



**GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
ACADEMIC BOARD
MINUTE**

**Minute of the meeting of the Academic Board held on Friday 6 February 2026 at 1.30pm
via MS Teams**

1. Sederunt

Robin Ashton (Chair);
Jason Quinn (Director of Digital and Information Services);
James Davidson (Lecturer);
Gerry Harkins (Lecturer);
George McGuire (Senior Curriculum Manager,);
Gary Sharp (Student Support Services Manager);
Lesley Phee (Organisational Development Business Partner);
Iain Cameron (Lecturer);
John Clarke; (Head of Enhancement and Assurance);
Katie McAnenay (Team Leader, Library Services); and
Alastair McGhee (Director of Student Experience and Enterprise)

In Attendance

Debbie Friel: Senior Committee Coordinator (purpose of the minute);
Michelle Harding: Head of Digital and IT Operations
Sarah Shea: Environmental Sustainability Manager
Claire Walters: Interim Senior Curriculum Manager

2. Apologies

Tracy Leavy (Director of Faculty & Community Engagement);
Peter Brown (Director of Faculty, Apprenticeships and Skills);
Chantell McCallum (President, Student Association);
Amrit Bedi (Equalities and Inclusion Lead);
Arlene Sweeney (Learner, Engagement Officer)
Jon Craig (President, Student Association);
Mae Smillie (Head of Student Information Services);

3. Academic Board Terms of Reference

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 12 members in attendance.

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

5. Minute of the Previous Meeting held on 7 November 2025

The minute of the meeting was accepted as an accurate record of the business conducted on 7 November 2025.

6. Matters arising from Minute of Previous Meetings held on 7 November 2025

There were no matters arising.

7. Malpractice Policy

The Head of Enhancement and Assurance highlighted that the College had reviewed and updated its Academic Malpractice Policy for approval in February 2026. He noted that there were two key changes which were highlighted in Red Text within page 3 and page 4 of the Policy.

He added that the updated policy maintains a non-exhaustive list of malpractice examples, clarifies the distinction between malpractice and maladministration, and aligns with updated Qualifications Scotland and JCQ guidance on acceptable and unacceptable uses of AI in assessments. It outlines expectations, responsibilities, investigation procedures, and potential sanctions for both candidate and centre malpractice.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to approve the Malpractice Policy.

ACTION: J Clarke agreed to publish the updated Malpractice and Maladministration Policy on the Quality Portal to replace the previous version.

8. Student Association SPARQS Framework Evaluation

The Head of Enhancement and Assurance spoke to the content of the paper. He outlined that the College's review of its student engagement activity against the SPARQS framework, highlighting that the College had strong, well-established structures for student representation and feedback. He highlighted that the student voice is embedded across all levels of institutional governance, with the Student President participating in the Board of Management, Learning & Teaching Committee, Academic Board, and a wide range of quality-related forums.

J Clarke added that the next steps were to submit the SPARQS Framework mapping to QAA via the AIS as evidence for the TQER review, highlighting where College practice aligns with SPARQS priorities.

C Walters raised concerns about the growing *volume* of Learner Support Plans and the increasing demands on staff. She felt the plans are shared appropriately, but the real challenge was how faculties and the College collectively manage and resource the level of support required for learners.

J Clarke acknowledged that this is a related but slightly different issue and confirmed that work is already underway. This includes streamlining alternative assessment arrangements, developing digital solutions, and exploring more efficient ways of managing learner support processes.

G Sharp agreed the issue is recognised across the College and that further work is needed. He highlighted an inconsistency between the main report and the appendix regarding who is responsible for creating and reviewing Learner Support Plans, and asked that this could be reviewed.

J Clarke clarified that the creation and review of Learner Support Plans sit with learning support professionals. He emphasised that the goal is not to add workload for lecturers or managers, but to create better systems and dialogue potentially digital and collaborative to review whether support remains relevant and effective.

Robin Ashton noting that while the College aligns well with the framework overall, some gaps were identified (e.g. stronger presence at Easterhouse and East End, wider regional engagement). He asked where responsibility for these actions should sit. G Sharp suggested

that an existing Student Engagement Plan could be an appropriate home for some of these actions, though this would need further review

R Ashton concluded that managers collectively need to ensure all identified actions have clear ownership, so progress can be demonstrated when the framework is reviewed in the future.

