Item 12
For Information

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

ACADEMIC BOARD

MINUTE

Minute of the meeting of the Academic Board held on 6 November 2020 at 2.00pm via MS Teams

1. Sederunt

Robin Ashton (Chair);
Peter Brown (Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum);
Andy Allan (Director of Learning Innovation and Curriculum);
Andy Laszlo (Director of Digital Services);
Tracy Leavy (Director of Community Engagement and Curriculum);
Arlene Sweeney (Learner Engagement Officer);
Gary Sharp (Team Leader - Advice Guidance & Learner Support);
George McGuire (SCM – HCLD);
Gerry Harkins (Lecturer, ECS);
Mhari Watt (Curriculum Manager – BCI);
Iain Cameron (Lecturer – ECS);
John Gallagher (Quality Enhancement Manager);
Margaret Cairns (Head of Library Services);
Monica McKerlie (Head of Services to Support Learners);
Patricia Currie (Equalities Manager);
Sarah Loughran (President, Learning and Teaching); and
Lauren McLaren (President, Student Association)
Mae Smillie (MIS Manager)

In attendance:

D Shiels (Director of Human Resources);
D Webster (Curriculum Manager, BCI)
J Lavery (Digital Skills Advisor);
Debbie Friel (Committee Coordinator), purpose of the minute.

2. Apologies

Derek Smeall (Principal); and
Alastair McGhee (Director of Business Services);

3. Terms of Reference

4. Declarations of Interest
Chair

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 18 September 2020

The minute was approved without amendment.

6. Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meeting held on 18 September 2020

No matters arising not covered by the agenda.

13. Digital Delivery Update

J Lavery and D Webster provided an overview of the wide range of digital skills development work being undertaken across the college. This included ICT staff and activity being led by the College's Digital Classroom Working Group and its sub-group. They highlighted that the majority of support staff were now familiar with the basic functions of Microsoft Teams and the requirement for basic training had subsided, with the focus moving to higher level skills development.

J Lavery informed members that teaching staff were using a variety of different approaches in their teaching delivery and that this was a concern. She highlighted that it would be beneficial to circulate a survey to establish which methods are being used and what had proven to be effective. Thereafter frameworks within subject areas could be established to maintain consistency. J Lavery noted a main recommendation would be to have teams baseline training to be included into all staffs PDR.

J Lavery and D Webster provided an update on the areas being addressed to support learners digitally. They explained that a Microsoft Teams area was currently being developed, this would also be used for events/training/webinars. Additionally, they were currently looking into having digital champions for students and this area could be used to host a digital support drop-in session which would include a communication channel to assist learners with their queries/issues.

R Ashton thanked D Webster and J Lavery for their detailed update and invited comments or questions.

M McKerlie asked for J Lavery to liaise with her further on the proposed development of a students' communications channel. She emphasised the importance of safeguarding students' personal information should it be intended as an open communications channel.

A Allan highlighted that in reference to the survey 'JISC' would be a significant tool that could be utilised for this purpose. It would also allow the College to review other similar national data sets for comparison.

R Ashton suggested that the staff focus group survey should be progressed, in addition he asked A Sweeney to look into digital focus groups for students. He added that it would be beneficial to have information on teaching models being used across the College.

9. GTCS Pilot

The Director of Human Resources informed members that on Tuesday, 3 November 2020 a national announcement was made to launch the GTCS registration, this coincided with a letter that was sent out by the College to all teaching staff. She added that GTCS will contact staff on 23 November to announce that registration had opened and that they should proceed to upload their TQFE.

D Shiels highlighted that the College has set up a GTCS Working Group. They would look to arrange suitable dates were teaching staff could attend events which would highlight the introduction to GTCS registration. Thereafter a Question and Answer sheet would be circulated to teaching staff. She highlighted that the GTCS national registration groups was currently exploring other routes to registration and what the equivalents to TQFE would be.

I Cameron queried if there was a cost involved. D Shiels reported that the first year would be free and thereafter there would be a free of £65 which would be covered by

the staff member. In addition to this fee, the PVG would have a cost of £18 to have updated.

7. Curriculum Activity Update

The Director of Planning and Performance and Curriculum provided an update on the curriculum activity progress to date. He highlighted that the quarter return to SFC was 69,875 this was up by 600 on last year's return. He stated that due to the current pandemic and restrictions the community target had been significantly affected. He provided members with a detailed overview of areas that the College was reviewing in order to increase the credit activity in January 2021. He noted that the College's early retention rate was up by 1.5% on last year.

R Ashton thanked Peter Brown for his update and commented that currently the unemployment rate nationally had doubled and was likely to increase further. He stated that the College would look at producing courses to assist with upskilling, reskilling in order to meet the needs of today.

