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REGIONAL BOARD REPORT

BORDERS COLLEGE REGIONAL BOARD

Subject: Learning for Leading Report	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☒
Prepared by: Ingrid Earp	**Date: 30 Sept 2021**

Purpose: To report to the Board results of Learning for Leading (L4L) visits and actions taken, where appropriate. To also remind Members of the process for the current year.

Linked to Strategic Ambition: Take a leading role in enabling an inclusive, resilient and sustainable Scotland

Performance Measures: Recogise nationally as a progressive organisation

Linked to Strategic Risk Register: New Risk (outwith themes)

New Risk Commentary:

Executive Summary:

53% of Learning for Leading 'visits' were carried out in 2020/21 – many of those were virtual, and the difficulties of carrying out such interaction in a virtual way is acknowledged.

Allocated areas will remain the same for 2021/22 with a view to revisit early 2022/23.

On the whole, the visits which were undertaken were very positive with recognition that the year has been a challenging one with staff showing commitment and flexibility throughout.

Recommendation: Members to note feedback and guidelines for future visits.

Previous Committee Approvals:

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

Learning for Leading (L4L) Scheme

Background

The aim of this scheme is to provide Board Members with an opportunity to become more directly familiar with the work of the College. The engagement is not designed to be a management review but more an opportunity to learn and understand the context in which strategic decisions are made at Board. In 2020/21 the scheme was extended to include support departments as well as curriculum areas.

The Process

- Departments are chosen and/or allocated at the start of each academic year.
- Your contact details will be shared with the leader of that area. They will contact you to arrange a general discussion about what the priorities and challenges are for that area and the types of activities that you may want to observe or join.
- You may want to speak to staff, a group of students, attend a class (either online or in person), have a tour of the facilities or attend an event. The content of a visit can vary and will be mutually agreed.
- Dependant on Board Members time commitment, you may want to engage in various activities on a single visit or do this over two or more events.
- Some questions may arise after any engagement visit so it is always useful to have a quick catch up with the leader of the area before writing a summary report.
- Using the template provided, you should complete a short summary report. This should be forwarded to Sheila McColm who will share with the Executive Team and Board Secretary in the first instance.
- Key comments, feedback and executive response, if applicable, will be recorded and reported on annually to Board.

Visits 2020/21

With the academic year of 2020/21 being an exceptional one and on campus visits severely limited only 53% of 'visits' were achieved and a number of these were held virtually. There were also a number of new Board Members who were not allocated areas until the second half of the academic year. It is proposed that allocations of areas remain the same for 2021/22.

Actions from Learning for Leading Visits 2020-21

Area	Areas for attention of College Management	Complete/Progressing/ Closed	Management Response
Management Information Systems and IT	**Areas which should be brought to the attention of the College Management:** • The transformation programme presents an opportunity to consolidate changes that were made rapidly due to lockdown. For example, where devices were quickly issued to staff and students, there is now time to identify a more thorough process to consider the needs and risks related to homeworking. • I discussed with Scott the NCSC Board Toolkit and Cyber Essentials, and ideas for engaging the Board in the context of upcoming risk workshops.	Closed Closed	• MIS stream of the Digital Transformation process will see the digitisation of all enquiries, applications and enrolments. Further processes are also being digitised in order to provide a better user experience and improve overall efficiency and effectiveness of data collection and processing. • ISLT Stream of the DTP will enhance the end user experience in many area such as campus connectivity as well as system/data availability and security as well as enhanced business continuity and disaster recovery in the event of data loss. • For the upcoming academic year we will have approx. 500 laptops in which we can provide students to allow them to continue studies remotely should some Covid restrictions still be in place which may restrict access to campus. All staff have the ability to work remotely using their laptop and our secure VPN connection. Once we have an understanding of what staff will be continue to work from home and in what capacity we can then look at providing the appropriate equipment.

