

Learner Experience Committee

Minutes

Meeting reference: Learner Experience 2023-24/02

Date: Wednesday 15 November 2023

Location: Boardroom (Braham Room 019)

Members present: Margaret Cook, Principal
Elaine Piggot, Board Member
Alistair Wylie, Board Member
Patrick O'Donnell, Staff Board Member
Fiona Smith, Student Board Member
Lorenz Cairns, Depute Principal
Catherine Etri, Vice Principal (Academic)
Deborah Lally, Head of Student Experience
David Gourley, Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement (to Item 7.2)

In attendance: Ian McCartney, Clerk to the Board

Apologies: Jenny Hamilton, Board Member
Veronica Lynch, Vice Principal (External)
Robert Boyd, Teaching Staff Member on the Committee

Chair: **Margaret Cook**

Minute Taker: Ian McCartney

Quorum: 7

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Minutes:

Item		Action
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies.</p>	
2.	<p>Additions To The Agenda</p> <p>Head of Learning & Teaching Enhancement noted that funds had been received from PKC to support the Big Project which had allowed clothing for students and nursery children to be supplied.</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Conflict of Interest in any Agenda Item</p> <p>None</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 06 September 2023</p> <p>The minutes were approved as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</p> <p><u>7.1 HISA Perth Strategic Update</u></p> <p>Action: Student Board Member to provide update to committee re HISA CEO recruitment</p> <p>Status: Covered within Paper 2</p>	
6	<p>Learner Experience</p>	
6.1	<p>HISA Perth Strategic Update</p> <p>Student Board Member outlined key highlights of Paper 2, noting that 170 Student Voice Reps had now been recruited, with training scheduled, and SRCs were being held this week.</p> <p>Student Board Member informed Committee that HISACon, the student leadership conference, had now been moved from earlier in the academic year to January. Principal queried why this had been rescheduled to what appeared to be very late in the calendar; Student Board Member advised that Clubs & Societies leaders were now being invited to the event, therefore it was felt more sensible to delay until later in the year.</p> <p>Chair noted ongoing issues around staff recruitment. Student Board Member advised that HR processes were progressing.</p> <p>Vice Principal (Academic) sought clarity on the numbers of SVRs currently trained as 45. Student Board Member advised that that was</p>	

	<p>the figure around a week ago so this would need clarified. Student Board Member also noted that a number of students were repeating SVRs and therefore may not have attended training this year.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience sought clarity on the timescale around the Student Partnership Agreement. Student Board Member advised that HISA staff members were leading this workstream so this would need to be checked. Chair expressed concern over how late in the year the SPA was likely to be presented, making it difficult to deliver within 2023/24. Student Board Member agreed, and also noted that 10-month contracts for student officers would have an impact.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 2</p>	
<p>6.2</p>	<p>Student Funding</p> <p>Head of Student Experience presented Paper 3, noting that figures excluded those funds dispersed through the Student Awards Agency, but includes all other funds issued by UHI Perth.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that awards listed as “Bursary” is available to FE students only, and that “Discretionary” refers to hardship funds, which are capped.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience further noted that a number of fund applications were being processed but were at the “additional evidence required” stage.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that the funding team are up to date with applications and are now in the process of identifying students who qualify for funding but who haven’t applied to encourage further applications.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that the cap for the HE Discretionary Fund had been reduced, however this was offset by an increase in the student loan.</p> <p>Student Board Member queried whether there would be enough money available for students for the whole year to assist with retention. Head of Student Experience advised that this could not be guaranteed within HE.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether students were assisted in other areas such as budgeting. Head of Student Experience advised that support workshops are held at the start of each academic year. Student Board Member advised that similar support is provided via HISA.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 3.</p>	