Members had a discussion on retention, it was the general consensus that motivation was seen to be good, however it was noted that in some areas attendance was sporadic. It was also observed that in some classes, there seemed to be better attendance when online than on campus.

T Currie queried if there was a theme from withdrawals, i.e. mental health, lack of digital literacy, stress etc and if the College had noticed a trend. P Brown commented that the College did not have exact details at that time, but stated that some CMs had contacted those who had left and one area of concern was that students had said that the course was not as expected.

8. Quality Update

J Gallagher informed members that SQA had announced that they will remove the need to complete assessments for the HN Graded Units. Colleges will have the opportunity to provide estimated results in place of the graded unit assessments. Further guidance on how estimates might be reached for various types of graded units will be issued during w/c 9th November 2020.

In addition, he stated that SQA announced at the start of the new session that they would be extending their prior-verification service to cater for the flexibilities in assessment that are in place for 2020-21. Pre-verification is now the overarching term used by SQA for the following:

•Prior Verification (pre-existing)
•Combining Assessments (new)
•Changes to Conditions (new)

He drew members attention to the link where members could gain access to the SQA forms. He asked staff to ensure that they submit these forms to the quality department where the forms would be logged prior to sending to SQA.

J Gallagher reminded members that their PDRs were due in by the end of November 2020 and that the paperwork was with their managers. He added that he would email a reminder w/c 9th November 2020. He advised that the support staff PDR remained in the same format as last years, however the teaching staffs' PDR had changed to align with GTCS professional standards.

R Ashton thanked J Gallagher for his report.

10. Advice, Guidance & Learner Support Update

The Head of Services to Support Learners informed members that the Advice, Guidance and Learner Support (AGLS) team offered a wide range of support measures to learners. She highlighted that the AGLS team moved quickly to deliver services online at the point of lockdown and continued to support learners throughout their remaining time at College. Learners engaging with services over this period stated that without the ongoing support and contact from Advisers they would have struggled to continue to engage with College and to manage with the stresses which lockdown had brought.

M McKerlie added that the College encouraged students to disclose any disabilities, difficulties or barriers as early as the application and enrolment process. Following on from this, learners who make a disclosure were contacted to complete a Needs Questionnaire, followed up by an adviser who would carry out a Needs Assessment. She advised that this work had continued during COVID and that they had experienced an increase in numbers from previous years.

She noted that during the COVID restrictions most activity had taken place online with learners. However, the team had also provided an on-campus service from August 2020 to allow for drop in.

She provided an update on the Core Skills Profiling and highlighted that 796 had completed online, in comparison to last year's figure which was 800, they had not experienced a huge drop in numbers.

R Ashton thanked M McKerlie for the update and invited comment or questions.

T Currie asked if the staff were coping with the increase of numbers and if they were confident that the students were continuing to be well supported. G Sharp commented that AGLS staff were all very busy and coping with the additional demands. He highlighted that the faculty staff were also doing their very best to provide learners with as much support as possible.

11. Student Association Update

S Loughran stated that the Student Association had been participating in the student forum and was actively seeking funding for Mental Health. The Scottish Government had announced an allocation to Colleges and Universities to the sum of 1.3million pounds. She noted her concern as to the distribution of these funds which would be administered through GCRB.

She explained that there was currently 115 student reps and their first meeting was scheduled to take place week beginning 16th of November via Teams.

The Learner Engagement Officer stated that the Stop and Check Survey had been circulated digitally using Microsoft Forms. She reported that on average they would expect to receive around 1800 responses, however had only seen a return of 451 this academic year. She advised that this had been promoted via email and on MyKelvin. She asked for support from CMs to encourage students to complete. She explained that the first three questions on the survey had remained the same and others had been slightly adapted. She continued to provide an overview of the statistics and informed members that 96% of students were satisfied with their overall experience to date.

It was noted by some teaching staff members that they were unaware that the survey had been circulated. R Ashton noted that this would be rectified.

12. Code of Learner Behaviour Review

The Vice Principal of Curriculum & Quality Enhancement informed members that he sought approval from the Academic Board to include an additional paragraph within the Code of Learner Behaviour. He explained that students were not adhering to the social distancing and face covering guidelines. He explained that the additional paragraph was to stipulate the importance that students behave in a manner that does not place health risks to staff or students. He drew members attention to the paragraph. He stated that students required to adhere to the guidance and all students would be informed of its inclusion. He highlighted that this would serve as a final warning for those students found to be flouting the rules.

T Currie stated that the first line of the paragraph was not necessary as students should already be aware.

Members approved.

14. Risk Management – Risk Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

No specific risks identified.

15. Equality Management – Equality Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

16. Data Protection – Data Protection Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda items

17. Closure

18. Date of Next Meeting
22 January 2021

Freedom of Information

The College subscribes to full openness and transparency in all of its operations and decision making processes. As a result, all documents (unless indicated) will be available for public scrutiny in compliance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.