

Zoom meeting 4.30pm

AGENDA

		Type	Lead
1	Apologies and Declarations of interest	Discussion	Ross Martin
2	Minutes and Matters Arising of Meeting of 21 July 2020	Noting	Ross Martin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B/19/096 Sale of Falkirk Campus 		

(Elements of Paper 2 are withheld from publication on the Forth Valley College website under Section 33 Commercial Interests and the Economy of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.)

3	Resuming Campus Operations	Discussion	Andrew Lawson
4	SMT Update	Discussion	SMT
5	Review of Risk	Discussion	All
6	Any other competent business	Discussion	All

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Zoom Meeting, (Commencing at 4.30pm)

Present: Ross Martin (Chair)
Dr Ken Thomson
Hazel Burt
Andrew Caldwell
Andrew Carver
Trudi Craggs (Vice Chair)
Lorna Dougall
Pamela Duncan
Jennifer Hogarth
Aleksandrs Petrovskis, Forth Valley Student Association Vice President (FVSAVP)
Ken Richardson
Andrew Smirthwaite, Forth Valley Student Association President (FVSAP)
Steven Tolson

Apologies: Naila Akram
Davie Flynn (Vice Chair)
Katherine Graham
Beth Hamilton
Liam McCabe

In Attendance: Alison Stewart, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Affairs (VPFACA)
Stephen Jarvie, Corporate Governance and Planning Officer and Deputy Board Secretary (CGPO)
David Logue, Falkirk Campus Project Director (FCPD)
Teresa Bradford-Wong, CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP (TBW)

The Chair invited the President of the FVSA to introduce the new Vice President, Aleksandrs Petrovskis, and the Board welcomed him to his first Meeting.

The Chair noted that David Logue and Teresa Bradford-Wong were in attendance to support discussions on the sale of the Falkirk campus paper.

B/19/094 Apologies and Declarations of interest

As noted above

B/19/095 Minutes and Matters Arising of Meeting of 25 June 2020

Members approved the minutes of the meeting of 25 June 2020, subject to the amendment of the figure associated with the number of laptops distributed to students by the College.

B/19/089 Draft Budget 2020/21 and FFR Commentary

The VPFACA confirmed that a single year budget and commentary had been submitted to SFC as agreed by the Board at the last meeting.

She informed members that while SFC had acknowledged the Board's decision that the College would not submit the following two years forecasts as requested they required this information for their own Board reports.

Following discussions with the Principal, the VPFACA provided the remaining two years information based on rolling forward the current budget for 2020/21 as presented to the Board in June with assumptions for pay awards and some other items included for future years. She confirmed that this submission was significantly caveated and that SFC were made aware that this was not approved by the Board.

Members noted the update

B/19/096

Sale of Falkirk Campus

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

B/19/097 Review of Risk

Members noted that risks associated with the sale were discussed.

B/19/098 AOCB

Board Self Evaluation

The VPFACA informed members that the CGPO will shortly be issuing the annual members questionnaires and that dates for individual meetings with the Chair and herself in August would be circulated soon.

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1. Purpose

To provide an overview of the preparations in place to enable a return to campus operations from 11 August 2020.

2. Recommendation

That members discuss and note the content of this paper.

3. Background

At the Board of Management meeting on 25 June 2020, the Depute Principal and Chief Operating Officer, supported by the Project Support Officer, provided members with an overview of the preparations being taken by the College to enable a return to campus operations.

Members welcomed the update and noted, owing to the time before the next scheduled Board of Management meeting, it would be valuable to have an additional meeting before staff and students return to campus.

4. Key Considerations

Summary information is provided below on a number of key areas in relation to opening the College to staff and students. This information below is not exhaustive but covers the main points. The project continues to meet key milestones for the opening of the campuses.

Members can request any additional information, if required at the meeting.

Health and Safety

- Created a general risk assessment for the campuses which has been shared with, and agreed by, the College Health and Safety group which includes representation from both recognised trade unions.
 - Creating specific risk assessments for areas throughout the College including practical delivery spaces where physical distancing is not possible
 - Purchased and deployed protective screening for front facing staff areas such as reception and learning resource centres
 - Purchased advanced cleaning systems including foggers, electrostatic devices and sanitisation tunnels to greatly enhance ongoing cleaning measures
 - Purchased additional sanitisation stations and deployed these throughout the campuses
 - Purchased PPE and sanitisation products for specified areas such as salons and workshops
 - Developed process for track and trace should it become necessary
 - Supporting staff who are home working with IT resources and office furniture from campus as appropriate to ensure College obligations are met for an appropriate working environment
 - College has been certified as Legionnaire free following the lockdown period
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Teaching

