

Board of Management

MINUTES of the MEETING of the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT held via Microsoft Teams, on Thursday 10 February 2022

PRESENT:	Robyn Kennedy, Innis Montgomery, Chris O’Neil, Ruth McFadyen, Sally Blyth, Donald MacKenzie, Arvinder Kainth, Mark Sheridan, Russell Edwards, Kelly MacKenzie, Samantha Cribb, Tina Stones, Gillian Galloway, Jane Rhodes, James Millar & Stephen Sheridan
CHAIR:	Mark Sheridan
APOLOGIES:	Bonnie Crawford & Amy Goodbrand
IN ATTENDANCE:	Assistant Principal – Finance and Audit Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations Assistant Principal – Student Experience and Quality Assistant Principal – Academic and Research Board Secretary
OBSERVER:	Rojan Kumar Subramani Dee Bird Michael Beveridge

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Feedback was sought from members with regards to the Board Away Day. Board Members reported that this had been an enjoyable day and allowed members the opportunity to introduce themselves to each other.

The Chair advised Board Members that from March we would be looking to hold Hybrid Committee and Board Meetings.

The Board Secretary advised the Board that Mark Sheridan has been appointed as Chair of the Board of Management by the University Court. This position will be for an initial 4-year term backdated to 01 July 2021. The Chair thanked all for their confidence in him.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were noted.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Confidential Closed Session – Board Creative Space

A confidential closed session took place. This session provided the Board with creative space to discuss the role of Board Members with regards innovation and

new horizons as well as collaboration and partnerships with other organisations (Note of Session: CSN-022022).

1. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

a.) Meeting of the Board of Management held on 14 December 2021

It was highlighted that there was a grammatical error on page 3 of the minutes within the first bullet point of item 04 – Annual Procurement and Value for Money Report.

Decision: Pending amendment of the error as detailed above; the minutes of the Board of Management Meeting held on 14 December 2021 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

b.) Confidential Note of Closed Session (CSN122021) held on 14 December 2021

Decision: The Confidential Note of the Closed Session of the Board of Management Meeting held on 14 December 2021 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

c.) Confidential Note of Discussion (CN-01-122021) held on 14 December 2021

Decision: The Confidential Note of Discussion of the Board of Management Meeting held on 14 December 2021 was **AGREED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

2. OUSTANDING ACTIONS

- **Partnership Agreement** – The Board Secretary highlighted that a copy of the new sample Academic Partnership Agreement (parts 1 and 2) and associated papers had been circulated to members via email. The Board noted that it was the view of the Chair and the Principal that we have agreed to part 1 but that part 2 requires additional thought with regards logistics in relation to finance. The Board noted the progress which has been made.
- **Capital Budgets** – The Board Secretary advised that creative time was now being set aside as part of each Committee and Board Meeting and that this item would form part of the creative discussion time within the March 2022 Board Meeting.
- **Rebranding** – The Board Secretary advised that following the presentation at the Board Away Day, the Marketing and Communications Team had prepared a response to the questions raised during the presentation. This has been circulated to all members. The Principal advised the Board that staff had been consulted on the proposed presentation with staff largely in favour of the change. The Board noted that the student representatives have raised their concerns over certain changes within the rebranding.

Decision: The Board **APPROVED** the proposed rebranding. This item can be removed from the list.

- **Business Solutions Team Presentation** – the Board was advised that this will take place in June 2022.
- **Terms of Reference** – the Board noted that the Chair and Board Secretary will make final updates to the Terms of Reference which will be brought to the March 2022 meeting for final approval.
- **Procurement Report** – The updated procurement report will be taken to the March Chairs Committee and will then come back to the BOM for final approval. The Board noted that the procurement strategy will be taken to the March F&GP Committee.

