**Minute: NCL Curriculum and Student Affairs and Outcomes Committee (CSAO)**

**12.30 17 February 2025 at NCL Cumbernauld and via Zoom**

**Present:** Barbara Philliben (Acting Chair), Catriona Blacker (SLC Student President), Stella McManus, Christopher Moore, Angela Pignatelli, Julie Webster (NCL Student President)

**Apologies**: Elizabeth Arogbofa (Co-optee), Fraser Hainey, Tarryn Robertson, Joanne Rosie, Ronnie Smith

**In attendance:** Ann Baxter, Ronnie Gilmour, Jennifer Lowe, Nicola Mulholland, Tony Brady (Lecturer, Department of Dental Health and Social Care, NCL), Dugald Craig (Head of External Funding and International Activity, NCL), Lynn Orr, (Head of Department, Dental Health and Social Care, NCL), Kate Wilson, (Academic Lead, Department of Dental Health and Social Care, NCL), Diane McGill, Penny Neish

1. **Chair’s welcome**

Barbara Philliben (BP) opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**2. Apologies:** as noted above.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Minute of the CSAO meeting 11 November 2024**

The Minutes were agreed.

**5. Matters arising**

**5.1 NCL Hoodies: Ann Baxter (AB) gave a brief update**: The **s**elling of hoodies in NCL has been well received and viewed as a positive move, giving students a sense of pride and belonging to NCL. As a pilot the hoodies are being sold at the Braw Wee shop in Motherwell. This will be evaluated prior to going ahead with the full plan at the commencement of session 25/26. The trial phase includes hoodies identifying specific departments which is proving popular among the students.

**5.2 External Funding drawdown CLIC project:** this item is covered in the CLIC presentation at agenda item 7.1.

**5.**3 **Green Skills Gap** – Industry view update. Joanne Rosie was tasked to report back to the CSAO but, although unable to attend this meeting, had advised that so far she had been unable to have the opportunity to discuss it with colleagues at Scottish Power. However, the CSAO members were keen to get her feedback and hoped that she would be able to report back to the Committee in due course.

***Action: Joanne Rosie to report back to the CSAO when she has had opportunity to discuss issues around the green skills gap with her colleagues.***

**Regional business**

**6. Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA) and Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP)**

**NCL**

Ann Baxter (AB) reported to the CSAO:

The new approach to quality assurance and enhancement includes the submission of a Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP), which all organisations were required to submit by 2 December 2024.

New College Lanarkshire have been advised that as part of the new tertiary quality arrangements, Alastair Duthie, Head of Scotland Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) will be the QAA Scotland liaison contact for NCL and his role will be to provide independent advice and guidance on quality matters, and to support the college in preparation for the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) and any follow-up activity after the review has taken place.

**The timetable for activity is:**

* SEAP submission deadline to SFC 2 December 2024
* Analysis of institutional SEAPs December 2024 to February 2025
* Annual Quality Engagements with SFC January to February 2025
* Institutional Liaison Meetings with QAA (in person visit) Late February to March 2025

There will be an Institutional Liaison Meeting (ILM) Handbook issued

New College Lanarkshire is due to be reviewed in academic year 2027/28.

An offer has been made that SFC will meet with Executive team to outline the requirements related to the Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model (OFAM).

Linda McLeod, SFC, is now the Lead Officer for Glasgow and Lanarkshire Regions, and she will be joined by Mairi Mitchell, Senior Policy Officer. Proposed date for the meeting is Monday, March 10th at Motherwell.

5 staff/students have been appointed as QAA reviewers.

**SLC**

Angela Pignatelli (AP) updated the CSAO on behalf of SLC and advised that the college had submitted its SEAP to SFC by the deadline. AP commented that Alastair Duthie is also the QAA Scotland liaison for SLC.

**7. Themes and Project Showcases**

**7.1** **Theme of meeting: Local Innovation Projects**

**7.1.1 CLIC (College Local Innovation Centres)**

Dugald Craig (DC) spoke to his presentation and outlined the background to the CLIC activities at NCL:

The College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC) pilot project is a mission based model which will make businesses across Glasgow City Region more productive through the development and deployment of digital capabilities, in support of the region's aim. The project is directly aligned to regional innovation strategies and will make a significant contribution to achieving those strategic objectives. It comprises 6 colleges: the 3 colleges in Glasgow, both Lanarkshire colleges and West College Scotland.