- Deployed a new model for in campus delivery taking into account limitations set by physical distancing requirements and reflecting blended learning where students in a class will attend campus on alternating weeks
- Created a specific covid-19 timetable to support the blended model of delivery and the staggering of class times to support staggered entry, break and exit times where possible
- Deployed additional IT resource (smart screens, webcams and microphones) to classrooms to enable joined learning for those on campus and those working from home and also to ensure commonality of classroom resource available to lecturers across all campus sites to the standard of the Falkirk campus.
- Purchased additional laptop resource to support learners who may be at risk of digital exclusion
- Reviewed curricular provision with a focus on theory, practical and placement activities
- Proactively working with awarding bodies to ensure proposed changes are acceptable to ensure a positive outcome for students
- Created and launched pre-induction materials for students
- Created and launched new enrolment processes to ensure physical distancing, including moving a significant amount of enrolment activity to an online basis
- Delayed start of academic year for students to allow time for staff training on new systems and approaches

Physical Measures

- Physical distancing applied to all areas of College either through the removal of furniture (e.g. classrooms) or through scheduling (staff rota's for use of staffrooms)
- Installed clear signage across all campuses to support key messages re physical distancing, maximum usage of resources such as lifts, cleaning of shared resource and the keep left system implemented to support movement around campus
- Restricting the number of people on campus at any one time. This will be done with lecturers and students only permitted on campus for timetabled activity and working from home remaining the default for support staff unless there is a clear need for them to be on campus.
- Staff movement will be recorded in real time via the employee records to support test and protect processes and to ensure provision of adequate health and safety provision e.g. fire wardens
- Closure of campus canteens and Gallery restaurant until October in the first instance. These areas will still be used for practical class work but will not be open to staff, students or external clients
- Implemented a stop to face to face meetings (except for key issues such as counselling) within the College and on staff attending external conferences/events
- No conferences/events to be held on campus until further notice

Communications

- Regular communications with staff and students via College social media channels, ezines, emails and other media
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- FAQ's available on College website. These remain under regular review.
- Creation of user guides campus for Staff, Students and Visitors to outline new processes and measures
- Creation and in house production of all new signage cross campus
- Creation of return to work Moodle course for staff members
- Welcome videos prepared for sharing with students and staff
- Creation of COVID-19 landing page on College website with key messages

5. Financial Implications

The final cost of the adaption to campus operations is still to be calculated as there are elements of ongoing costs such as sanitisation products which will need to be supplied until such time as the College is advised by Scottish Government that a return to a pre-Covid operational environment is possible. Care has been taken to balance the purchase of equipment/services to enable a safe and quality offering to students and all campus users with the need to prevent unnecessary expenditure.

6. **Equalities** - Care has been taken to ensure equalities and accessibility have been factored into decisions made. Where specific additional processes/procedures are created these will be subject to the College's Equalities Impact Assessment process.

7. Risk

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High	X	X
High		
Medium		
Low		
Very Low		

Failure to operate a safe environment upon resuming campus operations could lead to local outbreaks that could impact on the health of individuals and lead to college closure(s). While significant work has been undertaken to mitigate the range of risk factors, the risk score will not be lowered until these can be demonstrated to work in practice.

Risk Owner – Ken Thomson

Action Owner – Andrew Lawson

Paper Author – Stephen Jarvie

SMT Owner – Andrew Lawson

1. Purpose

To present to the Board of Management a summary position on SMT activity from the Board meeting in June 2020

2. Recommendation

The Board should note and provide question as appropriate on the SMT activity undertaken since June 2020.

3. Key Highlights

3.1 National involvement

Following the Minister for FE, HE and Sciences announcement of a review of SFC in late June, the Principal was asked to join an FE Co-Production Advisory Group with four other Principals and senior executives from SFC to support the future for credit modelling, to maximise SFC funding to Colleges, to further develop the narrative of the role of colleges and to support the process for a new and more impact orientated Outcome Agreement contract between SFC and Regional Colleges. The Advisory Group is a short life working group expected to be 12 weeks duration. To date however, whilst discussions have been open and well received we are still waiting for news as to the allocation of a further £10m for the Flexible Workforce Development Fund. If this was matched the previous FWDF fund allocation it would mean circa £550k to the College.

The Principal has led in the development of a sectoral Digital Ambition which will help to underpin future funding for digital infrastructure.

