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

**12.30 11 November 2024 in person at NCL Coatbridge and via Zoom**

**Present:** Barbara Philliben (Acting Chair), Catriona Blacker (SLC Student President), Fraser Hainey, Stella McManus, Christopher Moore, Joanne Rosie, Julie Webster (NCL Student President)

**Apologies**: David Winning, Angela Pignatelli, Tarryn Robertson, Ronnie Smith

**In attendance:** Ann Baxter, Ronnie Gilmour, David Innes (Associate Principal, SLC), Jennifer Lowe, Nicola Mulholland, Alan Moffat (Interim Dean for Digital Learning and Quality Enhancement, NCL), Elizabeth Arogbofa (Co-optee), 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 2 September 2024**

The Minutes were agreed.

**Regional business**

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

Ann Baxter reported to the CSAO:

On 25 October – NCL and SLC met with SFC as part of Lanarkshire Engagement meeting. Discussion focused on:

* Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model
* Self-evaluation report against 2023-24 Outcome Agreement
* Case Studies to be submitted at the same time as self-evaluation
* SEAP (Self Evaluation and Action Plan)

SFC were not able to advise who the QAA Quality contact is for either college.

Sign-off form still to be sent by SFC to Colleges.

Colleges were advised on 5 November that there was a new deadline for the Self-Evaluation Report and case studies against the 2023-24 Outcome Agreement. This is now 31 January 2025 and not 2 December 2024.

The deadline for colleges to submit the Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP), as part of Scotland’s Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF), remains Monday 2 December.

BP asked if the colleges would be able to capture the data required given the timescales. Alan Moffat said that discussions with departments was being accelerated and AB commented on the importance of the students understanding what the college is demonstrating and that it would be a challenge to identify high level themes in the document together with the required evidence given the 5000 word limit. However, AB assured the CSAO that NCL was on track to meet the deadline dates.

Stella McManus (SMcM) said that SLC was in a similar position. The college is using the format of the previous review (How Good is Our College, HGIOC), to cover the requirements of SEAP. SMcM said that despite the sector requesting a template for this report, none had been received to date, the result is that colleges are taking different approaches making it difficult for SFC to compare them.

The CSAO will be updated at its next meeting (February 2025).

**6. Themes and Project Showcases**

**6.1** **Theme of meeting: Quality**

Alan Moffat (AM) spoke to his paper which set out the key improvements taking place within Quality Enhancement at New College Lanarkshire. It focuses on four critical areas:

1. Complaints handling and reporting

2. Systems development for internal verification

3. Curriculum review incorporating AI in learning and teaching

4. Review of professional services and staff development within the Quality department.

The thrust of these initiatives is to enhance the student experience and at the same time strengthen NCL’s commitment to academic excellence and continuous improvement.

**6.2 QAA’s (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) Tertiary Sector Improvement Model**

In his paper AM outlined the principles and delivery mechanisms of the new quality model:

* TQER: Tertiary Quality and Enhancement Review
  + Objective: To create a Quality Enhancement framework which sets out to establish a centre of excellence in learning, teaching and assessment. TQER is designed to support assurance and enhancement of academic standards. The TQER will be cyclical, peer-led, with an emphasis on the importance of student engagement, data and evidence, and outcomes reporting.  A 7-year cycle has been agreed which will include an implementation year and a reflection at the end of the cycle. A QAA Liaison officer will support the reporting on quality assurance, improvement and enhancement.
* AQE: Annual Quality Engagement
  + The AQE has two aspects to it. Institutional Liaison meetings (ILMs) led by QAA, and SFC engagement on monitoring of quality of provision. The Self-Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) will form the basis for annual engagement. ILMs will be managed through external peer reviews and institutions will be encouraged to seek advice on any additional information which will help the review in addition to the SEAP.
* SEAP: Self Evaluation and Action Plan
  + From 2024-2025, the SEAP will be the only annual reporting on quality that institutions need to make to SFC. As part of the TQEF review cycle, institutions will not be required to submit a SEAP if they are undertaking a TQER. Instead they will submit a Strategic Impact Analysis (SIA) to QAA.    
        
    The SEAP will allow institutions to reflect on quality assurance and enhancement activities and outcomes whilst planning strategic enhancement through the action plan. Key priorities will be how the SEAP acts as an evidence base for high quality learning and teaching, student engagement and strategic planning. SFC will use it as a marker for gauging the effective use and impact of public investment. QAA will use the SEAP as an evidence base for the TQER, annual institution progress and to support the ILMs.