The CLIC Centre for Digitally Enabled Health at New College Lanarkshire, is dedicated to transforming healthcare delivery through digital innovation. The team of health care experts will provide fully-funded support to healthcare organisations aiming to integrate advanced digital tools and methods to improve levels of care and support. Digital tools can help companies and organisations improve their staffs’ effectiveness and wellbeing which in turn can lead to better experiences and wellbeing for their service users.

Additionally, the CLIC Centre for Digitally Enabled Health fosters collaboration through networking opportunities, supports pilot projects for new technologies, and offers ongoing technical assistance. The CLIC Centre for Digitally Enabled Health will offer:

* Bespoke technical training to support healthcare organisations to incorporate new technology in to everyday practice.
* Access to cutting-edge facilities to enhance practitioners’ knowledge and skills of digital tools to support health care.
* Advice and support to help companies identify digital innovations in healthcare practices to harness the power of technology for improvement.
* Relevant skills training for individuals employed in healthcare companies to improve service-user experience and increase productivity.
* Arranging access to opportunities for collaborative relationships.

Link to DC’s presentation: <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/hk8KklFyiKX6RZXs?ref=Link>

Tony Brady (TB) gave an overview of his work on digital wellbeing for staff and students

Digital toolbox including VR headsets

Link to TB’s presentation: 

Lynn Orr: spoke on wellbeing for staff with VR and AI training for staff and how to use it.

Kate Wilson outlined how these practical uses of digital innovation are being reflected in the development of units for students and employers as well as having a positive impact on the college’s digital curriculum.

Christopher Moore (CM) expressed his admiration for the work being undertaken in this project and for the achievements already evident. He commented on the networking opportunities to work with small businesses being released through the CLIC project and was keen for information on this project to be demonstrated to MSPs at the appropriate opportunity.

CM invited Stella McManus (SMcM) to advise the CSAO on SLC’s involvement with this CLIC project. SMcM thanked CM and said that SLC’s focus was Sustainable Development and that SLC had had similar experiences to NCL in the opening of networking opportunities especially with small businesses. SMcM was very positive about SLC’s role in this project.

**7.2 Support needs of learners in Scotland’s Colleges**

AB introduced Education Scotland’s ‘Thematic Review: Meeting the support needs of learners in Scotland’s colleges’, published in February 2025. AB said that although NCL had not been part of this Review she felt that it was important for the CSAO to be aware of its insights and recommendations.

The report notes that throughout the pandemic the number of learners declaring one or more additional support need increased exponentially. In academic year (AY) 2022-23, the proportion of Scottish Funding Council (SFC) credits delivered nationally to learners with a declared disability was 27%. This is approximately a 5% rise on pre-pandemic levels.

**The Review’s Recommendations**

To address the findings outlined in the Key Insights, the following recommendations for colleges and national bodies to improve the quality of provision and services across Scotland’s colleges are:

1. **Improve the early disclosure of additional needs**

Encourage and support all learners to disclose additional needs through:

* + improved data sharing between schools, colleges, and external agencies, ensuring compliance with GDPR
  + proactive strategies that build trust and encouragement for all learners to provide information on their needs, and
  + increased visibility and accessibility of the support available at college.

**At NCL –**

Activity engagement with students prior to commencing to develop PLSP (Personal Learning Support Plan) prior to commencing. Established new area – Student Services – with a team approach to supporting students who may have an additional need that will impact on learning.

1. **Support for mental health**

Continued investment in support for learner mental health and wellbeing, ensuring:

* mental health awareness training for staff to improve consistency in support;
* mental health support is accessible and sufficient to meet growing demand; and,
* promoting partnerships with local mental health organisations to expand available resources.

**At NCL –**

Mental Health First Aid at NCL - Mental health first aid is the help given to someone developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of a mental health problem, or in a mental health crisis. At NCL we have a trained team to provide mental health first aid support to our staff and students. Contact list is available on the Clan (staff) or NCL App (students), and our reception team at each campus also holds the list and contact details.

