Edinburgh College

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LEARNING, TEACHING & STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

16:00hrs, Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Present: Hunia Arshad; Audrey Cumberford; David Elder; Lorraine Farquharson; Ross Laird; Skye Marriner; Luna Morrison; Ryan Quinn; Jeanette Stevenson (Chair)

In attendance: Jon Buglass; Nicola MacKenzie; Jonny Pearson; Nora Senior; Marcus Walker (Clerk)

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1 The Committee NOTED that following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, a decision had been taken by the Chair of the Board and the Principal to postpone all Board related meetings on 9 September 2022 - as a mark of respect. The Chair advised members that due to the rescheduling of the Learning, Teaching & Student Experience (LTSE) Committee at short notice, prior to the Board of Management on 27 September 2022, the agenda had been truncated to consider items of business marked 'For Discussion' only.

1.2 Apologies were NOTED from Becky Duff, Kerry McCormack, and Annette Chapman.

1.3 The Chair welcomed David Elder (ECSA Student President), Skye Marriner (ECSA Vice President Welfare) and Luna Morrison (ECSA Vice President Activities) to their first meeting of the Committee, following their appointment as sabbatical officers on 1 July 2022.

1.4 The Committee NOTED that five new co-opted staff members had joined the LTSE Committee (Minutes 5.3 refers), following the circulation of an open invitation to both lecturing and lecturing management staff in June 2022. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed Hunia Arshad, Lorraine Farquharson, Ryan Quinn, and Carole Paterson.

1.5 The Chair welcomed Nora Senior, the Chair of the Edinburgh College Board of Management, to her first meeting of the LTSE Committee as an attendee.

1.6 The Chair welcomed Nicola MacKenzie, the Acting Director of Student Experience, to her first meeting of the Committee as an attendee.

1.7   The Committee NOTED its thanks to Richard Swan, the former Lecturing Staff Board Member, who left the College on 31 July 2022. The Chair advised the Committee that the appointment of a new Lecturing Staff Board Member would be communicated on 7 October 2022, following a ballot of lecturing staff.

2.   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1   No declarations of interest were received.

3.   MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3.1   The Committee APPROVED the minutes of the LTSE Committee from 20 May 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4.   MATTERS ARISING REPORT

4.1   The Committee NOTED that actions from the previous meeting were either complete, overtaken or on the agenda.

5.   TERMS OF REFERENCE

5.1   The Committee NOTED that the Code of Good Governance dictated that committees of the Board should regularly review their terms of reference to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

5.2   The Committee DISCUSSED its terms of reference and AGREED that its purpose and remit remained appropriate.

5.3   The Committee NOTED that, following a curriculum management restructure in 2021/22, the new roles of Head of School and Curriculum Team Manager had been created. The Chair advised the Committee that to capture such changes in the co-opted staff membership of the LTSE Committee the 'Membership' section of the Terms of Reference had been updated.

5.4   The Committee DISCUSSED the proposed changes to co-opted staff membership, which retained six members of co-opted lecturing / lecturing management staff on the Committee and AGREED to recommend the amendment to the Board of Management.

6.   CURRICULUM STRATEGY UPDATE

6.1   The Committee NOTED a presentation from the Vice Principal Education & Skills on the development of a new Edinburgh College Curriculum Strategy. The Vice Principal advised the Committee that the College currently had a Curriculum Planning & Design Strategy 2017-22, however, the development of a new Edinburgh College Strategic Framework offered the opportunity to pause and reflect on the current curriculum offer.

6.2   The Committee NOTED that the purpose of the new Curriculum Strategy was to provide institutional coherence, oversight, and leadership, whilst refreshing

the focus on the core pillars of learning, teaching, assessment, and outcomes. The Vice Principal Education & Skills outlined to the Committee the curriculum design principles to which the process of strategy development would adhere, and the central importance of the student voice to the process.

6.3   The Committee NOTED recent College Development Network (CDN) research findings focussed on curriculum design. The Vice Principal Education & Skills emphasised to the Committee that a curriculum designed to meet both the current and future demands of students, employers and wider society must be: Flexible, Interactive, Data-led; and, Personalised.

6.4   The Committee DISCUSSED the following in relation to the development of the Curriculum Strategy:

(i)   The potential for further partnership working with sparqs (student partnerships in quality Scotland) to support curriculum development.
(ii)   The progress (to date) of consultation meetings with students, staff, and other stakeholders, to define a curriculum of the future.
(iii)   The embedding of employability within the Curriculum Strategy and the cross-faculty sharing of the best practice model implemented by the Faculty of Creative Industries.
(iv)   The embedding of Digital skills within the curriculum and recent developments through the Digital strand of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.
(v)   The timeline for the approval and implementation of the Curriculum Strategy.
(vi)   Recent changes to the College's project-based assessment methodology to reduce the burden placed on existing students.