ACTION: Learner Support Plan Documentation: J Clarke agreed to amend the appendix of the Sparks mapping report to ensure comments about the creation and review of Learner Support plans are merged and accurately reflect faculty staff involvement.

ACTION: G Sharp to review the existing Student Engagement Plan and determine whether it provides an appropriate location for the identified actions.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of this report and the continuing college activity to value and incorporate the learner voice into its operations.

9. Digital Inclusion Report

The Head of Digital and IT Operations reported that the College was improving digital inclusion by expanding device access, upgrading Wi-Fi, and strengthening digital skills support. She informed members that Laptop loans remain extremely high, and students report increased confidence using tools like Smart Search, e-books, and MyKelvin.

M Harding added that the College is also enhancing accessibility features, digitising support services, and working with community partners to reach vulnerable learners. Future plans include expanding device capacity, exploring AI-enabled support, and improving study-skills provision.

G Sharp praised the report as thorough and high quality, but suggested that the statement indicating *no equality implications* undersells the work. He recommended reframing this more positively to reflect how the work contributes to equality.

ACTION: J Quinn agreed with Gary's point and confirmed the equality implications section would be updated before the paper is submitted to the Learning & Teaching Committee and the Board.

C Walters strongly supported the report, particularly its focus on future skills. She highlighted recent work on meta-skills, informed by feedback from students, staff, and employers, which identified six key skills: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, resilience, adaptability, and creativity. She noted that further work is planned with J Clarke and M Harding to develop a consistent, college-wide approach to meta-skills.

R Ashton welcomed the discussion on AI skills, emphasising their importance for inclusion and employability. He noted that some staff and students feel apprehensive about AI and that the College has a responsibility to build capability in this area to support learners' readiness for the workplace.

Overall, members were very positive about the report, endorsing its future-focused skills agenda while identifying opportunities to strengthen equality messaging, meta-skills coherence, and AI capability development across the College.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the contents of this report.

10. Update on Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER)

The Head of Enhancement and Assurance informed members that the College was preparing for its external TQER, scheduled for late 2026. He highlighted that a Steering Group had been formed, a risk map produced, and an action plan created to ensure all evidence and processes meet review requirements. Work is underway to develop the Advance Information Set (AIS), which will be submitted to reviewers.

J Clarke added that the College has also begun its Institution-Led Quality Review (ILQR) cycle, with the first review (Healthcare, Childcare & Social Care) completed in December 2025. Findings showed strong practice, positive student experience, and only minor areas for development. The next ILQR, focused on Student Funding, will take place in March 2026.

Overall, he noted that preparations aim to strengthen quality assurance, meet SFC requirements, and enhance the student experience.

R Ashton acknowledged that major quality reviews can be demanding in the lead-up, but sought reassurance that quality enhancement is an ongoing focus rather than something addressed only every six years. He emphasised the importance of ILQR as a continuing annual process, noting that it will cover all areas of the College over a six-year cycle. He welcomed the positive feedback from the first ILQR, highlighting that it built on existing annual processes and did not create an excessive additional workload.

J Clarke agreed and reinforced that the work being undertaken is not solely for the upcoming TQER review. He noted that while there is currently significant effort involved in improving processes, documentation, and systems, once these are established, they will require maintenance rather than repeated intensive effort. He added that improved systems should lead to greater consistency, efficiency, and joined-up working across the College, ultimately making quality processes more manageable and beneficial in the long term.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- Note the college's ILQR process and activity.
- Make any suggestions to refine and improve the process.

11. 2024-25 At Risk Review Process Outcomes

The Vice Principal informed members that the College annually reviewed all courses using a risk-based quality enhancement approach, categorising them as Green (low risk), Amber (medium risk), or Red (high risk).

He noted that the Red-high risk courses are those courses where student outcomes have been significantly low over a number of years. All courses which have regularly been more than 15% below the full-time college average for that level are classed as high risk.

R Ashton added that Faculty Directors completed detailed review proformas, and a cross-College At-Risk Panel met on 10 November 2025 to determine next steps. As a result, three courses will be removed from the 2026–27 curriculum, with two being replaced by redeveloped, more suitable programmes. Furthermore, the panel agreed that 16 other high-risk courses should remain in the curriculum due to significant ongoing quality improvement work and promising early 2025–26 performance data. These courses will continue with monitoring and full impact assessments.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the for outcomes of the At Risk Review Process for the 24-25 courses. No further comments were raised.

