

Item 4.2 LB 16/12/2019

Approved Minute: Curriculum and Student Affairs and Outcomes Committee (CSAO)

12.30 pm 18 November 2019, Board Room, NCL Cumbernauld

Present: David Winning (Chair,) Jean Carratt, Dianne Dixon, Stewart McKillop, Christopher Moore, Elizabeth Newlands, Barbara Philliben, Calum Smith

Apologies: Lorraine Cowan, Rose Harkness

In attendance: Angus Allan, Ann Baxter, Brian Gilchrist, Carolyn Laird, Diane McGill (Board Secretary), Penny Neish

1. Chair's welcome

1.1 David Winning welcomed the new NCL Principal, Professor Christopher Moore, new Lanarkshire Board member, Barbara Philliben, and NCL Student Association President, Calum Smith to their first meeting of the CSA

2. Apologies: as noted above

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minute of the CSAO meeting on 2 September 2019

4.1 The draft Minutes were agreed.

5. Matters arising:

5.1 STEM Update: Ann Baxter (AB) advised that in May 2019 200 pupils had attended a Step into STEM event which had proved very successful. A conservation event had been held over the summer and in October a 3 day event took place also involving school pupils. The events were well received and overall were very successful, however the college has identified a number of areas where improvements could be made, and these will be taken into account when organising the next set of events.

There will be an event for teaching staff at the end of January 2020 and a Step into STEM (Pre-school) event mid-February.

5.2 Who Cares? Scotland: Diane McGill (DMcG) said that Board participation in this training would go ahead once all Board members have their NCL email addresses. This action is currently being progressed. Carolyn Laird (CL) advised that the Who Cares? Scotland training is on hold at the moment and it is anticipated that it should be available again in 2-3 weeks. Board members will be advised.

Action: Board Secretary to advise members when the Who Cares? Scotland training is available.

5.3 Winter leavers: CL reported that through the Supported Learning Faculty, NCL was running a new programme of one day courses and activity for winter leavers with North Lanarkshire Council, offering a mix of subjects for 88 pupils this year across the college campuses. There have been some challenges to accommodate the Council's initial expectations and in some subject areas attendance has been poor. Feedback is mixed; some saying the provision is too classroom based, others saying they are very happy. It is difficult to meet all needs but now that the college is clearer on what the Council is seeking the College will be able to make improvements for next year.

- 5.4 **Microsoft Teams:** A copy of the notes of Jason Quinn’s presentation to the Board prior to its meeting in October have now been circulated to members. JQ had outlined the potential Microsoft Teams could offer to the Board as an information repository and also as an e-discussion area. Further discussion with JQ on how to progress this facility will be pursued by DMcG.

Action: DMcG to follow up with JQ re the use of Microsoft Teams by Board members.

Regional business

6. ROA Update:

Angus Allan (AA) said that the ROA had been submitted to SFC during the first week of November. AA commented on the SLC figures in the Lanarkshire ROA National Measures Data Table (Appendix A of the paper Lanarkshire Region: Self-evaluation of Outcome Agreement 2018/19) which he said were in general above the sector average. Stewart McKillop (SMcK) said that SLC’s success rate had improved on the previous year and that the college sat in the top quartile in the sector. The average age of students at SLC is now 28. AA said that although SLC was pleased with its current position there was no room for complacency and that they would continue to work hard to make further improvements.

Ann Baxter said that NCL was making good progress on attainment and acknowledged that the area of care experience students needs more work. Across the college, departments are working hard to improve achievement and retention and recently applied measures are taking effect. With regard to workplace learning AB advised that the college was developing a new strategy to address issues around the demands being placed on employers across Lanarkshire for work experience opportunities. There are limitations on what employers can offer and placements cannot be made very far outwith the region. There are also transport difficulties to be taken into consideration. However, NCL staff will continue to look for work placement opportunities for students and to encourage more employers to be open to their involvement with the college in this way.

7. Student Reports

7.1 NCL Student Association Report

Calum Smith (CS) spoke to his report and highlighted several issues:

- Mental health awareness activities undertaken by the NCLSA
- Stress management/stress control techniques prior to exam time (April/May 2020)
- Healthy Body Healthy Mind activities
- New class rep structure and class rep training from sparqs
- Attendance at Skillset Scotland
- Student survey of canteen set up and provision. Results awaited.
- Revamp for the students’ area in the E-Block: the SA and Learner engagement team are working alongside students from Engineering on improvements to their social area. It is hoped that this will be completed at the end of November.
- NCLSA are also involved in the development of online low level courses to improve student engagement. These short term courses will operate like games with quick rewards, an online leader board, etc. The gamification offerings will also be available in a paper version.

7.2 SLC Student Association Report

Liz Newlands (LN) spoke to her report and highlighted:

- College involvement in Glasgow Pride in August
- Range of activities during a very successful Freshers’ Week
- Launch of Deaf Awareness Training with potential for a course to run in January 2020.

- First chit chat session for students. SLCSA decided to invite students to an informal chat over lunch to encourage students to engage and share with each other. This was so successful that other sessions are planned.
- SLCSA organised a theatre night in East Kilbride Village Theatre
- World Mental Health Day: SLCSA had a coffee and cake stall in the college to encourage staff and students to chat
- Health and Wellbeing Week: the SA ran a range of activities throughout the week.
- Care Experienced Week: SLCSA provided information and advice to care experienced students and organised a social event to celebrate their achievements.
- Climate Change: SLCSA was involved in promoting the Human Chain event in October. The event was very successful and involved 800 students and staff.
- LN also provided a list of upcoming events throughout 2020.

