

LEARNING, TEACHING & STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 22 MARCH 2024

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams, 14:00hrs

Present: Hunia Arshad; Becky Duff; Lorraine Farquharson; Ross Laird (Chair); Liz McIntyre; Skye Marriner; Luna Morrison; Carole Paterson

In attendance: Jon Buglass; Gail Graham; Anna Vogt; Marcus Walker (Clerk)

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were NOTED from Annette Chapman, Jon Craig; Audrey Cumberford, Daniel Holland, Jonny Pearson, Ryan Quinn, and Eleanor Sim.

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 on 17 November 2023 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.

4.2 ***Education Scotland 'You said, we did' Communications [Ref. 8.5/19.05.23]***

The Committee NOTED an update on communications to students relating to improvements implemented in response to Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visits, students' satisfaction survey feedback, and Class Reps engagement. The Vice Principal Innovation, Planning & Performance informed the Committee that the College was in the process of installing large TV screens across campuses to communicate improvements directly to students.

4.3 **Health & Wellbeing Strategy [Ref. 5.5/17.11.23]**

The Committee NOTED an update on the development of a draft Health & Wellbeing Strategy for the College. The Assistant Principal Student Experience advised the Committee that following a period of consultation on the Strategy a detailed update would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee on 17 May 2024.

5. **STUDENT EXPERIENCE REPORT**

5.1 EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (ECSA) CLASS REP MEETNG REPORT

5.1.1 The Committee NOTED that, in the week commencing 29 January 2024, ECSA had held its second round of Class Rep meetings. The Student President advised the Committee that ECSA were delighted that two members of the Board of Management, Ross Laird and Ian McLaughlan, could join Class Reps meetings at Milton Road and Sighthill, as part of its Reverse Shadowing Scheme.

5.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the objectives of the Class Reps meetings were three-fold; (i) to gather feedback about the sense of belonging at Edinburgh College; (ii) to assess what factors were impacting the overall learning experience; (iii) and to provide attendees with updates and information on the ECSA Elections and Student Live Survey. The Student President informed the Committee that 88% of Class Reps agreed with the statement '*Edinburgh College was a welcoming place*' and this topic was explored further as part of a 'sense of belonging' discussion.

5.1.3 The Committee DISCUSSED key issues facing students studying at Edinburgh College, as highlighted within the report, including the continued impact of industrial action, disparities between campus in terms of catering options and activities, and incidents of misgendering non-binary and trans students. The Assistant Principal Student Experience informed the Committee that Student Experience Team would be receiving awareness training within the current academic year around misgendering and the use of gendered language.

5.1.4 The Committee welcomed the feedback provided through the Class Reps Report and DISCUSSED the planning in place to progress actions in a timely manner. The Chair highlighted to the Committee the importance of closing the 'feedback loop' to illustrate that the College listened to its students and took appropriate actions - where required.

5.2 STUDENT EXPERIENCE DEEP DIVE

5.2.1 The Committee NOTED a deep dive presentation on the Student Experience Department, which included 11 Teams working to support Corporate Parenting, Safeguarding & Strategic Partnerships with Local Authorities, Widening Participation, and Student Recruitment. The Assistant Principal Student Experience advised the Committee that the Edinburgh College Model aimed to ensure that curriculum delivery was tailored to both the needs of students and the region.

- 5.2.2 The Committee NOTED several challenges facing the Student Experience Team, including the expectation of students around the role of colleges, the complicated and intersected needs of students, pressures on key partners such as the NHS, social work and the Third Sector, and the availability of information to undertake high quality transition work. The Assistant Principal Student Experience highlighted to the Committee that such pressures were exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, requiring many students to combine their work and studies, and the significant financial pressures on the college sector.
- 5.2.3 The Committee NOTED that to achieve continuous improvement the Student Experience Team remained focussed on working collaboratively with curriculum teams to ensure the best outcomes for all students.
- 5.2.4 The Committee welcomed the deep-dive presentation provided into Student Experience and DISCUSSED the following:
- (i) The 111 FTE staff members within the Student Experience Department and the continuity of service across the various Student Experience Teams.
 - (ii) The use of ProMonitor and the work undertaken by the College to collate appropriate action-based information to support students.
 - (iii) The needs of part-time students and the need for further research to fully understanding the experience across all modes of study.
 - (iv) The College as the 'right place for students', whilst recognising that it was not always the best support mechanism for complex individual needs.
 - (v) The opportunity for creative partnerships with the Third Sector (- through a co-location model) to help meet students' needs whilst utilising the College's existing Estate.
 - (vi) The interlinks between Student Experience, successful outcomes for students, and the College's strategic aims.
 - (vii) The importance of collecting appropriate data to demonstrate the full impact of the Student Experience Department, and to illustrate its contribution to student retention and achievement.
- 5.2.5 The Committee AGREED that, in addition to collating more data on the impact of Student Experience, the Assistant Principal Student Experience should also consider the use of case studies to help connect stakeholders and partners with wide range of work undertaken across the Department.
- 5.3 STUDENT EXPERIENCE UPDATE
- 5.3.1 The Committee NOTED a Student Experience Update relating to activity over Quarter 2 of the academic year. The Assistant Principal Student Experience informed the Committee that the Learning Support Team were currently exploring ways to make the services they offer easier to access for students, including the removal of onerous processes and paperwork for the start of the 2024/25 academic year.
- 5.3.2 The Committee welcomed the data provided by the Assistant Principal Student Experience, as requested by Members at its last meeting, and DISCUSSED the

information provided within the Report. As outlined under Minute 5.2.5, the Committee AGREED that it would welcome examples of student stories, to compliment the existing information provided.

6. STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY UPADATE

6.1 INDUCTION SURVEY 2023/24 REPORT

- 6.1.1 The Committee NOTED a report on the results of the 2023/24 Induction Survey, which was designed to assess students' opinions regarding key aspects of their experience before starting at the College, and during their first few weeks of study.
- 6.1.2 The Committee NOTED the scope of the survey, which was made available to students, via Moodle, for a five-week period from 23 October 2023. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement highlighted that the response rate of 24% of all students - across all levels and modes of attendance - was up by 10% on the previous year. Further to this, the Committee NOTED that 41% of full-time students had responded to the survey.
- 6.1.3 The Committee NOTED that the average overall score across all surveyed questions was 4.1 stars out of 5. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement informed the Committee that the highest scoring question was '*I feel that I am on the right course*' (4.5 stars), whilst the lowest scoring question was '*Have you been made aware of the ECSA and its role in supporting students?*' (3.8 stars).
- 6.1.4 The Committee NOTED that across the 17 questions survey, 10 questions saw an increase in satisfaction levels, 3 questions saw no change, and 4 questions had a decrease in satisfaction when compared to 2022/23 academic year. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement advised the Committee that the most significant improvement, in comparison to 2022/23, was for the question '*Any financial support you are entitled to should be in place at the start of your course. How do you rate this?*' with an increase of 7%.
- 6.1.5 The Committee DISCUSSED the Induction Survey responses and AGREED that progress against action 'areas of development' should be reported back to its next meeting.

6.2 LEARNING & TEACHING SURVEY 2024

- 6.2.1 The Committee NOTED 13 multiple choice questions which comprised the 2024 Learning & Teaching Survey. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement advised the Committee that the SFC required an 'overall satisfaction rating' to be recorded and reported.
- 6.2.2 The Committee NOTED that, due to a scheduling change, the LTSE Committee had taken place three weeks later than originally planned. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement informed the Committee that due to this delay the College had taken the decision to publish the survey on 11 March 2024.

- 6.2.3 The Committee DISCUSSED the implementation of the 2024 Learning & Teaching Survey and AGREED to endorse its publication. The Board Secretary advised the Committee that, in future, appropriate steps would be taken to ensure that Members received the opportunity to review the survey before its publication.

7. 'HOW GOOD IS OUR LEARNING & TEACHING'

7.1 EDUCATION SCOTLAND ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT VISIT UPDATE

- 7.1.1 The Committee NOTED that an Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit (AEV) had taken place over two days in January 2024, during which HM Inspectors had met with a range of learners, staff, and stakeholders. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement highlighted that Education Scotland had provided the Executive Team with a final version of the AEV Report on 19 March 2024, which had subsequently been circulated to the Committee.
- 7.1.2 The Committee NOTED that the AEV Report would be officially published by Education Scotland on 26 March 2024.
- 7.1.3 The Committee NOTED that the Education Scotland AEV Report indicated HM Inspectors' confidence that the College had made 'satisfactory progress' and had the capacity to continue to improve. The Assistant Principal Quality & Improvement informed the Committee that the AEV Report also confirmed that previous areas of development and points for action, identified in 2023/24, had been addressed.
- 7.1.4 The Committee welcomed and DISCUSSED the positive progress outlined within the AEV Report. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, commended the College on the significant improvements made to the learning and teaching experience since the last engagement visit.

7.2 EDUCATION SCOTLAND ACTION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

- 7.2.1 The Committee NOTED that, considering Education Scotland's comments regarding the addressing of previous areas of development (*Minute 7.1.3 refers*), activities within the action plan would be taken forward as operational matters.
- 7.2.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the main points of action outlined in the latest AEV Report and AGREED that a new action plan should be developed and presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

8. DRAFT LTSE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

- 8.1 The Committee NOTED that it had been asked by the Board of Management to present an annual report on 26 March 2024. The Chair advised the Committee that the report would highlight key matter of business considered by the Committee and future areas of development.

8.2 The Committee DISCUSSED the 2023/24 Annual Report and AGREED its circulation to the Board of Management.

9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

9.1 STUDENT AGREEMENT 2024/25

9.1.1 The Committee NOTED that the process of drafting a 2024/25 Student Agreement, in collaboration with ECSA, was underway. The Assistant Principal advised the Committee that a draft version of a new Student Agreement would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting.

10. FOR INFORMATION

10.1 COMMITTEE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2023/24

10.1.1 The Committee NOTED its proposed programme of work for the academic year 2023/24.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 The next meeting of the LTSE Committee shall be held on 17 May 2024.

The meeting closed at 16:00