**6.3** AB recommended to the CSAO that possible themes for future meetings could include:

* Wellbeing Academies – visit prior to CSAO on 17 February at Cumbernauld or 12 May at Motherwell.
* Visit to Dental facilities on 1 September at Coatbridge and hear about the Dental Nursing degree – by then we will have complete year 1 and year 2 will be commencing.
* Update from Humanities Dept on Breaking The Cycle: Pure Class Perspective on Mental Health Conference - December 3rd. Speakers will be SJ Speirits, Stuart Cooney, Gavin Brewis, and Darren McGarvey, each bringing their expertise and personal experiences to the forefront. They will explore how socioeconomic factors influence mental health and the barriers faced by different class groups in accessing mental health care.
* Sustainability update – led by Jane Crowe – Head of Department - Beauty, Aesthetics and Hair Design
* Update on Colleges’ Local Innovation Centres project – or CLIC – funded by UKRI, the UK Government’s agency for research and innovation. This project ends on 31st March 2025. Update would be from EFI (External Funding and International) and relevant academic Department.

Following some discussion the following schedule was agreed:

* + **Research and Innovation** - Update on Colleges’ Local Innovation Centres project (CLIC) funded by UKRI, the UK Government’s agency for research and innovation.  This project ends on 31st March 2025.  Update would be from EFI and academic Department as well as SLC: **prior to** **CSAO meeting on 17 February 2025 at Cumbernauld**
  + **Partnership and Collaboration** - Wellbeing Academies – visit **prior to CSAO meeting on 12 May 2025 at Motherwell**
  + **High Quality Learning** - Visit to Dental facilities to hear about the Dental Nursing degree – by then we will have complete year 1 and year 2 will be commencing – **prior to CSAO meeting 1 September 2025 at Coatbridge**

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

**7. Student Association reports**

**7.1 SLCSA**

Catriona Blacker (CB) spoke to her report and highlighted:

* SLCSA’s focus on student engagement and the activities which had taken place since the beginning of the new academic year;
* Student elections have taken place. There are now 7 new Student Officers who will support and promote the SA;
* As part of their campaign for warm clothing for students CB said that SLC hoodies have sold out at £5.00 each, 500 from this year’s order and another 15 from the previous year. All colours were popular, but the pink was in especially high demand across all departments.

Christopher Moore (CM) asked Julie Webster (NCL Student President), (JW), if she thought NCL should be investigating having hoodies at NCL. JW said this was a good idea and would be especially welcomed by those students who do not have a warm coat. CM said that he would look into this with a view to having NCL hoodies available for the beginning of next term. He suggested that including the department on the hoodie may also appeal to students. JW supported this idea.

Fraser Hainey (FH) confirmed that this move would be welcomed by the students as it would foster a sense of community. He felt it would be a positive addition and strengthen the college’s identity. This type of clothing is appealing to students as is evident on campus. Maybe other options could also be considered.

***Action: NCL Executive Board and NCLSA to look into the possible provision of hoodies at NCL***

BP thanked CB for her report.

**7.2 NCLSA**

JW spoke to her report and advised the CSAO:

* The Wellbeing Academies have been well received and are busy on all campuses. They are being used by students and staff. All feedback has been very positive.
* The Wellbeing Academy and Active Campus Co-ordinator have been working with the construction students to incorporate physical activity into their course. This has had a positive impact on their motivation and course retention. These interventions are now being trialled by other departments.
* Over 300 class reps have signed up to provide feedback on learning, teaching and assessment within their classes. This feedback will contribute to the course review process. Sparqs training for the class reps is going well.
* The buddy system at Motherwell is proving very positive.
* There is a new student president at the Coatbridge Campus.
* The winter jacket appeal has received an encouraging response across all three campuses. Numerous warm jackets have already been received.
* Christmas outfit rack: a number of beautiful dresses have been donated by staff members for students to make them feel special at Christmas.
* The Roadshow to highlight the 3 main campaigns are getting underway:
  + Be well to do well
  + Be financially fit
  + Getting to know you

The objective is to engage with the students to ensure they are aware of the services available to them and to get their feedback on the resources provided.

* JW acknowledged the ongoing support of a member of staff in Reception, who continues to play a major role in the clothing and food banks in the college.

BP thanked JW. CM commented on the great range of activities and the energy with which both SAs are working for their students. He praised the connectedness between the initiatives and commented that the Christmas clothing rail was inspiring.