Newly signed Student Mental Health Agreement 2024- 2025

On NUS site -Think Positive - Student Mental Health - Scotland - Blog: New College Lanarkshire on their new Wellbeing Academies

NCL is in partnership with Action for Children who offer 1:1 support through the STAY Mentoring Programme. This service aims to help care experienced and other vulnerable students who are at risk of not sustaining their college place due to external barriers or difficulties.

1. **Improving information sharing on transition**

* Improve the sharing of relevant learner information from schools to colleges about school-aged learners, by:
* improving data-sharing agreements, and
* providing comprehensive pre-college information for school-age learners, focusing on realistic expectations and the skills required for college success.

**At NCL -**

Recognise this as an ongoing challenge and actually was noted as part of lessons learnt from a complaint.

Schools must be encouraged to share as much information about a school pupil coming on a school-college link programme as they can • Induction days are key to identifying issues early and working on early interventions and that these should be undertaken earlier in the year if possible • Schools should be clear with parents that all communication regarding pupils on school-college partnership programmes should go through the school and not directly to the college.

1. **Improve learner outcomes for key groups**

* Address inequity in learner outcomes by:
* Implementing targeted interventions for learners with disabilities
* Using data-driven approaches to identify at risk groups and prioritise support, and
* Improving self-evaluation and action planning for improvement, particularly with key partners.

**At NCL-**

Fortnightly monitoring by the Executive Board of key groups that include students from the following categories:

* Priority students
* Care experienced
* 20% most deprived postcodes
* Disabled
* Ethnic minority

SMcM thanked AB for bringing this report to her attention via the CSAO as SLC had not been involved in the thematic review either. SMcM said that SLC also encounters difficulties getting information on support needs and acknowledged that this is a sensitive area. SLC is developing resilient support and pathways for these learners but it is a major issue. SMcM commented that funding and training for staff in this area is challenging.

**7.3 Theme for the next meeting of the CSAO**:

**Partnership and Collaboration** - Wellbeing Academies – visit **prior to CSAO meeting on 12 May 2025 at Motherwell**

Further information will be provided when the meeting information is issued in due course.

**8. Student Association reports**

**8.1 SLCSA**

AP spoke to the SLCSA report and highlighted:

* The work being undertaken by the SLCSA to encourage student awareness and participation in the SA and to find out what the SA can do for them;
* The continuing effects of the cost of living and the impact on students’ lives. Via financial support of the SLC Foundation students are provided with free healthy breakfasts and free soup and sandwich. The SA is developing links with Aramark, a food services company, to continue delivering the free food for students initiative. In addition, the SA is committed to continuing with the food larder which supplies food, toiletries, and stationery including notebooks and binders.
* STEM event: students were thanked for their participation and support of this event. They received certificates from Developing the Young Workforce in addition to practical gadgets and an Amazon voucher.
* Student mental health: SLC and the SLCSA committed to sign up for the Student Mental Health Agreement in 2024 and are therefore undertaking a further 2 year plan to give the best support student mental health they can. The current focus is on young men’s mental health which is a particularly challenging area.
* SLCSA ran a number of events over the festive season and continues to provide social and career opportunities events for the students.

AP thanked the SLSA for its work with students and their commitment to student wellbeing.

**8.2 NCLSA**

Julie Webster (JW) spoke to the NCLSA report which covers details of the activities on the 3 main NCL campuses, in particular JW commented on:

* Student mental health and the activities around International Men’s Day
* The establishment of Cumbernauld FM in the Cumbernauld Campus and the involvement with students and skills development opportunities
* The NCLSA is also looking to increase engagement with activities in the local community to enhance the standing of the college in the area
* Focus on the impact of the cost of living pressures on students and their families and how to address them
* Making better use of social media to interact with students and keep them advised of college opportunities and services
* The positive impact of NCLSA activities on student engagement, retention and wellbeing. The Active Campus football sessions were particularly well-received and contributed to national project participation. The NCL Connect platform and Class Rep meetings have furthered efforts to foster a more connected and engaged student body.
* Additionally, new partnerships with Terence Higgins Trust and Social Track Wishaw, along with the Cycle Scotland bike initiative, will further enhance student wellbeing and create new avenues for support and engagement. Continuous evaluation and refinement of these initiatives will ensure sustained positive impact and student satisfaction.

