

## Learning Enhancement Committee meeting minutes

The first meeting of the Learning Enhancement Committee was held at 2.00pm on Thursday 11 April 2019 at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.

**Present:** Paul Little (Chair)  
Dr Veena O'Halloran (Vice Chair)  
Dr Martha Caddell  
Dr Gary Campbell (observer)  
Dr Claire Carney  
Professor Frank Coton  
Karen Corbett  
Angela Cox  
Dr Ailsa Crum  
Eve Lewis  
Rowena Pelik  
Fiona Robertson

**Officers:** Dr Dee Bird (Secretary)  
Derek Horsburgh  
Dr John Kemp  
Emma Roberts (Clerk)  
Karen Watt (Chief Executive)

**Apologies:** Liam McCabe  
Dr Ken Thomson

### 19/01 Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all members, observers and Council executive officers to the first Learning Enhancement Committee meeting. A brief round-table introduction from members followed.

The Chair informed the members that the purpose of the meeting was to agree the remit of the committee, and to begin to develop a programme of work. The Chair recognised that the committee covers both the college and university sectors, so it offers the opportunity to identify shared priorities and to enhance the student learning

experience by improving the learner journey from the senior phase right across the tertiary sector.

#### **19/02      Declarations of Interests**

The Chair reminded the members of their responsibility to indicate if they had or may be perceived to have a conflict of interest under any item. None was declared.

#### **19/03      Remit and Membership of the Learning Enhancement Committee LEC/19/01**

The Committee received a paper outlining the draft remit of the Learning Enhancement Committee. Members were invited to discuss and approve the remit, and to advise of any amendments.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- The remit had been decided following the Learning Enhancement Committee working group, and also draws on the SFC's draft strategic plan.
- The SFC Board will be reviewing its committee structure, and there is a possibility that the Skills Committee and Access and Inclusion Committee may be combined with the Learning Enhancement Committee. It was **agreed** that the remit can be reconsidered once this review has taken place.
- The remit should reflect the uniqueness of the Committee, and its reach both nationally and internationally.
- The remit should incorporate equality and diversity, even if this was already represented in the remit of the Access and Inclusion Committee.
- It was agreed that in item 2 of Annex B, 'HE representatives' should be amended to 'university representatives' as HE is also delivered in colleges.

The remit was agreed. It was also **agreed** that if any further commitments are made, the remit will be returned to the committee for approval.

#### **19/04      Overview of quality in colleges and universities**

The Committee received a paper for noting, which provided members with a general overview of quality approaches in both the college and university sectors.

The Committee noted that:

- The SFC has a statutory duty to ensure quality in both the college and university sectors.
- The quality arrangements for both sectors, although different, are both focused on enhancement and continuous improvement.
- An area for additional consideration is the quality arrangements where colleges and universities overlap, such as college students studying university level courses.
- The reference to the TEF appears in the paper should come under the sub-heading of UK quality initiatives so that it is not assumed to be a part of Scottish university quality.

**19/05**

### **The UHI experience: Challenges and Opportunities for a Tertiary Institution (Presentation)**

The Committee received a presentation from Dr Gary Campbell, Vice Principal, Strategic Developments, UHI. The presentation focused on the challenges and opportunities for a tertiary institution, focusing specifically on UHI.

The purpose of this presentation was to give insight to the Committee to prepare for further discussion on shared priorities across the tertiary sector. A copy of the presentation is attached at Annex A for reference.

In discussion the Committee noted:

- The advantages of a 'seamless' learning experience. There should be parity between college and university, and staff and students should be able to move around within them.
- There was a need for complete visibility in staff conditions, and for parity of esteem between further and higher education and its practitioners. The wider cultural barriers to achieving this were also discussed.
- Within the UHI context, 'Tertiary' may either be an inclusive or a restrictive term. Members need to recognise the importance of language, and consider their use of it, in order to fully understand what the Committee is seeking to achieve.
- A 'Metro' system, which allows learners to smoothly enter and exit at different points, was highlighted.

- Cultural legacy barriers need to be addressed.
- National bargaining remains a pressure for the constituent colleges of UHI.

## 19/06 **Workshop to identify shared priorities (facilitated discussion)**

Dr Ailsa Crum, QAA, and Karen Corbett, Education Scotland, SFC, introduced the discussion. The purpose of the workshop was to begin to stimulate thinking on priorities for both sectors, and also to consider where there are shared priorities. This would enable the Committee to begin to form a programme of work and inform long term agenda planning.

Members were asked to individually identify:

- Priorities within their 'own' sector
- Priorities within the 'other' sector.
- Shared priorities

The Committee **agreed** that the individual responses would be collated and circulated amongst members before the next meeting.

In discussion the Committee noted that:

- A student-centred approach needs to be taken, providing a seamless learner journey.
- Professional development for practitioners across both sectors is a priority, to ensure that there is consistent and coherent teaching across Scotland.
- There is a need to align the links between schools and colleges, and between colleges and universities. The Committee should also identify ways to challenge the existing culture in Scotland, to change perceptions and remove any divisions between teachers, college lecturers and university lecturers.
- The learner journey needs to remain individualised, ensuring that it is flexible and non-transactional. Progression should be thought about more holistically, with multiple routes of progression available beyond articulation. There is a need for greater flexibility both within and across the sectors.
- There needs to be consistent models of assessment and feedback across all sectors, beginning with schools.

- In both sectors, shared priorities include meta-skills; enhanced access to attainment, further study and employment; more effective use of data; and the educational capital to succeed.
- In the college sector specifically, the key priorities are identifying the skills needed at a local and regional level; continuing improvement of quality arrangements in colleges; raising attainment, and understanding the diversity of the tertiary sector.
- The key priorities identified for the university sector included enhancing and refining widening access policies; the development of graduate level skills; mental health and student partnerships.
- The Committee should consider which priorities will have the most impact at a national level and for key stakeholders, and how they will meet policy drivers around economic and social needs.
- There was a need to establish the distinctive Scottish elements of college and university education in Scotland.

#### **19/07 Long-term agenda (AIC/19/07)**

The Committee **agreed** that the Chair and the Secretary would discuss the long-term agenda further, and present this to members for approval at the next meeting.

#### **19/08 Any Other Business**

SFC would be nominating a new member for the QAA Board. The Committee was invited to consider any possible nominations, and to send any further details on to SFC. Members were reminded that nominees must have a strategic view beyond any single institution.

The Committee was informed that two events would be held by QAA Scotland. It was **agreed** that the invitation for these events would be circulated amongst members.

#### **19/09 Date of next meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place at 10.00am on Thursday 19 September 2019 at 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.