

Resources and General Purposes Committee – 24 May 2021

Item 8.2 NCL Brand Update

This paper provides a summary of current and planned activity in the areas above to provide an update for the Resources and General Purposes Committee. Where the approval/ratification of the Committee is required, this is highlighted at the appropriate points.

1 Brand Dashboard

The dashboard for the last available quarter, covering the period November 2020 – to February 2021, is attached. This shows the range of activity undertaken, but with a particular focus on the growth of our online promotion. Some of this has been of necessity, as we diverted budget from outdoor and transport advertising to online due to the pandemic, but we have also sought to develop and enhance our online presence and visibility through social media takeovers by specific areas of the curriculum – such as make up artistry and music, as well as ‘Expert in the Field’ sessions to showcase the talents and expertise of our staff and the careers that we can offer to students. In all of our online promotion, we are taking a very human approach that is warm, welcoming and focused on people.

2 Brand Update

In terms of other areas of work being undertaken by the Brand Team, this has included:

- COVID-19 communications for staff and students
- Recruitment campaigns for full-time, part-time and evening provision (for AY 2021/22)
- Experts in the Field sessions (focusing on recruitment best practice / sharing ideas / developing new approaches)
- #ChooseCollege virtual showcase planning, as part of wider sector promotion of colleges taking place on 26th May
- Race to Zero Pledge – which is a global campaign sponsored by United Nations Climate Change to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest (<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/race-to-zero-campaign>)
- NCL Rebrand Launch (internal & external plans)
- Supporting and encouragement of a digital first approach to student recruitment and application
- Promotion of the Microsoft Shared Goals Agreement, the first of its kind signed by a college in the UK
- Virtual launch of the Smart Hub Lanarkshire, which is a partnership of NCL, North Lanarkshire Council and Strathclyde University via the Advanced Manufacturing Challenge Fund
- Continuation of course area ‘spotlight’ sessions

- One to one online sessions with a course expert
- Supporting in the planning and execution of NCL's developing sustainability agenda and COP26 engagement.

3 Communications Update

For our communications team, activity focuses on both external public relations activity and internal communications.

Public Relations

Since March 2021, we have had 53 articles featured in the press with a combined total reach of 1,796,793 and a PR value of £69,328 calculated on the basis of featured space. Articles have been published in relation to some of the activities highlighted by the Brand Team and some examples of the stories that have featured are available on our own website here

<https://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/news>

Communications

Other communications activity since March has included:

- Survey of Internal Communications, as part of our evaluation of our internal communication approaches. We received almost 300 responses, which has provided good feedback on current communication channels, as well as indicating the type of communication that staff would like to see more often. A report on the survey responses has been drafted and will inform future planning for the communications team.
- The Communications Team have also been central to ongoing COVID related communications and updates to staff and students
- 4 x entries written for the Herald HE Awards. The deadline for submission was 6th May and the awards will take place on 17th June.
- Mental Health Awareness Week (10th – 14th May) – internal communication to staff and students, highlighting resources and sources of information. Hosted by the Mental Health Foundation, the theme this year is 'Nature, recognising the importance that connecting with nature has for mental wellbeing – internal and student communications
- Internal and external communications for International Women's Day, focusing on the #ChooseToChallenge campaign focusing on calling out gender bias and inequality.
- Led the external communications activity on behalf of all 3 partners involved in Smart Hub Lanarkshire
- Guest blog written for SFC (still to appear)

Assistant Principal: Organisational Development

May 2021

BRAND & COMMS DASHBOARD

NOVEMBER 2020 – FEBRUARY 2021

HIGHLIGHTS & PRIORITIES

- NCL Festive Activities
- NCL Virtual Awards Ceremony
- COVID-19 communications – Staff and Students
- Staff Engagement

- NCL Purpose, Mission and Values consultation process
- NCL Rebrand
- August full-time Recruitment
- COP26
- Revival of SARG group
- Creation of Expert in the field sessions
- International Women’s Day 2021

- Government Digital Accessibility updates
- Christmas staff activities
- Partnership with Rangers
- Loch Lomond Charity Single
- CDN Award Win
- Course area spotlight sessions

BRAND

Working closely with the Principal and Chief Executive Christopher Moore, the Brand and Communications team have been working in the background to create a brand which will positively influence how people think and feel about the college.

The launch of the new college brand will take place in two phases. Phase 1, Internal release and phase 2, external release.

DESIGN

93

DESIGN JOBS WERE CARRIED OUT IN-HOUSE including 312 individual materials within those projects.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Since September 2020 we have focused on increasing our social following and engagement across the following key channels:



400+ new likes on Facebook.

• 600k + impressions

• Most popular post – Graduation #GoosebumpMoment (52k reached)

Rangers FC partnership post (28k reached)

• Over 16,000 page views.



• 662k impressions

• 2850 likes & x retweets

• 1400 link clicks



- 1300 new followers since the start of term
- Thousands of post likes
- 10k + video views
- Hosted 2 takeovers with others planned

COMMS

(Our external comms officer was on furlough for the whole of January/February)



• 53 stories in local, national, industry and online news

• 1,611,394 opportunities to see the stories

• £113,267 worth of editorial space in publications



• 474 pages of content

• 96,360 visits and 977 unique visitors

Communications activities also included:

- Christmas activities for staff including Virtual Big Breakfast, Christmas Card competition, music video competition and tree decorating contest

- CPD Survey
- Creating video interviews for Choose College campaign
- 2 x entries written for TES FE Awards
- Covid-19 updates to staff and students

RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS

Due to the pandemic, all out of home media with exception of pre booked digital boards was suspended. All activity has since transitioned online.

2021 recruitment is driven by a digital first approach, encouraging engagement with prospective students. This year’s recruitment is being built and developed in partnership with course experts across the college to ensure we maximise potential where possible to ensure recruitment targets are met.

Areas of focus are reviewed fortnightly, and budget is allocated to Brand and those areas of low recruitment.

Activities to date include: Direct email, Regional mail drop, 6 month paid SEO strategy, PPC audit (pending procurement), Organic social engagement, Spotlight events, One-to-one expert in the field sessions, Radio sponsorship.

EVENTS

- NCL Virtual Graduation
- Christmas Coffee Morning