BP thanked both student presidents for their reports and commented on the wide range of projects they continue to be involved in, in addition to new initiatives they identify and embark upon.

**SLC Business**

**9. SLC Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee**

AP spoke to her paper and updated the CSAO:

**Credit and recruitment activity 2024-25**: SLC has a core credit allocation of 43,601 credits. To date they have delivered 95%. The 2,087 credit gap is expected to be met through the January starts.

Recruitment continues to be positive and is a top priority for the curriculum teams. The college is working to meet its target for 24-25 of 5,837 students. Enrolments for FT HE courses are up from last year by 59 and for PT FE by 138.

**Curriculum mid-year review**: As at February 2025 the analysis of enrolment, retention, early and further withdrawals is on-going with further investigation into the retention figures for FT FE and FT HE being a priority as they have dropped unexpectedly to around 90%.

**Progress reviews**: A series of progress reviews have taken place across the 12 curriculum departments focussing on the approach to self-evaluation around the student experience. The content of the progress reviews is active throughout the year to ensure proactive interventions where required.

**Self-Evaluation Action Plan (SEAP)**

AP spoke briefly to the SLC SEAP paper. This has been through the SLC Board and was submitted to SFC by the December 2024 deadline.

**NCL business**

**10.1 Credit and Curriculum update**

AB spoke to her paper and reported that at the time of writing the report there were 11,651 student enrolments and 111,510 SFC credits delivered. The current situation on 17 February is 12,024 students enrolled with 114,356 SFC credits delivered.

**Key highlights:**

On Friday the 23rd of January, NCL hosted the Scottish Regional Heat of the AHT (Association of Hairdressers and Therapists) Competition at the Motherwell Campus. **The Department of Beauty, Aesthetics, and Hair Design** had numerous entries, including participants from South Lanarkshire school groups, as well as NVQ Level 2 and 3 students in barbering, hairdressing, nail services, and make-up artistry students.

The college achieved outstanding success, being named Best College in Scotland after winning an impressive total of 43 medals, including 17 Golds.  This success now qualifies many NCL students to compete in the National Heat in Blackpool later this spring.

**Computing and Digital Technologies department**, CADD team have started work with heart transplant specialist Mr David Varghese on a project to create 3D printed models of hearts and other organs to allow surgeons to train/practice in a realistic but safe environment, by using realistic copies of organs.

**Culinary Arts department**, in partnership with other departments, Culinary Arts will be participating in International Week. Students and staff will be hosting a Gala Dinner at the Coatbridge campus. Lecturer Colin Wilson, organised a Macaroon Masterclass on Wednesday 12th February in aid of Macmillan Cancer support. Donations for the course, so far has raised £1070, which is over 2 ½ times the original target.

**Staff Development Academy** has focused on Health & Safety, with the aspiration that all leaders and staff supporting students undertaking overseas educational visits will have IOSH Managing Safely. In addition, leaders are also undertaking an Occupational Health and Wellbeing qualification and a module in understanding mental health.

**Visual and Creative Arts, Art & Design** HNC students pitched their banner designs, created to celebrate 160 years of education at Coatbridge.  The winners will be unveiled in March at the celebration events.

**10.2 NCL Quality Assurance/enhancement and learning and teaching activity**

Jennifer Lowe (JL) spoke to her paper:

**10.2.1 Students, Education, Learning and Teaching Committee (SELT) update**

Following the formal launch of the Wellbeing Academies and the Student Partnership Agreement in October 2024, the Be Financially Fit Campaign was launched in January 2025.

The SELT group is developing a Brain Health campaign focusing on the research carried out by Brain Health Scotland. NCL’s mission is to inspire the college community to be empowered to protect brain health and reduce the risk of diseases that lead to dementia.