3. FINANCE POSITION

The Assistant Principal – Finance and Audit provided the Board with a verbal update on our financial position. The Assistant Principal – Finance and Audit advised that he has been able to make a more informed judgement with regards the expected HE and FE credits for this year; highlighting that we are estimating a HE loss of circa £300k where we had budgeted for a £400k loss.

Discussions around the following took place:

- Explanation of the expected clawbacks
- Expected FE and HE credits for the year vs targets. Explanation of the sector setting of targets and the impact of Covid-19 on the sector being able to meet these targets. Sustainability of courses.
- Income drivers.
- Staff Costs including pay increases, supply teaching costs and the national insurance rise for the year 01 April 22 – 31 March 23.
- The Board noted that following efficiencies made during the Financial Recovery Plan (FRP) it is felt that we are as efficient and effective as we can be.
- Student Support Funds which have been used to assist students in digital poverty.
- Flat Funding and its expected impact.
- Explanation of the Arm's Length Foundation (ALF)

The Assistant Principal – Finance and Audit advised the Board that he would continue to monitor the financial position cautiously however he advised that we are in a better position than had been expected.

Action: The Board Secretary to source appropriate financial training for Board Members.

Decision: The Board **AGREED** that a written summary of the financial position would be included within papers for all future meetings to ensure that Members have time to review the information.

Assistant Principal – Academic and Research left the meeting.

4. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal spoke to his report and discussions around the following took place:

- **Student Enrolments.** It was highlighted to the Board the impact of the withdrawal of Mental Health support for students from the Scottish Government. Further discussions on student finances, the prospective impact from flat funding and clawbacks took place. The Board discussed the reasons for decreasing enrolments noting the declining demographic, impact of Brexit, the cyber incident and Covid-19. The Board discussed our current HE and FE curriculums and noted the paradox where we have seen high student satisfaction, as evidenced within the Early Student Satisfaction Survey, but have been impacted by an increase in students withdrawing from their studies.
- **Enhancing Student Experience.** The Board was advised of a new Philanthropic Initiative which will allow the College to provide a free breakfast for students. The Board welcomed this initiative. The Board noted that student clubs and societies were now meeting face to face. HISA advised that they have a number of events planned for February and March 22.
Action: The Board Secretary will share information on the Breakfast Club Initiative with the Board.
- **Sector Wide Issues.** The Board noted the change in attitude from both the Scottish Government and the SFC with regards the prospect of redundancies within the sector.

Kelly MacKenzie left the meeting.

The Assistant Principal – Operations and External Relations provided the Board with a presentation on our current FE Credits. Again, the Board noted the reasons behind the decline in enrolments.

5. STUDENT ACCOMMODATION DISCUSSION - CONFIDENTIAL

A confidential discussion with regards residencies took place (CN-01-022022).

6. GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The Board Secretary spoke to her report and highlighted that there had been several updates since this report was produced.

The Board was advised that we are now able to formally ratify the appointments of James Millar and Stephen Sheridan as Non-Executive Members of the Board of Management.

Decision: The Board **RATIFIED** the appointment of James Millar and Stephen Sheridan as Non-Executive Members of the Board of Management.

Item 01a.

The Board was advised that we are also able to formally ratify the appointment of Jane Rhodes as a Co-opted Member to the HR Committee.

Decision: The Board **RATIFIED** the appointment of Jane Rhodes as Co-opted Member to the HR Committee.

The Board noted that all other appointments will formally take place at the Board of Management meeting being held on 31 March 2022.

The Board discussed the possibility of Hybrid Board and Committee Meetings. It was noted that the Board Secretary was currently consulting with the IT Department over the VC technology available in the Board Room. Board Members provided their agreement to a move to hybrid meetings.

The Board noted that a Teaching Staff Member Representative Election is ongoing and that the timetable for these elections has been shared as part of the paper.

The Board gave their thanks to the outgoing Teaching Staff Member Representative for all their work and commitment over the past 4 years.

7. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 31 March 2022 at 4.30 p.m.

Signed by the Chair:



Date: 31.03.22