3.2 Futures Programme

Our introduction of Instructor Assessor role, which is underpinned by our Futures Programme, continues to move forward. Alternative arrangements were implemented during COVID 19 taking into account the health and wellbeing of those affected. However, it was important that we maintained contact with staff and keep both staff and unions fully informed of developments during this time.

As a result of vacant posts and redeployment opportunities becoming available the number of lecturing staff in the consultation process was reduced from 79 to 50. This equated to 44 FTE of which approximately 30 staff will be offered Lecturing posts and approximately 20 staff offered Instructor Assessor posts. Some of these post may be fractional.

Moving forward, we have now successfully recruited 10 staff into the role of Instructor Assessor (7.0 FTE) with a further 3 interviews for the post about to take place and with interest both internally and externally.

Following our commitment to face to face consultation meetings there still remains a number of individual meetings to take place and these will be concluded before the end of August 2020. We continue to have roles for all those affected by this process and continue to make it clear that the college had no plans to make any staff compulsory redundant. However, should any member of staff refuse a post we offer them they will effectively be putting themselves in a redundancy situation and the college will have no other option and would commence a compulsory redundancy process.

It should be noted the EIS/FELA remain in dispute with the college on the grounds that they do not agree the Instructor Assessor post is a suitable alternative for a lecturer. However our rationale is robust and has been scrutinised thoroughly.

It should also be noted that any change to a college's structure is a local issue and this is an important aspect of autonomy for each college to maintain due to the unique culture, business objectives, and resources, allowing colleges to grow and evolve as required.

3.3 Sale of old Falkirk Estate

We are delighted to report that the sale of the old Campus to Gannet developments is now complete and funds have been transferred.

3.4 Budget 20/21

The Senior Management Team have met on 2 occasions to review the budget position and consider actions to resolve the £900k shortfall. Key areas under discussion are:

- Short course commercial income
- Modern apprenticeship income
- Staffing structures
- Review of curriculum to review inefficient and non performing programmes
- Maximising the use of assets – exploring the potential to lease parts of the buildings to external parties
- Review of non-staffing operational spend

To date we have identified additional income/savings which has reduced the shortfall by approximately £400k leaving a shortfall of £500k . Further work is required in relation to Foundation Apprenticeships which will become clearer once the schools return next week. At the time of writing, we are also awaiting confirmation on the Flexible Workforce Development Funding for 20/21.

3.5 Student Funding

During 19/20 SMT approved a Business Transformation project to further develop the Online Bursary Application system. The key developments are

- allowing students to upload supporting documentation required to support their application for funding
- automating the calculation of the awards
- automating the issue of award letters

These 3 changes will remove labour intensive manual process which will free up the Student Funding team's time to process applications quicker and providing a better service to the Students. We are delighted to say the system went live 2 weeks ago.

3.6 Learning and Student Experience

All Teaching Departments have now confirmed their curriculum delivery for 20/21 and key conversations have taken place over the summer to identify changes to delivery due to the impact of C-19, identify poor recruiting programmes and have robust plans in place for the commencement of learning and teaching in August. Where appropriate, Teaching Departments have also created recovery plans to support those students who were deferred due to the impact of C-19. Specifically, these plans have taken into consideration the additional workload on deferred students who have progressed to their next year of study, whilst carrying over work from Block 2 of 19/20 session, as well as the increased workload on staff.

Learning & Student Support and Learning & Quality Departments have been engaged throughout this planning process to ensure the correct resources are in place to support staff upon their return in August.

To further support staff the start of the academic year has been delayed by a week to give staff additional time to prepare for the changes in delivery for 20/21. Overall recruitment to courses is healthy with the majority of interviews taking place over the phone due to C-19 restrictions. Feedback has indicated that phone interviews have been well received by candidates.

For the small number of courses that have recruited poorly these have been identified and alternative provision has been put in place with all affected students being offered alternative courses. The courses that have been impacted have been mainly in the Alloa Campus within the Department of Business and Communities where alternative provision is now in place.

The support of our new students is progressing well with approximately 550 notifications to date of students who have additional support needs and 100 students requiring continuing engagement from last year. We expect these numbers to continue to grow as we resume in-campus services. The Learning Support Team have already commenced interviews with our new students and the Team have adapted their approach to conduct their needs assessment meetings with the students either on MS Teams or over the phone. This format is working well.

Learning and Quality are working with the Resuming Campus Operations Project Team and Teaching Departments to ensure guidance and support is available for teaching staff who are returning in August and will be delivering in a blended digital format.