			• Updated Cyber Security report presented to SLT in April, exercise given at WLT in August with aim to inform of the preventive work we have completed to mitigate some of the cyber threats, the main aim for the exercise was to highlight some of the threats end users need to be aware off as well as each area of the college identifying ways to continue to work should the college be hit with a cyber-attack and have no access to systems for a prolonged period of time.
Land Based	• Although staff are au fait with the equipment and its use, it would be advantageous if things like Go PRO equipment to allow staff to record demonstrations that could be included in online sessions could be based at and constantly available at Newtown rather than having to access through Gala.	Closed	• HND work placement student has started the work placement and has submitted a report to marketing. Equipment is being sourced.
Quality and Development	• Focused and supportive approach to quality, equality and digital development, will provide a strong basis for positive developments which will have a direct impact on the quality of the student experience.	Closed	• Further work on defining roles and responsibilities in the team will take place in 2021/22 as the new VLE takes shape, the actions from the equalities mainstreaming report are rolled out and the hybrid/ blended approach to teaching, learning and assessment continues. • This will all support and develop both staff and students at Borders College.
Student Services	• The dedication and resilience of staff and students is outstanding, given the pressures experienced. A huge 'thank you' to all.	Closed	• The opportunity to share the work of the department was very much welcomed and the comments received as a result much appreciated. The team continue to strive

	• I look forward to an in-person meeting on campus as soon as feasible.	Closed	towards providing a positive experience for all our students and finding person centred interventions to help maintain wellbeing and progress. • We are happy to accommodate any visits to the department to find out more about what we do. •
STEM	• An overall impression of a well run, forward thinking department	Closed	• Thank you for these positive comments
Childcare	• Whist remote learning has allowed the course to continue and, in itself, has allowed for many benefits, it is clearly not without issue. Only half of the students attending the class had their cameras turned on and it was this same cohort who actively engaged with the class by answering questions and participating in conversation. The other students were simply names on a tab and it was not possible to know if they were even listening to the class. Eileen confirmed this is a routine position and, as would be expected, it is the students who actively engage who are doing best in their learning. • For a large part of the lesson, one student was on camera whilst driving her car. I asked Eileen about this and she confirmed this has happened over a few weeks and, as the student does not have her screen on and does not take part in conversation, it has been agreed with the Curriculum and Learning Manager as being acceptable. I am concerned that, at best, the student is not engaging with the class and, at worse, this could present a risk to both the student and other road users. I urge this position to be reviewed.	Closed Closed	• Students have been provided with information on Online Etiquette as part of the Online induction module on moodle – this includes switching camera on during online lesson (unlike they have issues with technology or have discussed issues with their course tutor) – on a positive note, all the students achieved their award • The Online Etiquette information now states specifically that students must not join an online class while driving

	• It is my view that both students and staff would benefit from a good practice guide for remote learning. Such a guide could cover minimum expected standards, as well as practical use guidance. There appears to be a clear link between use of cameras and levels of class engagement. I understand that there are privacy issues relating to students having cameras on in their own home but this could be mitigated by use of blurred backgrounds. A good practice guide could detail when it is expected students should have cameras on and provide guidance on how to maintain privacy. This, in turn, could lead to higher levels of engagement. Critically, College wide guidance would support staff when challenging student engagement on Teams by providing them with a point of reference for acceptable use and standards.	Closed	• The staff guide for e-learning has been updated for 2021-22 delivery and is available to all staff on moodle.
DEBI	• The Apprentice Programmes appears to have further growth, but this growth will depend on sufficient staffing levels. • At the same time, growing commercial programmes will require sufficient staff resources, particularly support with the administration surrounding these commercial programmes.	Closed Closed	• Staffing continues to be an issue however we are interviewing for a temporary Business Support Advisor next week and a replacement assessor for Business & Admin and Employability. • Working with HR to address long term sickness absence. MA and FA programmes continue to grow and this places a huge administrative burden on the team.