**SLC Business**

**8 SLC Learning and Teaching update**

David Innes (DI) spoke to Angela Pignatelli’s paper and reported that to date the SLC credit level is 38,804, 1124 credits off target. He advised that SLC has put an action plan in place to address the shortfall by targeting the November and January course starts.

DI noted that there was a missing number in para 3.3 of AP’s paper and should read:

*3.3 The applications are divided into full-time and part-time programs as follows:*

* *4752 for full-time courses: an increase of 223 from 2023 – 2024;*
* *1****2****68 for part-time courses: an increase of 69 from 2023 - 2024.*

DI advised that given the terms of the new contract with college South Lanarkshire Council, the Rural Academy has been re-branded as the Employability Academy.

As regards SEAP, DI said that without further guidance from SFC, colleges are still trying to understand exactly what is required of them as regards themes.

Joanne Rosie (JR) asked, from an employer perspective, how the green skills gap was being approached by colleges. DI said that colleges were already addressing skills in this area although they may not be badged as green. Work still needs to be done to persuade parents that sustainable careers are available in this area. Also traditional jobs need to be open to new techniques but it takes time for such changes to be accepted across industries. SMcM asked JR to let them know where there were gaps in skills provision and added that it was important for the sector to talk to industry.

CM commented that JR’s question was helpful. NCL is currently developing its strategy to 2030 and is looking for new areas where investment in skills will be required. He said that NCL is inviting industry representatives in to college and extended an invitation to JR or company representative to visit NCL to discuss possible opportunities. JR said she would take this up with her colleagues.

***Action: JR to speak to her colleagues about engaging with NCL on green skills gaps***

**NCL business**

**9.1 Credit and Curriculum update**

AB spoke to her paper and reported that NCL had officially recorded achieving 117,592 credits against a target of 117,288 last A/Y.

There has been some delay in the resulting process, and while progress is being made, there are still some outstanding. The figures will be updated and presented to CSAO at its next meeting.

**External Funding**: the aim is to optimise the drawdown of both grants [CLIC (Colleges Local Innovation Fund) and UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)]. There have been delayed starts due to the contracting processes, staff availability due to time pressures from other duties, staff illness and absence, timely submission of relevant supporting evidence, all of which may impact on draw down of all of this. To that end, this has been raised with the funders (UKRI and UKSPF) to identify any scope for virement across the relevant budget heads (for example, divert labour grant to consultancy or increase material/capital budget). NCL is awaiting responses.

The Head of EFI (External Funding and International) has also been meeting with the external evaluators of the UKRI project (CLIC) and indicated to them that 12 months is a relatively short operating cycle for innovation projects. NCL would find it challenging, although willing, to deliver in such a limited timeframe.

These concerns, are similar to those which are felt by all other colleges in Glasgow City Region. However, while NCL is likely to achieve the outcomes and outputs of both projects the college may not be able to draw down all of the requested grant for labour/staffing. The college is confident that the claims made for materials and capital will be accepted and paid, so there will be no requirement for any of that grant to be returned. The staffing/labour grants are paid upon successful claims submission which means there should be no clawback.

After a short discussion it was agreed that the RSB Finance Committee should be made aware of the external funding issue.

***Action: To ensure that the possible delay in the drawdown of external funding from CLIC and UKSPF is brought to the attention of the RSB Finance Committee***

**Construction:** AB was pleased to reportthat Scott Ahern won SJIB (Scottish Joint Industry Board) Apprentice of the Year 2024 for Electrical Installation.

**Culinary Arts**: AB advised that the opening times for ML1 have been increased and encouraged Board members to book into restaurants and enjoy the food prepared by students.

**Music and Performing Arts: A** range of events is planned:

* Week beginning 11th November 2024: Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, performed by HND Acting students;
* Week beginning 18th November 2024: Twelfth Night, performed by HND Acting students;
* Week beginning 9th December 2024: Dance Production at Hamilton Town House;
* 26th November 2024: BA Music Performance at the Poetry Club (SWG3, Glasgow).

And highlight of the year - panto Mother Goose  - The Town House, Hamilton from 30 November to 8 December.

**Staff Development Academy -** SDA supported CDNs (College Development Network) workforce survey in May 2024 and achieved the largest response rate across all colleges in Scotland. Data has been reviewed and further work is being undertaken to gather information specific to our workforce needs in terms of professional development.