7	Curriculum	
7.1	<p>ASOS/Student Completion & Progression</p> <p>Head of Student Experience provided an update on the impact of Action Short of Strike (ASOS) on student completion and progression, advising that UHI Perth started to input results in mid-October, with weekly statistics being returned to Scottish Government around the measurement of impact, with the main SG focus being on apprenticeships.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience noted that approx. 16,000 results had been processed by the team in 3 weeks, resulting in all certificates likely to be issued by end December.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience referenced KPI tables within Paper 4 (noting indicative positions provided for 2022/23), and advised that further analysis would be conducted into this data in due course.</p> <p>Board Member queried whether assurances had been received from awarding bodies with regards to certification, whether a Comms Plan was in place, and whether data was being captured re reasons for withdrawals?</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that UHI Perth were in regular contact with awarding bodies, including group awards, and that all students had been emailed with scheduled dates for results and contact details should these not be received. Head of Student Experience further advised that there are a vast number of reasons for withdrawal and PATs work to ensure there is maximum opportunity for intervention. Vice Principal (Academic) noted that financial reasons are the most prominent, however a number of students are encouraged or supported to move to part-time study which is reflected in the lower withdrawal rates shown in the stats.</p> <p>Board Member queried the age range around drop-out rates being a factor due to lack of awareness or understanding of what College life would be like. Head of Student Experience noted that data is captured by protected characteristics, and that UHI Perth conducts pre-enrolment interviews and Open Days to allow potential students to better understand the organisation.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 4.</p>	
7.2	<p>Student Recruitment</p> <p>Head of Student Experience outline Paper 5, including the difference between the 2 methodologies for measuring the income raised via</p>	

	<p>student recruitment.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that UHI Perth is highly likely to meet or exceed FE targets, and explained that being over-target would not result in students being turned away if there is no impact on staffing requirements. Head of Student Experience noted for context that FE credit targets across the sector had been reduced by 10%.</p> <p>Head of Student Experience advised that there was optimism around meeting HE FTE targets, however ASOS and results processing had taken precedence over the last few weeks and as a result some registration for modules has still to be processed which will improve reported statistics. In addition, an uplift in numbers will be experienced when January courses commence.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 5.</p>	
<p>7.3</p>	<p>Fraser of Allender Institute Report</p> <p>Chair tabled Paper 6 for information and advised Committee that the Report focused on the impact and difference Colleges make, reinforcing the message of their importance within Scotland.</p> <p>Board Member thanked Chair for distributing the Report, and queried how this was being used to marketing advantage. Chair advised that the Report had generated significant national TV coverage supported by local press releases. Chair further advised that the sector was working with government ministers to help paint a positive picture of the sector in spite of reduced funding, however there was doubt as to whether this would result in extra finances being found. Chair noted that the University sector had been very effective in using this approach in the past, so it was positive to see a similar focus within the College sector.</p> <p>Chair advised that meetings with the Secretary of State alongside Scotland’s Colleges’ “Thinking The Unthinkable” events would make extensive use of the Report and its findings.</p> <p>Committee NOTED Paper 6.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Committee Minutes</p> <p>Committee noted the following minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Engagement Group, 28 September 2023 • Scholarship & Research Committee, 29 May 2023 • Scholarship & Research Committee, 25 October 2023 	

9	Date of Next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 21 February 2024 @ 2:00pm 	
10	Review of Meeting Committee confirmed the business of the meeting had been consistent with the Terms of Reference.	

Information recorded in College minutes are subject to release under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI(S)A). Certain exemptions apply: financial information relating to procurement items still under tender, legal advice from College lawyers, items related to national security.

Notes taken to help record minutes are also subject to Freedom of Information requests, and should be destroyed as soon as minutes are approved.

Status of Minutes – Open

An **open** item is one over which there would be no issues for the College in releasing the information to the public in response to a freedom of information request.

A **closed** item is one that contains information that could be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 applies.

The College may also be asked for information contained in minutes about living individuals, under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018. It is important that fact, rather than opinion, is recorded.

Do the minutes contain items which may be contentious under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018? **Yes** **No**