

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
ACADEMIC BOARD
MINUTE

Minute of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Friday 1 May 2026 at 1.30pm via MS Teams

1. Sederunt

Robin Ashton (Chair)
Tracy Leavy (Director of Faculty & Community Engagement)
Peter Brown (Director of Faculty, Apprenticeships and Skills)
Jason Quinn (Director of Digital and Information Services)
James Davidson (Lecturer)
Gerry Harkins (Lecturer)
George McGuire (Senior Curriculum Manager)
Gary Sharp (Student Support Services Manager)
Alastair McGhee (Director of Student Experience and Enterprise)
Amrit Bedi (Equalities and Inclusion Lead)
Mae Smillie (Head of Student Information Services)
John Clarke; (Head of Enhancement and Assurance)
Arlene Sweeney (Learner, Engagement Officer)
Katie McAnenay (Team Leader, Library Services)

In Attendance

Debbie Friel: Senior Committee Coordinator (purpose of the minute)

2. Apologies

Iain Cameron (Lecturer)
Jon Craig (President, Student Association); and
Chantell McCallum (President, Student Association)
Lesley Phee (Organisational Development Business Partner)

3. Academic Board Terms of Reference

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 14 members in attendance.

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 6 February 2026

The minute of the meeting was accepted as an accurate record of the business conducted on 6 February 2026.

6. Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meetings held on 6 February 2026

R Ashton noted that he was confident all actions were complete.

7. Draft Learner Behaviour Policy and Student Disciplinary Procedure

The Assistant Principal, Performance, Planning and Student Experience explained that the revised Learner Behaviour Policy clarifies expectations for learner conduct and places stronger emphasis on positive, inclusive and supportive approaches to behaviour management. The policy strengthens alignment with equality and inclusion principles, embeds trauma-informed and restorative practices, and reinforces the importance of learner voice, with the intention of supporting positive behaviour and reducing unnecessary escalation into formal disciplinary processes.

J Clarke informed members of the significant updates to the disciplinary policy, including the addition of risk management measures after serious incidents, clarification of staff roles in investigations and hearings, and a more explicit commitment to accessibility and inclusivity for students with additional support needs. He added that the revised policy now specifies that the right to appeal does not guarantee a second hearing, introducing valid grounds for appeal and closing a loophole that previously allowed all appeals to proceed to a second hearing regardless of merit. The policy now requires advance notice for reasonable adjustments during disciplinary processes, addressing concerns raised by T Leavy about late declarations of additional support needs and ensuring procedures are more accessible and inclusive.

Robin emphasised that, following policy approval, the focus would shift to training and awareness for both students and staff to ensure effective implementation and understanding of the new procedures.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- Approve the revised Learner Behaviour Policy (April 2026); and
- Approve the revised Student Disciplinary Procedure (April 2026).

8. Learning and Teaching Strategy Review

The Vice Principal introduced the refreshed Learning and Teaching Strategy, noting that it is being reviewed to ensure alignment with the new College Strategy introduced in December. He highlighted that most KPIs remain high, limiting scope for significant increases, with the exception of full-time HE, where a 1% annual increase is proposed due to current performance being below sector averages.

J Quinn welcomed the inclusion of points previously raised, particularly in relation to developments in artificial intelligence (AI). He noted that while AI is currently used as a tool, it also presents challenges, particularly in assessment, and will have increasing relevance for future workforce skills. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that students develop appropriate AI-related skills, tailored to subject areas.

R Ashton agreed that this should be strengthened within the Strategy, particularly within the section on wider and transferable skills. He noted the need to reflect both student skill development and the associated staff training requirements.

It was agreed that the Strategy would be updated to include reference to AI skills and capabilities. Subject to this amendment, the Committee supported progression of the Strategy to the Learning and Teaching Committee for endorsement.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- note and consider the review of progress related to delivery of the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2025-2028;
- consider and agree, subject to any amendment, the draft Learning and Teaching Strategy 2026-2030; and
- note the intention to develop a new Student Experience Strategy in the 2026-27 academic year.

9. Review of Quality and Enhancement Handbook

The Assistant Principal, Performance, Planning & Student Experience stated that the paper spoke to the comprehensive review and rewrite of the College's Quality Enhancement Handbook, which had reached its scheduled review date.

The Assistant Principal explained that the revised Handbook represents a substantial update designed to ensure the College's approach to quality is current, coherent and aligned with both internal practice and external expectations. He added that the revised document places stronger emphasis on quality enhancement rather than procedural compliance, with a clearer focus on learning, teaching and assessment practice, reflective evaluation, and learner experience.