In partnership with the Student Engagement team, the SELT group is supporting the NCL’s Wellbeing Committee. Through partnership working with the NHS and linking into NCL’s Wellbeing calendar. The focus will be on public health and health promotion initiatives.

**10.2.2 Academic Standards, Planning and Monitoring Committee (ASPMC)**

The ASPMC have approved NCL’s Credit Rating Procedure and NCL’s Setting You Up for Success and Social Enterprise units.

**Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)**

NCL has been advised by QAA that the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) will take place in academic year 2027/2028.

NCL submitted its Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) to the Scottish Funding Council in December 2024.  Alastair Duthie will be NCL’s QAA Scotland Liaison contact.

NCL is engaging in two QAA quality enhancement projects:

**Pedagogy for Transitions**

A project in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway College, Abertay University and the University of the West of Scotland.  The project aims to improve student transitions from Further Education (FE) to Higher Education (HE) by aligning pedagogical approaches across institutions. The project aims to explore sharing of core methods and approaches which foster student-led learning through curiosity and exploration.

**Transition Learning**

A project in partnership with SCQF, Fife College and SWAP.  The aim of this project is to review the localised learning and guidance programmes that have been developed in colleges and universities to support student transitions to higher education. It also aims to build awareness of how programmes can achieve SCQF credit-rating and how this can support entry to higher education.

**Student President Chloe Sandilands** has been appointed as the QAA student representative supporting the Student Transition and Enhancement Partnership (STEP) Group. Her role will help shape students transitions from FE to HE and enhance the student experience.

**10.2.3 Learning Well**

NCL will launch the first fully online degree in Business and Leadership through the Learning Well. NCL received 323 notes of interest, 165 applications and anticipate a cohort of 90 students starting the degree on the 24th February 2025. This will also be supported by a workshop conference on the 1st March 2025 at UWS Hamilton campus.

**10.2.4 Student engagement (SE)**

The SE team is finalising their Wellbeing Calendar for Semester 2.  There are planned themed events around tackling poverty, mental health, addiction etc.

SE have engaged in roadshows to promote the three campaigns: Be Well to Do Well, Be Financially Fit and Getting to Know You.

**10.2.5 Awards**

NCL Dental team were winners of the Research Project of the Year award sponsored by the Scottish Funding Council. The team led the development of National Occupational Standards and curriculum design for China, Mongolia and the Philippines.

**10.3** **Developing the Young Workforce and Undergraduate School**

Nicola Mulholland (NM) spoke to her paper.

**Overview:** New College Lanarkshire offers a varied programme to **schools** infour Local Authorities: North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, East Dunbartonshire and Falkirk. Courses range from level 1 to level 7 and cover over thirty disciplines.

Additional Support Needs (ASN) courses are delivered in a successful partnership with Buchanan High School, Coatbridge. Many of the pupils progress into college on leaving school.

NCL’s HNC Schools Pathway is delivered in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council. Five HNC pupils from AY 2023/24 are now on degrees within the Undergraduate School. Four pupils directly entered year 2 of the BEng Cyber Security degree and one pupil directly entered Year 2 of the Collaborative Health and Social Care degree.

**Foundation Apprenticeships:** There has been in a reduction in the number of Foundation Apprenticeships being delivered by almost a third, reflecting the national trend. There are also a number of additional factors: for South Lanarkshire Council, issues with changes to travel subsidies and poor recruitment means that there is no Year 1 Engineering or Creative and Digital Media; in North Lanarkshire Council, there was not a viable class for Engineering or IT Software Development and recruitment for L6 Social Services and Healthcare did not meet anticipated targets. This being said, however, retention for all Foundation Apprenticeships is 81%.

The **Undergraduate School** offers both full-time and part-time study options across 13 undergraduate course options.  Almost all of the higher education students now have a degree pathway at NCL with multiple entry points to support articulation from a variety of different NCs and HNC/Ds.

**Undergraduate School Enrolments and Withdrawals:**

* The total number of students enrolled in full-time degree programmes in the Undergraduate School is 255; retention is 89.9%.
* There are 6 part time students; retention rate is 83.3%.
* Seven of the 13 degree courses within the Undergraduate School have had no withdrawals to date.