NCL Regional College business

8. NCL Update from Committees

Carolyn Laird (CL) sought confirmation from the Chair that the level of detail now provided was adequate for the Committee. DW confirmed that he was content with the reduced level of detail in the NCL paper, 'Update Report from Internal Committees'.

Academic Standards Planning and Monitoring Committee: Engineering and Automotive

CL reported that the Work Based Learning project in Automotive Skills had been approved. CL commented on the challenges to the staff in this area to increase the number of employers involved to enable students to undertake these courses.

On course performance 2018-19 where there was a less than 60% success rate, the Academic Standards Planning and Monitoring Committee are looking into the issues and the barriers to higher achievement. Over the next 3 weeks the senior team is running 'Spotlight on the Curriculum' sessions with each Faculty to identify next steps to improve performance. The Committee is looking at this from the viewpoint of 3-4 year trends. They are exploring a range of different approaches.

The Step into College Programme has proved successful in reducing early withdrawal, but the teams are still aiming to achieve a 2.5% improvement overall.

Learning and Teaching Team

Discussions are on-going on the observation of learning process. Following concerns raised by EIS/FELA the L & T Team has sought clarification from the EIS on the issue of the observation of learning as opposed to observation of the staff members delivering the learning. CSAO will be kept updated.

Action: CL to keep CSAO updated on the observation of learning process

The Copyright Licensing Authority is running an exercise across the college on identifying royalties for authors. Notices have been placed on all photocopiers on the requirements of the CLA in this area.

Learning and Teaching eTechnology Team

Innovative projects are being undertaken to address retention issues for Automotive students through gamification of some courses.

9. NCL Awards and Achievements

CL spoke to the paper and drew the CSAO's attention to the wide range of awards gained by both staff and students across the college. CL advised that a number of students would be competing in the Worldskills UK final in Birmingham later in November.

10. NCL Annual Complaints Report

AB reported that there had been a spike in complaints (from 54 to 73) which related to the industrial action days, but that generally there were no other areas of concern. However, the SMT has drawn up a lessons learned and action table and will be working on these over the coming months.

11. NCL Key Performance Indicators

11.1 Key Performance Indicators – update

AB said that NCL performance was definitely improving; there has been a big drop in early withdrawals. NCL's involvement in the Scottish Government's programme on raising attainment and improving retention has been a great help but other colleges participating in this project have not had such positive results to date. The project has provided a structured approach from which NCL has benefitted. It will take about 2 years for all of the changes NCL is making to address retention issues to be fully effective so further improvement is anticipated. NCL tries to follow up with students who withdraw but this is not always possible, however there is usually a range of reasons for withdrawal such as going into employment, mental health issues and personal reasons.

11.2 Key Indicator Infographic

AB advised that the infographic was a visual way of presenting the figures set out in the various tables and graphs in the update paper. Members of the CSAO welcomed this different way of presenting complex information. It was suggested that it may be useful to have ROA targets included. AB to investigate this proposal.

Action: AB to review whether the inclusion of ROA targets in the infographic would enhance the information provided.

12. Progress and Review of the NCL Business Plan

AB said that the Business Plan was progressing as scheduled and that SFC was pleased with the efforts being made.

Assigned College business

13. SLC Development Committee minutes 3 September 2019

Stewart McKillop (SMcK) spoke to the paper and highlighted several areas:

- Classroom observations: these are now completed and an action plan drawn up.
- Quality Enhancement Group Report: Awarding Body Verification Activity Update SMcK advised that all 2018-19 external verification events have been successfully concluded. City and Guilds have awarded the College Medium (registration only) Approval for a number of qualifications across the college. He added that the relationship with SQA remains strong.

- Complaints Quarterly update: The total number of complaints received for 2018-19 was 15, 14 of which have been actioned. 8 only were upheld. SMcK said that the college sought to learn from the complaints as this could lead to improvements being put in place.
- Marketing, Recruitment and International Activity update: SMcK expressed concern about the UK leaving the EU and the impact this would have on the recruitment of EU students. Their fees will be paid for the next 3 years but thereafter there is some uncertainty on the prospects for the recruitment of students to colleges. SMcK said he was concerned that universities may lower their entry qualifications and students who would otherwise have applied to college will be encouraged to apply for university.

General Committee Business

14. Approval of Publication of Committee Papers

- i) Agenda
- ii) Minutes of the CSAO meeting 2 September 2019
- iii) ROA Update
- iv) NCL Update from Committees
- v) NCL Awards and Achievements
- vi) Key Performance Indicators
- vii) Key Performance Infographic
- viii) Progress and Review of NCL Business Plan
- ix) SLC Development Committee Minutes 3 September 2019 – *see SLC website*

15. AOB

- The action identified in para 14 of the Minutes of the CSAO Committee on 2 September 2019 remained to be addressed. It was agreed that AB would take this forward and would discuss with Keith Fulton.

Action: AB to look at the wording in the NCL HGIOC Report as it relates to SLC and discuss with KF.

- The Chair thanked Stewart McKillop for his contribution to the CSAO Committee and wished him well in his retirement.

16. Date of next meeting:

The date of the next meeting of the CSAO Committee is Monday 24 February 2020 at 12.30 in the Boardroom of NCL Cumbernauld.