Depute Principal provided a summary of quality enhancement activity related to learning and teaching and student success against actions identified in the *Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan* (EREP) for 2018-19. Each Curriculum team had identified areas for development, which they were addressing through actions and 'tests for change', an approach being implemented as part of the college's involvement in the College Improvement Project (CIP).

The Committee **NOTED** the progress being made.

**16. QUALITY CONVERSATION**

It was **AGREED** that consideration of this report be deferred to the next meeting.

**17. AOCB**

**CHAIRS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEES OF COLLEGES IN SCOTLAND FORUM – 13 NOVEMBER**

The Chair reported that the meeting had been called test the interest among the Chairs of Learning and Teaching Committees at Scottish Colleges for a forum in which to exchange views on topics of interest to them. The aim was that through the forum the spread of best practise would be encouraged. The level of interest had been scoped and future meetings would go forward on this basis.

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 5 March 2019 at 8.30 a.m.

Signed by the Chair:

Sarah Burton

Date:

5 March 2019