Key changes highlighted included the introduction of a clearer Quality Enhancement Framework, strengthened embedding of learner voice and partnership, clarified roles and responsibilities across governance structures, and improved alignment with current quality processes and supporting documentation. The revised structure was described as more accessible and supportive of a consistent, enhancement-focused quality culture across the College.

J Clarke outlined the approval process, noting that the handbook would become active after endorsement by both the Academic Board and the Quality SCM Forum, with plans for annual refresher training for staff to ensure compliance and readiness for upcoming reviews.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to approve the new Quality Enhancement Handbook

10. Meeting Community Needs Report

The Assistant Principal Community Engagement and Curriculum provided an overview of the College's four community engagement strands; wider access, community and youth hubs, literacies and essential skills, and the learning network, detailing current activities, priorities for the coming year, and the impact of funding changes, with R Ashton and T Leavy discussing future plans and partnerships.

T Leavy detailed the four main strands of community engagement: wider access (with 20+ partners and 1500+ enrolments), community and youth hubs (family-focused, 400+ enrolments, support for child poverty), literacies and essential skills (targeted projects for women and care leavers), and the learning network (supporting 32 centres with digital resources). She added that the key priorities included consolidating and evidencing impact for funding bodies, expanding certificated progression opportunities, strengthening youth access pathways, enhancing digital and online learning offers, and aligning delivery with child poverty objectives.

She further explained that due to the loss of the community fund grant, the need to align activities with credit funding criteria, expand certificated provision, and improve tracking of youth access participants' progression into further education or employment.

Members discussed potential use of new child poverty funds to open a hub at East End Campus in partnership with the Halliday Foundation, and to expand ESOL delivery and parental engagement initiatives.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

11. Student Association Partnership Agreement Annual Report

The Learner Engagement Officer stated that the paper spoke to student partnership activity during the 2025–26 academic year and outlined how partnership working between the College and the Student Association has supported the student experience.

She highlighted that the Student Partnership Agreement underpins collaborative working and supports students to influence decision-making, provide feedback and engage in College life. Key areas of activity included strengthening student representation, supporting Class Representatives, improving communication channels, and ensuring the student voice is embedded within college committees and governance structures.

It was noted that partnership activity has also focused strongly on health, wellbeing, inclusion and equality, with student-led initiatives supporting wellbeing, cost-of-living challenges and sustainability. The report reflected positively on the impact of partnership working, while identifying areas for further development, including ensuring consistent engagement across campuses and increasing participation from a wider range of students.

A Sweeney invited question or comment.

The proposal to share out information on class representative roles over the summer was strongly supported by James Davidson, who noted that recruitment is often challenging, with students lacking understanding of the role and feeling it is introduced too late. Early communication is expected to improve awareness and uptake.

R Ashton acknowledged these challenges, highlighting that new students are often overwhelmed at the start of term, while there is also a need to identify class representatives quickly to begin training and engagement.

Gary Sharp outlined plans to provide clearer guidance and introductory learning materials so students better understood the expectations before taking on the role. He also noted the importance of raising awareness among all students about the purpose of class representatives.

Arlene Sweeney emphasised the importance of promoting the role in terms of employability and transferable skills, encouraging a broader approach to increasing student interest.

R Ashton concluded that strengthening the class representative system is a key priority, particularly in relation to quality assurance and anticipated external scrutiny in the next academic year.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

12. Rail Engineering Development – Progress Update

The Assistant Principal, Curriculum, Skills and Apprenticeships informed members that the paper highlighted progress made in developing rail engineering provision at the College and provided an update on employer engagement, partnerships and planned curriculum developments.

P Brown outlined that rail engineering has been identified as a priority growth area aligned with regional skills needs and the College's strategic role in delivering employer-led provision. Progress to date includes strong engagement with industry partners, co-design discussions to ensure curriculum relevance, and activity to strengthen apprenticeship pathways within the wider engineering portfolio.

It was noted that plans are progressing to introduce a rail engineering pre-apprenticeship programme designed to provide clear, accessible routes into employment and apprenticeships. The development was described as supporting local communities, inclusive economic growth and progression into skilled employment, while risks related to funding, capacity and ongoing employer engagement are being actively managed through phased planning and governance processes.

P Brown explained that a partnership with SWGR and Volker Rail enables students to access paid work opportunities while studying, with the potential to transition into accelerated apprenticeships that recognise prior learning and offer competitive salaries.

R Ashton and P Brown discussed the potential to replicate the 'earn while you learn' model in other sectors, noting its benefits for both students and employers in addressing skills gaps and recruitment challenges.

