

Board of Management Learning and Teaching Committee

Minute of meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee of the Board of Management held at the Dumfries Campus on Tuesday 19 January 2016 from 2.00 pm in Room 1074b.

Members present: John Henderson, (Acting Chair) Carol Turnbull (Principal)
Ian White Julian Weir
Craig McGill

Faculty representatives: Jim Maginess Peter Woods

In attendance: Andy Wright, Vice Principal (Learning and Skills)
Jannette Brown, Secretary to the Board and Vice Principal (Corporate Services & Governance)
Brian Johnstone (Regional Chair)

Minute Taker: Heather Tinning, Executive Team Assistant

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Delia Holland, Chair had agreed with John Henderson to act as Chair for this meeting.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Delia Holland (Chair), Barry Graham, Kenny Henry, David Denholm and Lorna Carr.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished members a Happy New Year. The Chair also welcomed Brian Johnstone, Regional Chair and Heather Tinning, newly appointed Executive Team Assistant to her first meeting as Minute Taker.

2 Declaration of interest

Members agreed to indicate declarations of interest as appropriate throughout the meeting.

3 Presentation – Project Search

June Holland, Head of Faculty, Ross McCreadie (Project Search Instructor) and Reegan Rodger (student on Project Search) were invited to give a presentation to members on Project Search.

June explained that Reegan has spoken at a number of events to promote for Project Search on behalf of the College. He is scheduled to attend an event at the Council this week.

Project Search is an American idea that started around 18 years ago. The programme was set-up to assist anyone with additional needs who are struggling to find employment. Although the programme was initially set up with the local hospital, June advised that the College is in partnership with the local Council at present. The Vice Principal, Learning and Skills advised that the Council purchased the license and that the College receives credits for the programme. Regular meetings take place to allow ongoing discussion on progress. The Learners, known as

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Interns, are registered as College students. The Interns are provided with a range of life skills, including developing confidence and core skills, including IT, Numeracy and Literacy. There are now 11 Project Search groups throughout Britain. The Instructor takes the lead role and is supported by 2 Job Coaches, who are employed by Dumfries and Galloway Council. The programme includes 3 weeks in-house training, prior to work placement. A Mentor/Buddy supports each Intern at placement, providing a supportive role. Ross recently hosted a Parent's Evening. June explained that Staff work very closely with the families, encouraging their support. Members watched a video, entitled Project Search 2015-16, showing case studies and identified skills learned by Interns.

Reegan spoke of his journey and experiences on the Project Search programme. He advised that the role of his buddy was very supportive and encouraging.

The perimeters of the programme allow learners aged 16-24 to participate. The placements help the Interns gain skills, boost confidence and independence. The main focus is on gaining employment at the end of the programme. If an Intern gains employment at the end of their placement, Project Search supports the employer for 6 months following employment.

June advised that through the Project Search programme a Car Wash business had been set up at Cargen Tower, cost of £5 per car, which is now a self run business.

Ross reported on the next steps for all Interns include Vlogs, a way to gather evidence allowing a portfolio to be created for each Intern. Updating CVs is continuous throughout the programme. Qualifications also to be offered include Site safety cards (CSCS), Valeting qualification, and Forklift licence. The future of Project Search includes Parent Recruitment to participate in a Steering Committee and the Twinning with Nebraska.

Members commented on how successful the programme was. Members enjoyed the presentation and thanked all involved.

4 Minute of Previous Meeting

The Minute of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 27 October 2015 was approved.

5 Matters Arising

5.1 The Principal reported that the meeting arranged with John Swinney and Borders College had been postponed and was still to be re-convened. The Principal advised that the paper had not yet been published and that the reported was being developed by SoSA.

5.2 The Regional Chair reported that the bid submitted by the College, the Local Authority and the Chamber of Commerce to establish a Developing Young Workforce for Dumfries and Galloway had been approved. The 3- Year contract is due to be launched on 3rd February. Regions have been encouraged to bid for the funds. The Regional Chair advised that approximately £180,000 per year coming into the region. He advised that further work is required to integrate with existing arrangements to deliver Developing Young Workforce School Pathways.

