Board of Management

Date of Meeting	27 April 2020
Paper Title	Board Annual Self-Evaluation
Agenda Item	12
Paper Number	BM3-G
Responsible Officer	Penny Davis, Board Secretary
Recommended Status	Temporary exemption under FOI(S)A S.22 - for future publication and submission to SFC
Action	For Approval

1. Report Purpose

1.1. To provide the Board with assurance on the evaluation process undertaken and feedback from its 2019-20 self-evaluation questionnaire.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Board is invited to **consider** and **approve** the report and note that findings from the self-evaluation survey have informed the draft Development Plan 2020-21.

3. Background

3.1. The Code of Good Governance requires that:

The board must keep its effectiveness under annual review and have in place a robust self-evaluation process. There should be an externally facilitated evaluation of its effectiveness at least every three years. The board must send its self-evaluation (including an externally facilitated self-evaluation) and board development plan (including progress on previous year's plan) to its funding body and publish them online.

3.2. GCRB underwent an externally facilitated evaluation in 2018 and will do so again in 2021. The interim 2020 report that follows outlines the self-evaluation activities undertaken during the course of the year, in accordance with the process approved by the Nominations & Remuneration Committee and reported to the Board in October 2019.

3.3. The Board received a detailed report on feedback from a self-evaluation questionnaire issued to all Board Members. The survey was reissued subsequent to the Board meeting. The final number of responses received was twelve. Additional feedback was consistent with earlier responses and no new areas for development were identified.

4. GCRB Self-Evaluation Process

4.1. In accordance with the approved plan, the following activities have been undertaken since March 2019.

a) Individual self-evaluation meetings between all Members and the Board Chair took place, including consideration of development needs and setting objectives for the year ahead. This was a transition year in which an interim meeting was held in July/August followed by a meeting in January/February 2020 (meetings will return to an annual cycle hereafter). The Chair provided generalised feedback on training and development needs at both stages, which was incorporated into the development action plan.

b) At their December 2019/January 2020 meetings, all committees considered and approved reports on their membership, attendance and activity during the year, key decisions taken, and priorities for the year ahead, and reported these to the Board.

c) All Committees also considered the Committee Chair's performance and provided feedback to the Chair which was shared with the Board Chair to refer to in one-to-one evaluations.

d) The Senior Independent Member undertook an evaluation of the Board Chair including a scaled questionnaire with space for qualitative feedback, and follow-up interviews with a sample of six Board Members including Non-Executive, Assigned College Chair, Staff and Student Members. A verbal report will be provided to the Board at a future meeting and feedback will be shared with Scottish Government as the appointing body. The 2020 questionnaire was modified to incorporate Scottish Government appraisal criteria to ensure that the appointing body received feedback from Board Members specifically aligned to those criteria.

e) A questionnaire relating to overall board effectiveness, based on principles in the Code of Good Governance, and on the Board's own feedback to its 2018-19 questionnaire was circulated to Members during January 2020. The questionnaire was shorter than the previous two years', focusing on key areas for review and development, and a greater emphasis was placed on qualitative feedback. The Board received a detailed report on feedback at its meeting in January, and feedback has been incorporated into the draft Development Plan 2020-21.   A summary of areas identified as development priorities, several of which are ongoing in nature, was considered and agreed by the Nominations & Remuneration Committee on 12 March, and is as follows.

  i. The need for a stronger development focus on effective boardroom behaviours, including the extent to which and the way in which members contribute to discussions.

  ii. Further strengthening of Board understanding around the use of performance indicators, monitoring and reporting, to support a clear line of sight for the Board into performance at a regional level.

  iii. Continued focus on GCRB's relationship with the Assigned Colleges to develop a common language and shared vision.

  iv. Continued focus on developing internal and external relationships and collaboration.

  v. Continued focus on students and understanding of factors impacting on the student experience.

5. Risk Implications

5.1. The report contributes to mitigation of Risk 0012: The capacity and capability of the Board is inadequate and standards of governance fall below the level required, and Risk 0013: There is a breach of legislation/guidance/code of practice and this results in a failure of governance.

6. Legal Implications

6.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7. Strategic Implications

7.1. There are no direct implications for the Regional Outcome Agreement or Strategic Plan associated with this paper. However, development recommendations will be informed by the content of this report and will promote effective governance and thereby support the achievement of regional outcomes.

8. Equalities Implications

8.1. No equalities implications have been identified in this report.