The newly formed EnableFVC Digital Skills Team will be available to support teaching staff with their digital pedagogy and blended approaches from the start of the new academic year across all three campuses, as well as starting to enhance curriculum design in our next generation of courses. This is a fantastic opportunity for the College that will continue to ensure our position as sector leading in innovation.

3.7 Alternative Guidance for Assessment

The Alternative Guidance for Assessment process that was used during C-19 lockdown period has received positive feedback from Programme Teams, with teams highlighting the robustness of the process and the level of support available that helped simplify the holistic assessment decision process. The Internal Quality Approval Group has feedback that the level of engagement from Curriculum Teams was extremely positive and the evidence gathered by the Teams to reach holistic assessment decisions was effective and robust.

The Alternative Assessment Guidance is still currently active and we are awaiting updated guidance from SQA for 20/21 quality protocols.

3.8 School College Provision

We have worked extremely hard with our Secondary Schools to ensure C-19 does not impact school/college relationships and senior phase recruitment for 20/21. Initial estimations highlight over 1000 school pupils will be studying with the College in 20/21. Foundation Apprenticeship numbers are improving and Skills for Work numbers are healthy.

We are also in the process of tendering with SDS for 200 places for the L4/5 Pre-foundation Apprenticeship programme starting in late August.

The College is also in discussion with Clackmannanshire Council regarding their three local Academies leasing space in the Alloa Campus for their senior phase delivery.

This will move the College's school partnership programme to the next level and paves the way for new opportunities in secondary senior phase education including the potential and unique Technical Academy pilot with Falkirk schools.

3.9 Results Day (Press Release 4 August 2020)

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

FVC students prove lockdown was no barrier to success

Forth Valley College has seen an impressive increase in success rates for Results Day 2020. Over 86% of students studying National 4/5s, Highers and Skills for Work programmes have successfully achieved their qualification – an increase of 12% from 74% in 2018/2019.

Despite a four month lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, hundreds of dedicated and committed students managed to work hard at home and online to complete their courses and are now celebrating the positive results. Academically the enforced switch from 'Face to Face'

teaching on 17 March – when the College closed - to online learning took a great effort but the college team rose seamlessly to the challenge.

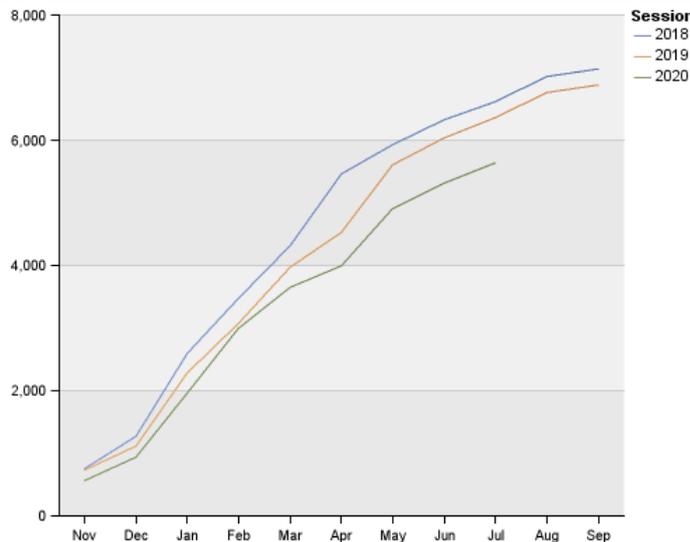
Dr Ken Thomson, Principal of Forth Valley College, said: “It is just fantastic to see so many students waking up to positive results today. It is testament to all their hard work, flexibility and determination that they have reached this point and it should fill them with so much confidence, that they can adapt to anything, as they take their next steps.

“It has to be said that I am also very proud of all my staff who have worked tirelessly, to support our students during this challenging period. Now more than ever, as we emerge from lockdown and one of the most difficult periods society has faced in living memory, we are eager to make learning work for the people of Forth Valley and Scotland as a whole to help with our economic, educational and communal recovery.”

3.10 Recruitment 2020/21

Full time recruitment continues to follow the same trend as it has over the last 3 months. We witnessed a drop in applications as we entered lockdown, with very few applications received over the first 3 weeks of lockdown. Since then we have received applications at their usual levels, however we haven’t recovered in terms of overall applications, which are still showing as being below where we have been at this point over the previous 2 sessions.

