



**Final Version Minute – Learning, Teaching &
Engagement Committee
held at 11.00 am on Friday 26th February 2021
via MS Teams**

Present: Rosemary Allford, Chair (RA); Andrew Campbell (AMC); Elodie Nowinski (EN); Faye Tudor (FT); HISA Depute (FD); Martin Jones (MJ)

Apologies: Vicky Gunn (VG)

In Attendance: Elaine Munro (EM); Ailsa Close (AEC); Andrew Brawley (AB) Education Scotland; Vicky Daveney (VD)(Secretary)

	Item	Action
21.1.1	Welcome & apologies for absence. The Chair welcomed all governors to the meeting and welcomed Andrew Brawley of Education Scotland. Apologies received from Vicky Gunn.	
21.1.2	Declarations of interest & any items deemed to be confidential. There were no declarations of interest.	
21.1.3	Minute of previous meeting held on 27th November 2020 To be signed by Chair.	Approved RA/VD
21.1.4	Outstanding Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note of thanks to go to all staff. 	AMC
21.1.5	Matters arising: Covid-19 impact – MJ stated that the governments pre-Christmas announcement came after staff had broken up for Christmas. Argyll College were quick to communicate with staff regarding a delayed start to January teaching. In January there was engagement throughout the partnership to produce a common position for communications. Learning was all online, with the recent announcement allowing for limited schools activity to recommence in the last week, in consultation with schools. EM confirmed the paper was an overview of staff and student wellbeing measures that had been put in place. Work has been undertaken with schools with careful health & Safety analysis, to ensure staff return to schools in as safe a way as possible. Wellbeing Workshops were held for staff and were well received. The trainer is continuing to work with some staff. Centre staff have spent a substantial amount of time supporting students. RA commented that the demand for SAMH is high and commended the college on securing their service. FT added that the workshops were excellent, the trainer was warm and understanding and the resources very useful adding the student calls are being well received. AEC stated that more information will be given to the auditor regarding staff wellbeing programmes and covid related health & safety measures, UHI is approaching partners to do more work relating to this. EN asked if there has been a rise in students asking for support? FT responded that managing home schooling and studying has had a negative impact on some students. RA stated that the NUS have issued a message for institutions to provide further signposting to students for both internal and external mental health support	

	<p>services and commented that capturing this information is important particularly with the pressure on funding. MJ agreed that communication is important and stressed the challenge it presents. Online centre specific meetings were arranged with all staff and the management team to talk through any issues staff might have. RA supported the meetings as a useful resilience building activities for the staff.</p>	
21.1.6	<p>Update on the Education Scotland Approach RA introduced Andrew Brawley. AB reported that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A motion for substantial reform has been passed with a proposal for HMiE to merge with Teaching Scotland. MSPs are uncomfortable with this. • This academic year the usual scrutiny has been paused. • Education Scotland has been tasked by John Swinney to produce reports on how remote learning has been going, initially for schools. 5% of schools have been sampled, with local authorities, head teachers, parents and pupils being contacted. SFC have now approved a similar model for the college sector. AEC and EM expressed concern about the extra pressure this may place on colleges, stressing the need to keep the workload light to allow colleges to focus on helping their students achieve. • Education Scotland’s ‘How Good is our School/College’ will be shaped by the learning experiences of covid and will be contributing to SFC’s review, this may be delayed due to changes in personnel. • There has been some useful work on ‘Virtual Bridge’, to which Argyll College staff have contributed, providing a good resource for staff and managers. • Some colleges have intimated they may start the academic year later, the problems for larger colleges of completing assessments, particularly due to late guidance from SQA, has a huge impact on recruitment for the next year. <p>RA suggested that communicating best practice from the sector would allow it to be adopted. RA thanked AB for his update.</p>	
21.1.7	<p>Early and further retention KPIs for full time FE courses to date 2020/21 EM reported that the retention KPI has been impacted by Covid. Early Retention was 91% after 1 Nov, which was 5% lower than the previous year – although this equates to just 14 students. A further 12 students have withdrawn since 1st Nov. In addition 10 SVQ Childcare students were withdrawn by the college at the end of semester 1 due to the uncertainty at that time of whether it would be possible for work placements to take place. The current retention figure of 76% is lower than previous years and is expected to be reflected throughout the sector. RA asked if there is additional support in place from SSSC to help students meet the standards required. EM confirmed that SSSC will not allow registration of students without achievement of the VQ element of the course. AMC asked FD if he had received any feedback from the student community as yet. FD stated that here has not been a class rep meeting this month so nothing new to report.</p>	
21.1.8	<p>Update on progress towards targets – 2020/21</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) FE credits – MJ commented that Argyll College will not achieve credit target this year for the first time – expectations are achievement of 80% of target. The decision that significant portions of the curriculum could not run this year has had a measured impact. The usual January short full time courses as well as leisure and part time evening courses have been limited. The region will also not achieve target. b) HE – MJ confirmed this has been better than predicted. AMC stated that given the current climate Argyll College is doing well and a benefit of being small is adaptability. RA agreed with AMC and added that the figures do not reflect the amount of effort which goes in to achieving them. EN agreed that this was a good achievement. 	
21.1.9	<p>Academic calendar 2021-22</p>	