**9.2 NCL Committee and Learning and Teaching Group update**

Jennifer Lowe (JL) spoke to her paper:

* NCL formally launched the **Wellbeing Academies (WAs)** at the Motherwell Campus on Friday 25th October 2024.  The WAs aim to provide holistic support services and programmes that cater to the physical, emotional, and social wellbeing needs of the students. The event was attended by over 70 internal and external partners and NCL gained insight into the impact of mental health and wellbeing by mental health blogger Kat Connelly.

At the event, NCL’s commitment to supporting the WAs and the Campaigns-Getting to Know You, Be Well to Do Well and Be Financially Fit were validated via the signing of the Student Partnership and Mental Health Agreements by Professor Christopher Moore and Student President, Chloe Sandilands.

A Wellbeing Committee has been set up; it will take a themed approach. This has already proved a great success in the Construction Department. The WAs’ strength will be to engage with the students in a different way.

* **Self-evaluation, course curriculum review and evaluation (CCRE):**
  + NCL has adapted the approaches towards self-evaluation focusing on the sparqs Student Engagement Framework to support the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF).
  + Sparqs will be visiting NCL in December to support the Learner Engagement Team to prepare for TQEF.
  + Heads of Department and curriculum teams are attending KPI meetings where the focus is on credit targets and retention.
* **Learner engagement:**
  + NCL plan to recruit an additional Learner Engagement Officer to maximise the student voice and prepare for TQEF.
  + Class and departmental representatives are currently undertaking sparqs training to maximise the student voice.
* **Awards:**

NCL has been short listed for three College Development Network (CDN) Awards. Announcements to be made on 14th November 2024 at the CDN Awards Ceremony:

* + College Community Learning Award
  + Research Project of the Year Award
  + Student of the Year Award.

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

Nicola Mulholland (NM) spoke to her paper.

**Overview:** New College Lanarkshire offers a varied programme to **schools i**n four Local Authorities: North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, East Dunbartonshire and Falkirk. Courses range from level 1 to level 7 and cover over thirty disciplines. In AY 23/24, there were 2000 pupils from 154 class groups, bringing in a total of 6359 credits and an estimated separate income of circa £300k.

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.

From her paper NM drew the CSAO’s attention to:

**School-College Partnership Courses for AY 24/25:**

* + There has been an increase in students enrolled on vocational programmes in S3-6 for 24/25 in North Lanarkshire and East Dumbarton. There have been an additional 91 pupils enrolled, which equates to 25%.
  + The HNC Schools Pathway is delivered in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council.
  + NCL is the first college in Scotland to deliver educational programmes via e-Sgoil’s DYW (Developing the Young Workforce) Live Platform. For 24/25, New College Lanarkshire is the only college offering programmes via DWY Live, with UHI offering one programme in Maritime Studies. A meeting is taking place soon with e-Sgoil to plan for next academic sessions and increase the offer and number of pupils who enrol.
  + NCL is also working in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council to roll out a series of First Aid courses at L6 to Senior Phase pupils and schools leavers.
  + **Foundation Apprenticeships :** are offered in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council and Skills Development Scotland.  The Construction Department worked closely with the local authority to plan for session 24/25 to ensure effectively delivery and that planned units within the framework could be delivered using resources available on the selected delivery sites.

It should be noted that these courses attract commercial income from the local authority; these courses are not credit-bearing and the credits are for illustrative purposes only.

* + **Access and progression:** These programmes are designed to support enhanced transition pathways for some of the most vulnerable learners in our society. Throughout the year, students visit our college sites to ensure that they become comfortable and confident with college staff and the environment to ensure the successful transition to a college course once they leave school.
  + The Access and Progression Department works with a variety of schools across North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, Falkirk, Stirling and East Dunbartonshire.
  + Through NCL’s partnership with South Lanarkshire Council there is a partnership with Strathclyde University’s Engineering Academy which sees the pupils attend college two afternoons per week and study the SWAP Access to Engineering course. This is a very successful course with the pupils progressing on to HNC Engineering.

**Undergraduate School Enrolments and Withdrawals:**

* The total number of students enrolled in full-time degree programmes in the Undergraduate School is 253. For the new degrees launched in AY24/25, the number of enrolments reached 198.
* To date, seven students have withdrawn, equating to a withdrawal rate of 2.77%.
* NCL also has 41 students enrolled in the part-time BA Childhood Practice undergraduate degree which is delivered from its Coatbridge campus.

