

**DRAFT MINUTES of the
MEETING of the LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE held via
Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 06 December 2022**

PRESENT: Dee Bird, Russell Edwards, Chris O’Neil, Stephen Sheridan,
Arvinder Kainth, William Campbell, James Millar and Kelly
MacKenzie

CHAIR: Dee Bird

APOLOGIES: Matthew Millward

ATTENDING: Vice Principal – Academic and Research
Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality
Tertiary Education Leaders
Information Systems Manager
Access and Progression Manager
Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager
Governance Officer

The Governance Officer confirmed that this meeting was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests, statements of connections or transparency statements noted.

Committee Creative Space

A creative space session took place which provided the Committee with an opportunity to discuss the work which the Tertiary Education Leaders have undertaken in respect of Sector Development Plans (Note of Session: CSN-LTR-122022).

The Tertiary Education Leaders left the meeting.

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

a.) Note of the Confidential Closed Session (CSN-LTR-092022) held on 27 September 2022

The Note of the Confidential Closed Session (CSN-LTR-092022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 27 September 2022 was **AGREED** as a correct record.

b.) Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 September 2022

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 27 September 2022 were **AGREED** and **APPROVED** for signature by the Chair.

c.) Note of the Confidential Session (CN01-LTR-092022) held on 27 September 2022

The Note of the Confidential Session (CN01-LTR-062022) of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee held on 27 September 2022 was **AGREED** as a correct record.

The Vice Principal – Academic and Research left the meeting.

2. SCHOOLS/SENIOR PHASE CURRICULUM

The Access and Progression Manager provided the Committee with a high-level summary of her report.

The Committee noted that:

- The first senior phase showcase event has taken place.
- Vocational courses have increased and we are continuing to look at ways to further expand these.
- The potential for 100 places to be offered next year.

- Increased pupil satisfaction and engagement.
- Partnership Working with the Highland Council in respect of their new initiative 'My Future, My Success' which is based on the same ideology as our LEEP project. The Committee noted that we had set a target of 15 pupils but have recruited 30 pupils to this initiative.
- Applications for the next senior phase will open in January 2023.
- Discussions are being undertaken with the Council around the possibility of the cap on numbers being removed. Committee members highlighted possible additional funding opportunities within the Council.
- The potential for more partnership working with the Council and the possibility of designing an offer akin to a sixth form college.

The Committee welcomed the rate of pupil satisfaction and noted the limitations around the current senior phase offerings and highlighted the importance of this area in respect of the growing local population.

The Committee thanked the Access and Progression Manager for this update.

3. WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE

The Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager provided the Committee with a high-level summary of her report.

The Committee noted that:

- We continue to see an upward trend of mental health disclosures especially in respect of high-level crisis.
- The current staffing levels within the team and funding.
- That the team are focusing on One at a Time therapy appointments which has proved successful in handling the short-term crisis which students are presenting with.
- That we have been able to secure volunteer counsellors this year who are providing counselling to those experiencing low level crisis.
- Upskilling of staff to enable them to identify and manage student mental health. This includes trauma informed practice.
- Behavioural issues which are being seen throughout the student population.

- Work which is being undertaken to define the parameters around partnership working and referrals.

The Committee discussed:

- The upward trends in mental health presentation and disclosure and the ratios in respect of those within Higher Education and Further Education.
- The impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the actions which we have implemented in order to assist students.
- How we manage risk, our duty of care and external services provided.
- Safeguarding of students.

The Committee welcomed the work which the Wellbeing and Learning Support Team are undertaking and noted that they are cognisant of the scale of the issue within the College and the impact which this has upon external services.

The Committee thanked the Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager for this update.

The Access and Progression Manager left the meeting.

The Wellbeing and Learning Support Manager left the meeting.

4. STUDENT RETENTION – REVIEW OF EARLY WITHDRAWALS

The Information Systems Manager joined the meeting.

