

MINUTES of the MEETING of the LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE held in the Boardroom, 1 Inverness Campus on Wednesday 2 December 2015

PRESENT: Robbie Bain, Hector Douglas, Louise James, Helen Miller, Lizzie Munro, Dominic Thierry

CHAIR: Hector Douglas

APOLOGIES: Jenny Loeffler, Diane Rawlinson

ATTENDING: Depute Principal
Head of Curriculum
Head of Student Services
College Secretary

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Ryan MacIntyre

The Chair welcomed Lindsay Snodgrass, Head of Student Services and Ryan MacIntyre, to their first meeting of the Committee. Ryan would formally be taking over from Jenny Loeffler as a Student Member on the Committee as Jenny had secured an Erasmus place in Finland for the second semester.

The Chair also wished to record the success of the college in being awarded first prize in the Changing Colleges Section of the 2015 College Development Network Annual Awards. It was very pleasing that this prestigious award brought sector recognition to all the hard work which had been undertaken over the last two years.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2015

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

2. POLICIES

a) GUIDANCE POLICY

A covering report by the Quality Officer assured the committee that the revised Guidance Policy has been through due College Process.

The Committee highlighted some grammatical and sense errors within the policy but subject to these being corrected, **APPROVED** the amended Guidance policy.

b) COMPLAINTS POLICY

A covering report by the Quality Officer assured the committee that the revised Complaints policy has been through due College Process.

The Committee highlighted some grammatical and sense errors within the policy but subject to these being corrected, **APPROVED** the amended Complaints policy.

3. ICSA CONSTITUTION – MINOR REVISION

A report by the Student President explained that as a result of the interest in the development of sports teams within ICSA, the Executive Committee considered

that a further Volunteer Executive Office was required, bringing the total number of volunteers to 8. The Executive also considered that the title of Campus Liaison Officer should better reflect the role undertaken and that it be changed to Scottish School of Forestry Officer.

The Committee **APPROVED** two minor amendments to the ICSA Constitution, namely:-

1. the addition of a further Volunteer Officer, namely a Sports Officer and
2. the change of title of the Campus Liaison Officer to Scottish School of Forestry Officer

4. STUDENT RECRUITMENT 15/16 – UPDATE

A report by the Depute Principal provided an update of student enrolment and recruitment for 2015-16 as at 26 November 2015.

FE recruitment, in terms of funded activity (Credits) was currently 3,927 credits below the year-end target. Planned activity still to enrol equated to 4,797 credits: however, it was unlikely that all the further planned activity would be realised.

In order to ensure that the College made its target this year it was important that:

- The college maximised the potential recruitment to planned programmes;
- The PDMs finalised the additional credits to be added to existing and January start short full-time programmes and these were processed via student records;
- The college considered additional activity that may be required as a contingency.

In terms of HE recruitment, based on the current enrolments, the College was projecting a total of 1,520.6 FTE against a target of 1,450.6 FTE: a projected variance of +70.6 FTE.

The Committee **NOTED** the position and **REQUESTED** the Depute Principal to provide members with a simple summary guide to the new credit system of funding.

5. FE EARLY RETENTION / WITHDRAWAL - UPDATE

A report by the Depute Principal provided an update on the Early Withdrawal (EW) rates for 2015-16 programmes. The accuracy of the 2015-16 rates depended on teaching staff reporting withdrawals to student records timeously. This had proved challenging in previous years. This year the MIS Manager had been sending out fortnightly withdrawal updates for FE to accompany the corresponding HE reports sent out by Executive Office's student records team. PDMs had been asked to verify before Christmas that all full-time EWs had been processed.

Full-time FE and HE rates appeared to be running below (better than) the rates for 2014-15. However, it was likely that some EWs had not yet been processed. Part-time EW rates were consistent with the final rates for last year.

Withdrawal rates (early and further) for full-time FE programmes had been running higher (worse) than sector levels for several years. Reducing them

while maintaining low partial success rates was an identified priority for the college.