**Overview Undergraduate School Activity:**

NCL and UWS have established a Board of Governance for the Undergraduate School in line with UWS’s governance structures for its own subject schools. This will be the main conduit by which planning and development of the Undergraduate School is undertaken, with project management support provided by UWS. The first formal meeting is due to take place in the Studio in Motherwell campus in November 2024. The Board will report to Professor Christopher Moore, Principal and Chief Executive of NCL, Professor James Miller, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of UWS, Ronnie Gilmour, Deputy Principal for Professional Services at NCL, and Marcus Ross, Vice Principal Planning and Recruitment at UWS.

An internal Community of Practitioners has been established at NCL. The purpose of this group is to build an internal network of all NCL staff who are involved in the delivery of the Undergraduate School degrees. The first meeting took place on 1 October 2024 where the group agreed on the number of meetings it would have a year and in what mode. The group also discussed the issues being experienced with regards to enrolment and accessing UWS systems, as well as sharing good practice.

An invitation has been sent to all of the Honorary Appointees to join NCL for a Christmas lunch in MLOne in December. This will give the Honorary Appointees an opportunity to network and meet with the Academic Heads to begin discussion on future engagement with the Undergraduate School students.

Recruitment to the Undergraduate School for AY25/26 is already underway with 22 class visits to be completed by mid-November. Currently there are 22 applications for AY25/26, with clear targets set for each degree course.

**9.4 NCL International Strategy**

AB reported that the International Strategy was launched earlier this year. It links to the development of the Wellbeing Academies and focuses on building partnerships. Its aims are:

To embed international activity into NCL’s academic curriculum planning through:

1. Increasing the number and improving the quality and mobility of activities

2. Diversifying the range of commercial projects in NCL’s International portfolio

3. Strengthening NCL’s commitment to International collaborations

4. Developing an NCL approach to Internationalisation at home

5. Improving the way in which the college communicates its International work to the NCL community and beyond.

In response to a question from CM, SMcM said that SLC had not yet engaged with Turing as it does not cover all costs, so SMcM was hesitant to commit SLC to this programme at the current time. It was suggested and agreed that a buddy system NCL/SLC would be a good approach.

**9.5 Complaints Report**

AB advised that there has been an increase in the number of complaints, some of which is a direct result of action undertaken by EIS FELA and ASOS. Processing of results was a significant factor and as a result the Executive Board and Deans made it an operational priority to ensure any results that had not been entered in the previous Academic year were prioritised and weekly reports were generated for Departmental Heads to track results that still had to be submitted.

It is important to note that Complaints reporting and evidence of student voice (SSES) will form a part within the new QAA – SEAP process.

**9.6 Institute of Apprenticeships**

NCL seeks to raise the profile of apprenticeships and prioritise this area of learning, which led to the development of Institute of Apprenticeships at NCL. This new institute will raise the profile of apprenticeships at NCL and demonstrate their importance. Embedding apprenticeships within departments will help to integrate the students more effectively.

There are four strategic objectives, to:

1. Enhance apprentice experience
2. Build employer relationships
3. Secure funding
4. Encourage collaboration with Third- party stakeholders.

CM commented that NCL currently has 1060 apprentices and wants to ensure this large group gets the appropriate support. SMcM said that SLC has 1200 mainly in construction.

BP said that the student experience is extremely important for this group as they can feel isolated if not strongly linked to their respective departments.

**General Committee business**

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

1. Agenda for the CSAO 11 November 2024
2. Minutes of the meeting 2 September 2024
3. NCL Students’ Association Report
4. SLC Students’ Association Report
5. CSAO meeting theme: quality
6. QAA Tertiary Sector Improvement Model
7. Credit and Curriculum Update
8. NCL Student Partnership Agreement
9. College Committee updates
10. Student Mental Health Agreement
11. Developing the Young Workforce and Undergraduate School
12. NCL International Strategy
13. Annual Complaints Report
14. Institute of Apprenticeships at NCL

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

Student satisfaction survey:

AB advised the committee that in the SFC College Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey 2023-24 published on 5 November 2024 that NCL had exceeded the national response rate in every category. AB added that the survey collected this data in relation to full time courses only.

Response rates:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | National | NCL |
| FEFT | 57% | 66.68% |
| FEPT | 34.2% | 50.03% |
| HEFT | 50.1% | 64.13% |
| HEPT | 32.5% | 66.84% |

**13. Date of Next Meeting: The scheduled date for the next meeting is Monday 17 February 2025 at the Cumbernauld Campus and via Zoom**