Cumulative Applications for Full Time August start courses (to date for 2020 Courses)

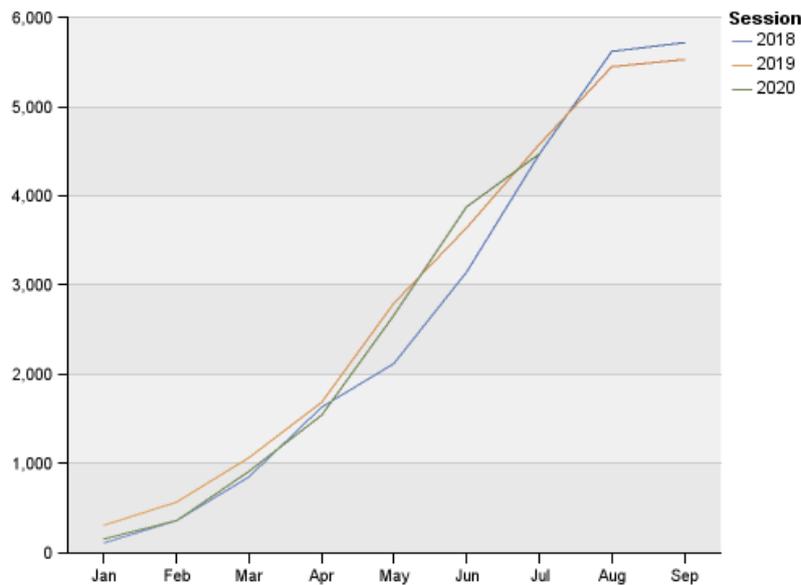


Session	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2018	738	1,271	2,588	3,472	4,311	5,462	5,927	6,326	6,615	7,024	7,138
2019	726	1,113	2,275	3,072	3,966	4,530	5,608	6,036	6,362	6,767	6,880
2020	554	937	1,957	2,987	3,651	3,988	4,899	5,319	5,635		

However, more importantly in terms of offers we are at a very similar position to where we have been at this point over the last 2 sessions. To date over 3,500 students who have

received an offer have engaged with our pre-entry induction course, which is very encouraging.

Cumulative Offers for Full Time August start courses (to date for 2020 Courses)



Session	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
2018	107	360	847	1,636	2,119	3,149	4,469	5,620	5,714
2019	304	565	1,065	1,685	2,798	3,644	4,577	5,449	5,527
2020	150	359	911	1,541	2,664	3,875	4,475		

3.11 Draft Credits Guidance

SFC have issued draft Credits guidance for Session 2020/21 to the Co-Production Advisory Group for comment. Overall, the proposed changes to Credits guidance are positive and welcomed. The main change is that Credits can be claimed in Session 2020/21 for all students who as a result of Covid-19 are requiring to return to complete a full or part year, to allow completion of their 2019/20 course. This will mainly relate to practical elements which were unable to be completed in 2019/20. Other significant changes are the removal of any reference to “one-plus” activity from Credits guidance, which will allow Colleges to claim Credits for additional units undertaken by full time students during the session, and linked to this, allowing Colleges to claim Credits for timetabled guidance on HE courses.

Colleges are being asked to prioritise provision that facilitates re-training and re-skilling to equip people for new employment opportunities as the economy recovers, however to enable all of the above within fixed Credits allocations, Colleges are being asked to deprioritise school-college activity outwith senior phase, and additional units to full time FE students unless this is in response to Covid-19. Feedback has been provided to SFC on the challenges and practicalities of deprioritising both of these groups.

3.12 Outcome Agreement 2020/21

As reported at the previous Board meeting, the Outcome Agreement process for 2020/21 was put in abeyance as a result of Covid-19. Part of the remit of the Co-Production Advisory Group is to review current and future Outcome Agreement guidance, with a meeting of the Outcome Agreement sub-group taking place on 6th August. The College is represented on this sub-group by the Principal and Vice Principal for Information Systems and Communications.

4. Financial Implications

None

5. Equalities

Assessment in Place? – Yes No

If No, please explain why – This paper is an overview report only, there are no changes to College policy or practice involved.

6. Risk

Please indicate on the matrix below the risk score. Risk is scored against Impact and Likelihood as Very Low through to Very High.

	Likelihood	Impact
Very High		
High		
Medium		
Low		
Very Low	X	X

Please describe any risks associated with this paper and associated mitigating actions –

None

Risk Owner – Ken Thomson

Action Owner – Ken Thomson

Paper Author – Ken Thomson

SMT Owner – Ken Thomson