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6 Annual Report on Institution-led Quality Review

The Vice Principal, Corporate Services and Governance spoke to the report, advised that owing to timing issues by the College, the Annual Report had not been to this committee prior to being considered and approved by the Board. The Report has now been submitted to the Scottish Funding Council. The Board felt that it was important that the Report was issued to members of the Learning and Teaching Committee. The Vice Principal asked members to consider the content and layout of the report with a view to any improvements that could be made when preparing next year's report. The Committee discussed the report and concluded that they were happy with the level of detail and layout of the report.

Action: The Vice Principal, to ensure planning schedule is amended to allow for this report to be considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee prior to going to the full board.

Members noted the report.

6.1 Regional Outcome Evaluation

The Vice Principal, Corporate Services and Governance, reported that much of the content is duplication from the Annual Report. The Vice Principal advised that the Scottish Funding Council is planning to review the need for two separate reports and this may change but not before session 2017-18. The Vice Principal explained that the information is used by the Scottish Funding Council along with information from Education Scotland as part of their review process. The Regional Chair asked if the College receives feedback from the Scottish Funding Council on the report. The Vice Principal confirmed that this does not happen but likely to be in touch should there be any issues highlighted in the report.

7 Key Performance Indicators

The Vice Principal, Corporate Services and Governance, spoke to the report, based on the position as at 12th January 2016, in particular highlighting that the College was concerned it may not achieve its activity target. There were a number of reasons for this, many full-time courses did not achieve recruitment target, two courses; Construction skills for DGHP and Overhead Lines Technician planned for did not run, likely to be 200 credit below target for school link activity and a Princes trust course start date has been delayed so will not be able to claim credits this session. The Vice Principal advised that the college can only claim credits following completion of the course within the same academic year. Discussions are ongoing with DGHP on the possibility of running courses before the end of this session.

The college made a decision at the end of April 2015 to run certain courses with lower numbers, to allow the recruitment of staff. Courses include Accounting second year and NC Construction. The Executive Team are looking at the shortfall and what action can be taken without additional costs. The Vice Principal advised that further discussion will take place at the Full Board meeting.

In response to the Chair's question on the reduced enrolments for 2015-16, the Vice Principal confirmed that the Enrolment figures also include courses run through CTS, many of which are full-cost recovery courses.

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The committee noted the report.

8 Quality Audit Reports

8.1 How did we do?

The Vice Principal, Corporate Services and Governance, spoke to the report, advising that this year the college produced a questionnaire on the induction process entitled 'How did we do'. Members noted that overall the responses were favourable and this indicates that we are doing well with the Induction experience. The questionnaire was completed by 372 learners, providing a return of 21%. Student comments have been passed to Faculty Heads to be actioned and included in self evaluation where appropriate.

In answer to Ian White's question on encouraging more learners to participate, the Vice Principal advised that the learner also completes other surveys including Learner Voices and Self Evaluation. Prizes have been offered in the past to also encourage participation on the surveys. Timing was also an issue for completion of this questionnaire, as Class Representatives had not yet been formed. Class Reps are a route to raising the profile.

The committee noted the report.

8.2 Complaints Handling Statistics

The Vice Principal, Corporate Services and Governance, spoke to the report advising that the College is required to return statistics on complaints in line with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The report indicates that 14 complaints had been received between the period 1 September 2015 and 30 November 2015. The Vice Principal advised that a filtering process, separates enquiries from complaints is in place.

The committee noted the report.

9 Student Association Update

The Student Association President provided an update on the Student Association. A questionnaire required by Education Scotland had recently been completed by learners, both at Dumfries and Stranraer campuses. The President reported that 27 groups in total had participated in this questionnaire. The questionnaire had also been put online for completion. The report was to be submitted to Education Scotland by the end of play today. Members noted that overall the feedback was very positive.

