

Board Development Plan Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER

For discussion

- 1.1 To discuss progress against the development plan for both Board and the Chair.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This paper aims to provide an update to the College Regional Board on the Board and Chair's Development Plan for 2024-25.
- 2.2 This plan was produced following the Board's end of year evaluation of its own effectiveness for 2023-24, and the Chair's end of year evaluation of his effectiveness in discussion with the SIM (Senior Independent Member).
- 2.2 Because of the Chair's accountability for the overall performance of the Board, and the strong links between the evaluation of the Chair and the evaluation of the Board, it was agreed that instead of two plans for development and improvement, all objectives for 2024-25 would be consolidated into a single Board and Chair's Development Plan.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION(S) REQUIRED

- 3.1 I recommend that the Regional Board: -
 - 3.1.1 Discuss progress against the plan and provide any feedback, commentary or amendments.

4.0 BACKGROUND/MAIN PAPER

- 4.1 Each year the Board self-evaluation is carried out and results collated by the Board Secretary, this is sent to all Members and all are encouraged to respond regardless of their length of service on the Board.
- 4.2 The SIM also carries out the Chair's review after anonymised feedback is sought from all Board Members by the Board Secretary, including staff and student board members.
- 4.3 The resulting plan is the amalgamation of both sets of feedback with a continuous focus on improvement and progression.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this paper.

5.2 Learner Implications

There are no direct learner implications of this paper.

5.3 Staff Implications

There are no direct staff implications of this paper.

5.4 Equality and Diversity Implications/Equality Impact Assessment

There are no direct equality and diversity implications of this paper.

5.5 Sustainability/Environmental Implications

There are no direct sustainability/environmental implications of this paper.

6.0 RISK COMMENTARY

- 6.1 There is no direct impact of this paper on any of the items in the Risk Register or items identified as risks to the College.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Members are asked to consider the progress and feed back any comments or updates.

R McCowan

Chair of the Board

Previous Board or College Committee Approvals: None

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Board and Chair's Development Plan 2024-25: Chair's Update on Progress for June Board Meeting 2025

The elements of the Board and Chair's Development Plan 2024-25 are outlined below together with an assessment from the Chair on the progress made against each element.

Board and Chair's Development Plan Elements/Objectives	Assessment of Progress Against Plan Element/Objective
1. The Principal and Chair will work with the Executive and Board to ensure that the Board are fully involved with, consulted on and contribute to the formation and development of the College values.	The College's values have been reviewed as part of its wider work on the new College Strategy - "Vision 2030 – Your College, Your Future". The Board has discussed the proposed College values at its Development Days. The new College Strategy including the College's new values will be submitted to the Board for approval.
2. The Principal and Chair will make the Board more aware of, and better signpost, the extent of external engagement and partnership activity undertaken by the Principal and Chair and proactively engage with the Board on how this can be improved	<p>The Principal and Chair provide communication updates to the Board members between Board and Sub Committee meetings in which they outline their external engagement activity. The Principal has also revised his Board Reports to include a much more comprehensive description of his external facing activity.</p> <p>As further evidence of that wider external engagement activity, the Principal has just been appointed as Trustee to the newly reformed Trustee Board of College Scotland.</p> <p>To date there hasn't been, as outlined in the plan, a proactive engagement with the Board on how the Principal's and Chair's external engagement could be improved. This needs to be carried forward in 2025-26.</p>
3. The Principal and Executive Team will present to, and agree with, the Board stretch key performance indicators in relation to student retention and achievement that will drive year on year	Because of the timing of when this plan is produced after the Board and Chair's reviews and considered at the December Board, the academic year is by then well underway. Rather

improvement and replace the college sector averages as the benchmark of success.	than the target be set retrospectively, it will be the 2025-26 academic year that this target will be set for. The targets will be included in the supporting strategies following approval of the Vision 2030 and these will be built into the Board and Committee reporting cycle in 2025-26.
4. The Principal and Chair will continue to regularly update the Board on progress against our strategic aims and to communicate to the Board frequently between Board and Sub Committee meetings on key developments in the region and in the wider external environment.	The Principal provides regular updates on progress against our strategic aims at both Board Meetings and at Board Development Days. As noted in point 2 above, both the Principal and Chair jointly update the Board between Board and Sub Committee meetings on key developments in the region and the wider external environment.
5. The Principal and Chair will work with the Board and the Executive Team to jointly deliver a fully costed financial plan for submission to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) that will close the projected forecast deficit anticipated to accrue when Heriot- Watt University exits from the Galashiels Campus in September 2026. This plan will be based on there being no intervention or support from SFC to address these financial challenges.	The Board have been fully involved in the discussions around this Development Plan and in its development via the Joint Working Group between Board members and the Executive Team. The Development Plan was approved by the Board at its meeting in March and submitted to the SFC shortly thereafter. The SFC subsequently visited the College to discuss the plan with the Principal and Chair and there are now active ongoing discussions between the College's Executive Team and the SFC's Executive Team.
6. The Principal and Chair will work with the Board and the Executive Team to take forward an Estates Strategy Implementation Plan that will deliver the best possible solution for the College estate that enables our students to get the best possible college experience and at the same time provides the optimal balance between efficiency, effectiveness and regional stakeholder interest.	Board members have been fully advised on the development of the College's Estates Strategy at its in-year Development Days. The Strategy has also been more formally considered and reviewed at Sub Committees and at Board meetings. The proposed Estates Plan has been welcomed by the Board. The proposed exit from the Hawick Campus has also been welcomed and approved by the Board and to date has been

	well managed. The Board is expected to consider a proposal for the Hawick Campus at the June Board Meeting.
7. In addition to point 4.2.4 above, the Chair will aim to improve his external relationship and key stakeholder engagement through better attendance at the Community Planning Partnership and by more effective networking via this forum, other external events such as COSS and at events hosted by the College where there are external stakeholders in attendance.	The Chair's attendance at CPP has improved this year. However, to date the meetings have been virtual rather than in person, so the networking opportunities have been negligible. COSS has a similarly constrained opportunity for real networking as the agenda is typically onerous, formal and very much driven by Scottish Government. The Principal and Chair have had recent discussions on how to make better networking use of external meetings at the College or where the College acts as a host venue for regional or national partners and using these occasions to maximise our external reach and opportunity.
8. The Chair will continue to keep the business of the Board and Sub Committees under constant review to ensure the optimum balance between the Board and its Sub Committees that enables effective scrutiny and a manageable agenda in the time available for these meetings.	This objective will progress as in previous years through each Sub Committees Self-Assessment, the Board's evaluation of its own effectiveness and the extent to which these processes highlight the need for changes to Sub Committee terms of reference or the scope of their work relative to the Board. On balance the Chair's assessment pre these evaluations, is that Board business and meetings this year seem to have been less time pressed and agendas more manageable than previously. The TORs for each Sub Committee also seem to complement one another better than in previous years following changes last year. However, it will be interesting to triangulate that assessment with the wider views of the Sub Committees and members evaluation of the Board's effectiveness.