The Information Systems Manager spoke to her report highlighting that:

- Our early withdrawal rates are the lowest that they have been for 5 years. The Committee noted that they are currently sitting at 5.4% and that whilst an additional marginal rise of around 2% is expected before the end of the Academic Year this is still a marked decrease on previous years.
- Which schools have seen increases and decreases in respect of their withdrawal rates.

The Committee thanked the Information Systems Manager for this update.

5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

- Corporate Parenting Plan – The Governance Officer advised the Committee that Corporate Parenting Training for the Board will form part of the Development Plan which is currently being drafted. The Committee noted that the previous LT&R Chair had provided an introduction to the appropriate members of the Council who can provide this training.
- QAA Presentation – The Committee was advised that the Academic Registrar, Faculties and Academic Standards, UHI Executive Office has retired and that we had been unable to engage with her in respect of developing the Tertiary Education Framework. The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality advised that a new role is being developed within Executive Office and the Committee noted that she will follow this up once this position has been filled.
- HISA – The Committee was advised that the CEO of HISA had resigned. It was noted that we will reengage with HISA to present to the Committee once a new CEO has been appointed.

6. POLICY FOR APPROVAL

Safeguarding Policy

The Committee was advised that updates to this partnership wide policy had been made following the Education Scotland review. The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality took the Committee through the changes in respect of the legislation updates and the definitions of what is considered a child.

The Committee noted that changes had been made in respect of HISA and their Safeguarding Policy and highlighted that this has been updated to make clear that anything relating to a safeguarding concern at the Campus must follow this policy and procedure.

Decision: The policy was **RECOMMENDED** for approval by the Board of Management.

Arvinder Kainth left the meeting.

7. EARLY STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY RESULTS

The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality spoke to her report and highlighted the following:

- The increased outturn for participation in the survey.
- Increased student satisfaction rates.
- Satisfaction rates for care experienced students.
- That out of the unsatisfied students around half identified a disability. The Committee noted that the increasing pressure that the Wellbeing and Learning Support Team are experiencing in response to increasing student mental health crisis has led to increased waiting times for learning support. The Committee noted that this area is being reviewed within the team.
- Teams are going through the appropriate free text comments.
- We are looking at future incentives to ensure a high response rate for next year.

The Committee noted the HISA President for Inverness and the Principal had written to the Council in respect of the problems that students were experiencing because of the bus service.

The Committee was advised that the issue of clubs and societies is being looked at by HISA and it is hoped that these will be back up and running at the start of the New Year.

The Committee discussed the measurable aspects of the feedback and how they can be reported as part of our KPI Matrix.

The Committee enquired as to the gender balance of response and noted that this was equal both in terms of response rates and satisfaction rates.

The Committee noted that the data from the survey was being analysed by each school.

8. SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT

The Vice Principal – Student Experience and Quality provided the Committee with a confidential update in respect of her report.

The Committee noted the range of things in place to safeguard the community and welcomed the Emily Test Charter.

The Committee was advised that because of the Short Life Working Group there have been changes made in respect of communication between ourselves, Halls Staff and Executive Office.

The Committee highlighted the lack of social events within the Halls and on Campus and noted that HISA are looking at implementing student led activities over the upcoming months.

9. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The HISA President for Inverness provided the Committee with a verbal update on the work currently being undertaken.

The Committee noted:

- That applications for grants for new clubs will reopen on 16 January 2023.
- The letter which was sent to the Council in respect of the bus service and how this is impacting on student learning.
- Potential for students being able to have physical ID's if required.
- Exploration of additional social spaces for students on campus.
- Work being undertaken to increase the numbers of Student Voice Representatives.
- The possibility of students utilising the chat function of Webex rather than using email.
- Improvements to Brightspace.

10. QUARTER 1 – COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Committee noted the contents of the Quarter 1 – Complaints Report.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2023 AT 4.30 P.M.

Signed by the Chair:



Date:

21 March 2023