R Ashton noted that further updates will continue to be reported to the Academic Board as it progresses, given its importance to curriculum development. He highlighted three key growth priorities supported by additional funding: engineering, a science project with the city/regional partners, and a care project led by T Leavy. He advised that updates on these projects will be provided throughout the next academic year.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

13. Kelvin Learning Model Implementation

The Assistant Principal, Performance, Planning & Student Experience Informed members that the paper spoke to the implementation of the Kelvin Learning Model, following its earlier development and co-design, and provided an update on its formal launch and initial staff engagement activity.

The Assistant Principal explained that the Kelvin Learning Model has been introduced as a practical, College-wide articulation of high-quality learning and teaching, designed to bridge strategic intent and classroom practice. The Model was described as a supportive, non-prescriptive framework intended to encourage reflection, consistency and continuous enhancement, while aligning practice with the College's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and national quality expectations.

It was noted that the Model was formally launched to teaching staff through structured development activity, which encouraged course teams to reflect collectively on current practice and share examples of effective learning and teaching. Early engagement has been positive and has generated valuable insight into strengths, areas for development and opportunities for professional dialogue. The paper outlined next steps focused on embedding the Model within College planning, self-evaluation and quality processes, ensuring it becomes a routine reference point for reflection and enhancement.

Members were invited to ask a question or provide a comment.

R Ashton highlighted that the relevant quadrant within the model is the one offering the greatest scope for improvement.

J Clarke agreed, noting that this area reflected the lowest RAG ratings, particularly around industry-facing practice, employability, and meta skills. He explained that while meta skills are embedded within the curriculum, they are not always clearly signposted or well understood by students. He also noted that some courses have limited capacity for work-based learning due to SQA framework constraints, which contributes to weaker ratings in these areas.

R Ashton acknowledged these challenges and indicated that this area should be incorporated into the college-wide self-evaluation and action plan. He referenced recent employer engagement events in the rail and science sectors, which consistently highlighted gaps not in technical knowledge but in core skills such as confidence and problem solving.

J Clarke added that emerging analysis suggests staff RAG ratings against the Kelvin Learning Model align closely with student feedback, particularly with strengths in relationship-building and inclusivity, and relative weaknesses in real-world application. He noted that although this is anecdotal at this stage, the consistency of findings provides a useful and coherent picture of areas requiring development.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the development of the Model up to this point, and the intended next steps.

14. TQER Preparation

The Assistant Principal, Performance, Planning & Student Experience informed members that the paper spoke to the College's ongoing preparations for the forthcoming Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review and provided an update on recent engagement with the Quality Assurance Agency.

J Clarke outlined that preparations have progressed through sustained internal activity alongside formal engagement with QAA, including institutional meetings designed to support a well-informed, proportionate review process. These engagements have ensured clarity around the College's context, mission, enhancement priorities and approach to academic quality, while supporting oversight of readiness for the review.

It was highlighted that Institution-Led Quality Review continues to play a central role in embedding tertiary quality expectations and evidencing reflective practice and enhancement. Ongoing preparation activity includes maintaining the TQER Action Plan, collating evidence to support review documentation, and engaging staff across academic and professional service areas. He added that overall, the paper provided assurance that preparation is being managed in a structured, risk-aware manner and supports continuous enhancement of the learner experience.

Members were invited to ask a question or provide a comment.

Robin Ashton invited feedback from Peter Brown on the College's approach to inspection preparation, following Peter's recent completion of a review.

P Brown confirmed that the College appears to be on the right track in its preparation. He explained that reviewers operate with significant autonomy and continually request additional evidence during the process. He noted that if concerns are identified, organisations are given opportunities to provide further supporting evidence. He also described how final validation meetings can be tightly focused, with short-notice agendas where senior staff are asked to clarify and evidence key claims, such as the effectiveness of employer advisory groups.

R Ashton thanked P Brown for the insight and emphasised the value of the feedback as useful intelligence to support preparation. He stressed the importance of ensuring that both staff and students selected for inspection discussions are well informed and able to clearly represent the College. He also highlighted the need for confidence and consistency in messaging ahead of the inspection process.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the college's continued activity in participating in TQEF/ QAA processes and preparing for TQER.

15. Tackling Child Poverty – RISE Initiative

16. 2026-27 Admissions Update

17. Participation in Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme

Members of the Academic Board acknowledged that items 15, 16 and 17 were presented for information only.

18. Impact and Consequences

- **Resources**
- **Impact on Students**
- **Risk and Assurance**
- **Equality**
- **Data Protection**
- **Environmental and Sustainability**

19. Closure

The meeting closed at 2.50pm

20. Date of Next Meeting

TBC