12. Summary of Positive Teaching Practice – Learning for Sustainability (LfS)

The Environmental and Sustainability Manager informed members that the report summarising positive Learning for Sustainability practice across Glasgow Kelvin College, drawn from Faculty Manager feedback as part of the College's participation in the EAUC Learning for Sustainability Pilot Programme. The report highlighted extensive existing practice across all curriculum areas, demonstrating that environmental and social sustainability, wellbeing, equality and community engagement are already embedded within core teaching, learning and assessment.

S Shea spoke of examples which included sustainable food practices, outdoor and nature-based learning, digital-first approaches, reuse and waste-reduction initiatives, partnerships with community organisations, and curriculum content addressing equality, ethics and global citizenship. The paper emphasised strong staff and student engagement, with practice contributing to enhanced learner wellbeing, skills development and community impact.

Members discussed how to celebrate and share this work. Ideas included light-touch recognition such as emails, lunches, or small prizes, as well as broader visibility through marketing channels (Teams, SharePoint, campus screens, social media, website content, possibly TikTok).

S Shea noted conversations with the marketing team about covering sustainability-related events and projects, which could also help attract prospective students by showcasing positive practice. Additionally, a deeper approach to celebration could involve staff development sessions where staff share what they're doing, potentially during staff development week. This was seen as a good way to meaningfully share best practice.

Suggestions for future ideas included creating a digital magazine or Sway-style resource to capture and showcase positive practice for future review. S Shea emphasised that Marketing may be open to support this.

Robin welcomed the work, noting that much of this activity wasn't previously visible, and supported finding ways to share, promote, and celebrate it more widely.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to:

- Note the College's breadth of LfS practice across subject areas and consider proposals to recognise and celebrate positive practice.

13. Education Scotland 2024 Review and Action Plan/Progress Update

The Vice Principal highlighted that the report sought to update Academic Board members on the College's progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified during Education Scotland's Annual Engagement Visit in May 2024. The review highlighted strong practice overall but identified five areas for improvement focused mainly on learner representation, meta-skills, and awareness of the Students' Association.

R Ashton added that the College has made good progress across all areas, including establishing Class Representatives for all Modern Apprenticeships, developing a new metaskills framework, improving Students' Association visibility, and revising Class Representative training to ensure earlier and more consistent delivery. R Ashton added that the update confirmed that the College was effectively addressing all recommendations.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the progress made against the areas for development identified through the Education Scotland Annual Engagement Visit 2024. No further comments were raised.

14. Widening Participation, Articulation and Progression Report

The Vice Principal informed members that the report outlined how the College continues to widen access for disadvantaged and under-represented learners.

R Ashton highlighted that the College delivers an inclusive, FE-focused curriculum, extensive community-based learning across nearly 40 venues, strong progression pathways to higher education, and targeted support for vulnerable groups such as care-experienced learners. He emphasised that evidence shows strong impact: high participation from SIMD10 areas, excellent community learner attainment (96%), and strong progression rates, with 95.4% of successful full-time leavers moving into work or further study. Future priorities include expanding digital outreach, strengthening progression pathways from community learning, enhancing support for vulnerable learners, embedding wellbeing in the curriculum, and developing ESOL pathways.

R Ashton asked members to consider whether the five identified areas for strengthening widening participation were the right ones, and whether there were any gaps or additional actions the group should be considering. He added that while the reports were partly prepared with inspection in mind, they are also useful as annual “taking stock” exercises to review progress, reflect on current practice, and identify actions to strengthen the college’s position.

Members of the Academic Board agreed to note the College’s continued strengths in widening participation and the future priorities to enhance access outlined in this report.

As the meeting concluded, R Ashton thanked all presenters and members for their valuable contributions.

15. Impact and Consequences

- Resource
- Students
- Risk and Assurance
- Equality
- Data Protection
- Environmental and Sustainability

Members agreed that no issues had arisen as a consequence of the business conducted at the meeting.

16. Closure

The meeting closed at 3pm

17. Date of Next Meeting

24 April 2026 - MS Teams