6.5   The Committee NOTED that once the Edinburgh College Strategy Plan 2022-25 had been approved by the Board of Management, and the ongoing consultation with stakeholders had concluded, a Draft Curriculum Strategy would be presented to the LTSE Committee on 3 March 2023.

7.   STUDENT EXPERIENCE REPORT

7.1   The Committee NOTED that the College had submitted a bid to the SFC for funding from the *Young Person's Guarantee Tackling Child Poverty Activity 2022/23*, to support the work of the College Community of Practice to provide early intervention and targeted support for 16–19-year-olds at risk of falling into a negative destination. The Acting Director of Student Experience advised the Committee that an analysis of the 2021/22 cohort had indicated that many young people faced significant barriers to learning, and it was anticipated that similar figures would be recorded in 2022/23.

7.2   The Committee NOTED that the turnaround time for application received by the Funding Team was approximately two weeks, with 1410 bursary / EMA and 43 childcare applications processed to date. The Acting Director of Student Experience informed the Committee that the processing of funding applications had improved significantly, with the Funding Team taking proactive steps to engage with those students requiring funding support prior to start of the academic year.

7.3   The Committee NOTED that Learning Development Tutors (LDTs) had been allocated to all timetabled Further Education courses, with remaining capacity being utilised to cover several HN courses. The Acting Director of Student Experience advised the Committee that for courses where students were allocated a course tutor from within the curriculum, there were also plans in place to provide ongoing pastoral support outwith timetabled classes.

7.4   The Committee NOTED that over the summer period Care Experience campus contacts, and Action for Children STAY workers, had engaged with all students who disclosed that they were care experienced. The Acting Director of Student Experience informed the Committee that early engagement with Care Experience students provided an opportunity for the College to offer more intensive support and build stronger relationships with students.

7.5   The Committee DISCUSSED the significant amount of work undertaken by the College in support of Care Experience learners. The Principal highlighted that Edinburgh College had direct contact with 1021 unique care experienced students (as of 2021/22), more than the entire Scottish university sector combined.

7.6   The Committee DISCUSSED the College induction provided the 2022/23 cohort and the role of ECSA within the wider process. The Acting Director of Student Experience advised the Committee that whilst ECSA representatives had been part of the Induction Planning Group, the College would continue to actively engage with the Students' Association around its involvement in future induction events.

8.   EDUCATION SCOTLAND PROGRESS VISIT - ACTION PLAN UPDATE

8.1   The Committee NOTED that the Education Scotland Progress Visit Report, presented to Members on 4 March 2022, had outlined many areas of positive improvement - specifically within services to support learning and aspects of the delivery of curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment. The Vice Principal Innovation, Planning & Performance reminded the Committee that the College received an overall 'satisfactory', out of two possible outcomes.

8.2   The Committee NOTED that in response to the relative performance in Full-Time FE the College had received an unsatisfactory narrative, which included actions aimed at improving KPIs. The Vice Principal Innovation, Planning & Performance advised the Committee that, following a reflection period, the College had implemented, or partially implemented, several of the actions.

8.3   The Committee NOTED a progress update against an Action Plan which had been developed for the College's own monitoring purposes but would provide a useful tool for engaging further with Education Scotland at the next planned progress visit.

8.4   The Committee welcomed progress against the Action Plan and DISCUSSED timescales, next steps, and end markers for success. The Vice Principal Innovation, Planning & Performance advised the Committee that the Senior Management Team regularly reviewed a more detailed version of the action plan, which included completion dates.

8.5 The Committee AGREED that the Action Plan, including further details on completion dates and success goals, should continue to be reported to future meetings of the Committee.

9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

9.1 None.

10. FOR INFORMATION

10.1 ECSA PRIORITY OBJECTIVES 2022/23

10.1.1 The Committee NOTED the ECSA Priority Objectives for the academic year 2022/23. The Chair informed the Committee that the ECSA Priority Objectives would be considered by the Board of Management at its next meeting on 27 September 2022.

10.2 COMMITTEE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2022/23

10.2.1 The Committee NOTED its proposed programme of work for the academic year 2022/23.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 The Committee NOTED that its next meeting would take place on 18 November 2022.

The meeting closed at 17:00