	EM confirmed that the FE calendar has been aligned to the UHI HE calendar and all holidays have been aligned with local school holidays. RA asked whether this affects bursary payments? EM confirmed that it does not. The committee approved the calendar.	
21.1.10	<p>Schools link activity</p> <p>EM noted that the college has been offering schools link provision for a number of years, agreed with each school at a local level. This can result in small cohorts which may not be viable. Argyll College is keen to provide a greater range of courses to schools, to add value to the school curriculum and provide a transition level academic offer to senior phase pupils. Due to the difference in school timetables networked courses have had limited success, however, MJ has been working with the Chief Executive of the local authority to align school timetables. The Local Authority have seconded a member of staff to assist with transformational change. Schools have aligned into 2 clusters, one cluster has a common timetable, the other has agreed times where networked college activities can take place. Vocational face-to-face activity will still be agreed at a local level with each school. AB agreed that this is a positive step in providing more opportunities for pupils through an expanded syllabus.</p>	
21.1.11	<p>Early Student Experience Survey (ESES) detailed report</p> <p>EM reported that overall student satisfaction is very high, with positive awareness of the student services available. Students were asked about the Brightspace learning environment and particularly the new online induction, the response was generally positive. Work is being carried out with HISA to see how the future student experience can be improved. RA asked FD for comments from the student perspective. FD replied that there was no update since the report presented at the previous board meeting. RA asked what Argyll College is doing to highlight the services available. EM stated that local centre engagement makes a difference, even when not in centres. MJ confirmed that this is where small scale is an advantage, with staff able to ring round students and the same familiar people answering the phone. RA noted that this is a real positive for the college. FT stated that the online induction has been good for the students. RA commented that there may be a good opportunity to write it up and broadcast it.</p>	
21.1.12	<p>Joint shared delivery of FE/HE courses across UHI partnership for 2021/22</p> <p>MJ confirmed that this initiative gives more opportunity for students with the key aim being to create a sustainable curriculum. In the past the college has suffered reputationally when courses have had to be pulled last minute due to low numbers of students. EM has been working closely with partner colleges to achieve commonality through a collaborative process, involving each teaching team at an early stage. The delivery of core skills to students is also under discussion, and work to deliver meta skills collaboratively to students is being progressed. Currently the focus is on full-time FE, although work is being done to timetable part-time PDAs for those working and wanting to upskill or reskill. RA commented that this will provide a good fit with meta skills and micro credentials.</p>	
21.1.13	<p>Update on learning, teaching and enhancement items in last quarter:</p> <p>RA noted that a broad range of activities across a broad geographical area is demonstrated. AB commented that Argyll College is used to dealing with students online and lecturers have experience of keeping students engaged using different methods.</p>	
21.1.14	<p>Policies for approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Malpractice policy • Staff/Centre Malpractice and Maladministration policy <p>RA stated these are important policies. EM confirmed that this is a review and reapproval of the existing policies. The highlighted sections are where changes or new sections have been added in line with advice and guidance from SQA. RA asked the committee for comments. The committee approved the policies.</p>	

21.1.15	AOCB	
	Date of next meeting Committee Meetings – Friday 21 st May Board Meeting – Friday 4 th June	
	Signed by Date Chair of Learning, Teaching & Engagement Committee	



Outstanding Actions

		Responsibility	Deadline
September 2020			
Note of thanks	<i>RA asked that a note of thanks be sent to admissions, finance and student services.</i>		<i>11 Dec 2021 (carried over)</i>
Policy approval: UHI Safeguarding policy	Inform Head of Student Services that policy is approved.	VD	21-Sep-2020 Completed
November 2020			
Note of thanks	To be included in marketing newsletter. VD checking with AMC.		TBC
Teaching Staff – self-reflection and evaluation questionnaire	<i>Details to be collated for committee meeting.</i>	EM	<i>May meeting</i>
February 2020			
Credit Targets	RA requested an update on how different parts of the curriculum have been affected when UHI figures become available.	EM	May meeting
Online Student Induction	RA requested ongoing feedback.	EM	May meeting
Student feedback from HISA	RA requested feedback from the student's association on how students would feel about a return to centres.	FD	May meeting or when available
Teaching Staff – self-reflection and evaluation questionnaire	Details to be collated for committee meeting.	EM	May meeting
Note of thanks	To be emailed to all staff from Andrew Campbell on behalf of Board. Included in marketing newsletter.	AMC/VD	12/3/2021