An inaugural edition of the Undergraduate School Quarterly has been published. It includes a focus on an Honorary Appointee, a Lecturer and an Undergraduate School student.

**Internship**: North Lanarkshire Council has made an approach with an opportunity for one of the Undergraduate School students on the BSc Digital Development degree to take up a part time position from year one of their studies until they graduate, following which they will offered a full time position. This is a very welcome development of a potential talent pathway which could be replicated in other departments and other councils.

Recruitment for 2025/26: 153 applications have been received and are being processed. 122 conditional offers have been made so far.

**10.4 Complaints Report**

AB spoke to her paper.

A total of 17 complaints were received in quarter 2, of which 11 were closed at stage 1, 5 were closed at stage 2 and 1 complaint remains open at time of report.

Of the closed complaints, 13 complaints were closed within the required timescale and 3 were closed within the additional permitted time.

NCL has met all the requirements of SPSO (Scottish Public Services Ombudsman)

Lessons learned: A key theme that NCL has learnt from complaints relates to the appropriateness and timing of good communication.

**10.5 Institute of Apprentices Update**

AB advised that the college plans to launch the Institute of Apprenticeships on 6 March 2025. NCL is steadfast in its ambition to be recognised as the leading provider of high-quality apprenticeships through our Institute of Apprenticeships (IoA) and central to this is a deep commitment to the wellbeing and professional development of all apprentices, both past and present. The IoA Alumni Network will foster a vibrant community where former and current apprentices can connect, share experiences and access ongoing career support and development opportunities. By providing a platform for continuous engagement, New College Lanarkshire will ensure that the apprentices benefit from a lifelong network that supports their professional growth and wellbeing long after they complete their apprenticeship.

The plan is to offer an enhancement package for Apprentices and Alumni that will include:

Professional and lifelong learning

* Access to a maximum of three free Micro Credential per year for all Apprentices and Alumni via The Learning Well
* Access to the full suite of Micro Credentials via The Learning Well via annual subscription or on demand access. The examples of current offering include:
  + Understanding Budgets & Financial Planning
  + Time Management Skills
  + Stress Management
  + IOSH Working Safely
  + Project Management
  + Digital Skills inclusive of AI
  + Public Speaking and Presentation Skills
  + Intro to Entrepreneurship
* Access to Gym facilities and fitness classes offered by the Wellbeing Academy
* Wellbeing Advice - Health & Nutrition etc – expert guest speakers, supported by the Wellbeing Academy
* Access to the Wellbeing Academy – Financial Fitness & Mental Health Support

Benefits will evolve as the Alumni is established and their input as members will help shape the network and opportunities.

**10.6 Initial Perception Student Survey Report Session 2024/25**

A very positive start to the year in gathering student feedback, which unlike the SFC Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) is distributed to all students not just to those on full time courses.

All departments achieved at least 50% response rather and overall departmental response rate up by 6.1%.

Overall satisfaction rates are up for all questions, however 1 question – “the arrangement for any extra activities/enrichment were made clear to me”, achieved less than 85% overall satisfaction and a number of activities have been planned to address that.

**General Committee business**

**11.** **Approval of Publication of Committee Papers:**

* 1. Agenda for the CSAO 17 February 2025
  2. Minutes of the meeting 11 November 2024
  3. Education Scotland Thematic Review: Meeting the support needs of learners in Scotland’s colleges
  4. SLCSA Report
  5. NCLSA Report
  6. SLC Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Committee – *via the SLC website*
  7. NCL Credit and Curriculum update
  8. NCL Committee and Learning and Teaching Group update
  9. NCL Developing the Young Workforce and Undergraduate School
  10. UWS/NCL Undergraduate School Quarterly
  11. NCL Complaints Report

**12.** **AOB**:

SMcM thanked Angela Pignatelli for all the work she has undertaken for SLC and wished her well in her new post. BP added her thanks to AP on behalf of the CSAO.

**13. Date of Next Meeting: The scheduled date for the next meeting is Monday 12 May 2025 at the Motherwell Campus and via Zoom**