The Student Association President and Vice President both reported on Christmas festivities including a Choir and Santa at both campuses. Two local primary schools at Stranraer and Cargenbridge Primary School in Dumfries formed the Choirs. Members noted a successful and very enjoyable event at both campuses.

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10 Learning and Teaching Mentor Evaluation

The Vice Principal, Learning and Skills spoke to the report. Members noted how successful this process had been in offering support to lecturers. The Vice Principal reported on the link to the evaluation process. The Chair advised that Delia Holland asked him to pass on that she was very impressed with the process.

Pete Woods, a member of the Learning and Teaching Mentor Evaluation team, reported on how the process reflects cultural change. The process was set up to replace the classroom observation process. He advised that the staff now encourage participation from a Learning and Teaching Mentor, and regularly invite them into their classes. The Learning and Teaching mentor evaluation, forms part of Peer Mentoring and Support.

Pete advised that the process can also identify Good Practice within the college, where staff share professional skills and experience with the Mentors.

In response to the Regional Chair's question, the Principal advised that other colleges follow a similar process. The Learning and Teaching Mentor is to support the lecturers as part of a development process and not a management process.

Pete advised that he has visited Dundee and Angus College; Perth College and Forth Valley to discuss their process for Learning and Teaching Mentoring. The Vice Principal, Governance and Corporate Services advised members that John Bowditch, from Education Scotland, has involved in discussions on the process and future developments with the L&T team, which has proved very successful.

The committee noted the report.

11 Vice Principal (Learning and Skills Update)

The Vice Principal, Learning and Skills, reported on the Education Scotland Review, week commencing 8th February. Meetings are ongoing, including staff and learner briefings.

The VP reported on ongoing Employer Engagement discussions, including Computing and the Care Sector.

The Vice Principal, Learning and Skills, and the Principal had recent discussions with Professor Malcolm Foley from University of the West of Scotland (UWS) to discuss articulation arrangements, for 2017-18.

The Vice Principal, Learning and Skills, reported on the UWS Restructure, advising that a major review is currently ongoing. Professor Foley advised that although UWS are focusing on the new building at present, they are keen to work with the College much more closely. One of the issues that UWS have reported is the lack of enrolment from school direct to UWS. The VP reported that the College HE numbers have increased, where UWS are reporting a decline in HE enrolments. The VP advised that there are a range of options to explore including further meetings with UWS and subsequent meetings with the Heads of Faculties.

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Staff have visited Strathclyde to look at the Engineering Academy. The Principal advised that she had requested to pilot this programme in 2016/17 but Strathclyde had already allocated funded places.

11.1 Schools Delivery 2016/17

The Vice Principal spoke to the report, identifying the delivery following discussions with schools across the region. The date for feedback from the schools is March 11th. Jim Maginess reported that the relationship with Stranraer Academy had improved over the last few months, with ongoing presentations at the Academy, providing information on college experience and funding. Members noted that the presentations had been well received. JM reported that he and Head of Faculty Drew Easton, are to take forward discussions with Douglas Ewart, which may help influence enrolments.

The Vice Principal, Learning and Skills, reported on the Gender Imbalance Programme to be progressed this year, capturing pupils at S3 level. He advised that pupils have more information to help make more informed choices. John Magill, Business and Community Liaison Officer, had been involved in various discussions with schools to take this forward.

The committee noted the report.

12 Any other Business

12.1 Developing Young Workforce(DYW)

The Principal reported that the Funding Council had allocated DYW funding to the College sector and that the College has been offered £75,000 to be spent by July 2016. The Funds can be used for new promotional material for DYW and the Gender Imbalance Workshops. The College is looking to host a regional conference towards the summer, in partnership with the Employability partnership, aimed at schools.

12.2 Technology

The Chair, requested on behalf of Delia Holland a presentation on the use of technology in the teaching process. The Vice Principal Governance and Corporate Services advised that can be arranged. However there may be some items following the Education Scotland review that might be of higher priority.

12.3 Education Scotland Review

The Chair wished the College Good Luck with the Education Scotland Review.

13 Date and time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee will take place on Tuesday 15th March 2016 at 2pm.