The Committee **NOTED** the report and that withdrawals could be as a result of personal circumstances rather than educational ability.

6. STUDENT EXPERIENCE 2015-16

A report by the Quality Manager provided an overview of student feedback during the academic year 2015-16 to date as follows:-

- Fresher's Fayre Student Survey (First Impressions)
- Early Experience Student Survey
- Student Focus Groups (facilitated by the Quality Unit)

Although improvements had been made, it was recognised that further work was required on joining instructions and on induction.

The Committee **NOTED** the position and thanked the Quality Manager for a very comprehensive report.

7. STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

A report by the Head of Student Services advised on progress made in the Student Partnership Agreement since September 2015 in the 4 aspects of: -

Student Representation

The number of class representatives had increased significantly for the last three years and now stood at 214. Twenty one student ambassadors had been appointed and would receive training in their role. A high number of returns were achieved from the student feedback carried out during Fresher's Fayre and through the early experience survey.

Student Community

Fund raising activities had been successful, connections had been made in the wider community to help develop the wider student social scene and a number of student sports teams were up and running.

The College Welcome

Information would be provided within the 2016-17 prospectus on the wider aspects of student life and investigations were underway on how to set up a student mentor scheme. Promotion of volunteering to help build citizenship and employability skills was being progressed.

Learning and Teaching

ICSA had been working closely with some individuals within the Art department to support students in planning and shaping their own learning but to also raise awareness of health and wellbeing. This was an exciting project which exemplified some of the aspects within the Framework for Excellent Learning and Teaching.

The Committee **NOTED** the very encouraging report.

8. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS FOR 16/17

A report by the Head of Curriculum referred to a review which would be undertaken to ensure that the existing curriculum being delivered

- was consistent with the college's mission,
- used the best combination of learning experiences to help each learner achieve these results,
- included assessment processes that showed whether the results were being achieved, and
- used the findings of feedback to improve the curriculum currently offered.

In addition, information collated from a wide range of external stakeholders would be used to inform the development of any new provision which would then be progressed through the streamlined and rigorous approval process for introduction from 16/17 and 17/18. This approach should enable the College to evidence that the curriculum that it will be delivering will be appropriate, effective, efficient and of a high standard.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

9. LEARNING AND TEACHING : UPDATE ON KEY OBJECTIVES

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 on the key objectives.

10. HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

A report by the Student President advised that the Inverness College Students Association (ICSA) had been approached to opt – in as full members of the Highlands and Islands Student Association (HISA) from 1 July 2017.

Further discussions would take place between ICSA Executive Office and HISA Principal Officers to clarify a number of issues identified and other issues as they emerged so that the SRC members would be able to fully inform their students of the impact of either opting –in to HISA or retaining the status quo. In the next year, ICSA and HISA would continue to work together on campaigns both regionally and locally.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

11. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

A report by the Student President provided information on the activities of ICSA in the first quarter of 2015-16 as follows:-

- Improvement of student voice and experience
- Twelve ICSA officers (4 paid and 8 voluntary) and 21 student ambassadors in place as well as over 210 class representatives.
- Dealing with feedback from students and working with the college on outcomes and responses through the "you said – we did" mechanism.
- Very encouraging uptake of extracurricular activities, especially sports teams but also other societies.
- 68 stall holders in attendance at the Fresher's Fayre and others on a waiting list
- Attendance at a number of committee meetings and events both within and external to the college.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

12. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) RESULTS

A report by the Depute Principal contained an analysis of the NSS results for UHI final year HE programmes running in 2014-15. The NSS was a national survey, the results of which were published and the overall satisfaction rates ranked by university.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

13. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEES

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of the Meetings of the following Management Committees

- a) Academic Management Group – 27 August 2015
- b) Academic Management Group – 25 September 2015
- c) Academic Management Group – 22 October 2015
- d) Equality and Diversity Committee – 1 October 2015
- e) Academic Standards and Quality Committee – 5 October 2015

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 8 March 2016 at 8.30 a.m.

Signed by the Chair: _____

C Louise James

Date: _____

8 March 2016

