

Nominations & Remuneration Committee

Date of Meeting	Thursday 27 May 2021
Paper Title	Review of Assigned College External Effectiveness Reviews
Agenda Item	8
Paper Number	NRC5-D
Responsible Officer	Penny Davis, Board Secretary
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Noting

1. Report Purpose

- 1.1** To apprise the Committee of completion of the Assigned Colleges' External Effectiveness Reviews (EERs) and any salient matters arising from the review process.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.** The Committee is invited to:

- **note** that an EER has been completed for each of the three Assigned College;
- **note** that the EER reports were positive and no material points of non-compliance were identified;
- **note** the observations under 4.4 relating to areas of common interest/development among the Colleges and GCRB.

3. Background

- 3.1.** Under the Code of Good Governance for Scotland's Colleges, all college sector boards are required to send their evaluation reports to their funding body. Boards were required to complete an externally facilitated evaluation by the end of April 2021, further to a direction issued by the Funding Council. GCRB received a report from each of the Assigned Colleges and submitted these, together with its own report, to the Funding Council by the deadline.

4. Assigned College EERs

- 4.1.** EERs were conducted by the following:

- Glasgow Kelvin College - Henderson Loggie
- Glasgow Clyde College – CDN
- City of Glasgow College - CDN

4.2 All evaluation processes and resulting reports were thorough-going and provided a list of development recommendations. None found any areas of material non-compliance with the Code of Good Governance.

4.3 There were some themes common to all reports, which also reflected the findings and recommendations of GCRB's EER. There may be benefits, in terms of both efficiency and impact, in seeking a shared approach to development in those areas. Initial discussion has taken place with GCRB's internal auditor, who is also internal auditor for the Assigned Colleges, about incorporating relevant further work on strategy development in the internal audit plan for 2021-22.

4.4 The following is a brief summary of common themes and areas for potential development at regional level emerging from or in response to the reports. A summary list of recommendations from the colleges' and GCRB's reports is provided for information at Appendix 1. The full reports are available on the Colleges' websites, and will be provided to Committee Members on request.

a) the quality of strategic debate and decision-making

- the need for improved access by college boards to regional strategy to allow for consistency between local, regional (and national) strategy
- the potential for a more consistent approach to monitoring performance (eg, common KPIs) at local and regional level; all college boards either use a dashboard system or are seeking to introduce one
- the need for a two-way approach to sharing strategic information for planning, ie, GCRB to Assigned College boards and vice versa

b) stakeholder mapping and relationship-development

- all reports were concerned with this; City of Glasgow College are developing a new stakeholder engagement strategy
- none of the college reports referred to GCRB as a key stakeholder or the governance/accountability relationship between the college and GCRB
- given that GCRB's report contained a recommendation on regional stakeholder mapping, there is potential for a collaborative approach that would benefit all

5. Risk Analysis

5.1 The report contributes to mitigation of 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. Resource Implications

7.1. There are no new financial implications arising from this report.

8. Equalities Implications

8.1. There are no new equalities implications arising from this report.

9. Strategic Implications

9.1. There are strategic implications arising from the areas of common interest/development identified under item 4.4 above. Collaborative approaches to sharing strategic planning information, developing corresponding approaches to performance monitoring and reporting, and stakeholder mapping and relationships could all have a significant impact.

Appendix 1 – Recommendations from EERs

City of Glasgow College (CDN)

1 Strategy

Ensure the Board has more time and opportunities to critically think through, test and challenge the strategic context, issues, and direction of College, particularly with the challenges of a post Covid-19 world.

- More involvement and use of the knowledge and expertise of Board members in the development of the papers that inform strategic discussions
- Change the format of strategy day to enhance discussion and improve teamwork and use an external facilitator

2 Succession Planning

Succession Planning must be more visible and there is a need for better understanding of succession planning in a strategic and operational context The Board should:

- Have more formal discussions within the Board and Committee structure.
- Be thinking through and planning for the succession of both Board members and senior staff.

3 Training and Development

Develop a training and development programme tailored to collective needs of the Board and individual members in their different Board roles i.e., Committee Convener, Committee Member, Ambassador, etc.

The development programme should have a strong link to the Board and Committees thinking on succession planning, stakeholder engagement and the Ambassador role to ensure future opportunities and development are clear and fit best for the Board and individual Members.

4 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

More involvement of the Board in the development of the new stakeholder engagement strategy, recognising that their role is strategic and not operational but can be practical.

To fully utilise the knowledge and contacts of the Board, discussions are needed with the Executive Team to define:

- The scope of the new strategy.
- The role of members, to ensure clarity on what and how they can practically contribute their skills, knowledge, contacts, and ideas.
- How members would support the Executive team and Faculties to deliver on the strategy.
- Its linkage to the role of Board members as Ambassadors.

5 Ambassador Role

A discussion to develop and define the role of Board Members as Ambassador's for the College. Discussion at Board and Committees to:

- Clarify and structure the role, its purpose and parameters, and the levels of its requirements and identify training needs.
- Clarify how it would work with Executive team and College Faculties in representing the College as part of the new Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.
- Maximise the expertise and time of members e.g., by freeing specific members from Committee responsibilities to use in an Ambassador role within the stakeholder engagement strategy.

6 Board Effectiveness

The Board and its Committees should consider and agree on a series of measures to help the Board work smarter and be more data 'savvy'. This should include measures on:

- Streamlined and smarter Board papers
- How the Board gain a better understanding of the data it needs and uses, for more informed scrutiny and decisions
- How the Board, with a high level of Committee scrutiny and assurance, better inform the information/papers that need to go to the Board and Board meeting agendas

6A The specifics of the improvements in Recommendation 6, suggested by members in 1-to-1 interviews and the workshop group, for the Board to discussion and consider are:

Streamlined and smarter Board papers:

- All Board papers to have a covering paper – 1 side A4, highlighting, professional analysis - not description of paper – covering purpose, status, and key issues/data to help Board members decisions.
- The Board should consider the use of one comprehensive performance report, where the relevant sections have been considered by the appropriate committees with only an executive summary being submitted to the Board.

Data:

- The Board need to gain a better understanding on data – what data they want to see, and to better understand that data's meaning and its impact.
- Board and Committee papers and reports should have a consistent approach in how data is presented.

Board:

- The Board should consider the role of the Performance and Nominations Committee, an all-Convenor forum that includes the Board Chair, in contributing to the development of upcoming Board meetings agendas.
- Committees have the responsibility to undertake scrutiny and provide assurance to the Board, with detailed discussion of papers at the Board being the exception. Induction Process The Board induction process is good but to ensure a smarter process would benefit from more detailed 'briefing pack' in Admin Control, including:
 - 'Legacy' documents with key background: on where College came from – history, how reached this point - its strategic and operational development, and its success.

- Full biographies of Board members, Executive Team and key wider staff members covering skills, experience, and expertise.
- New Board members would also benefit from 'getting to know you' sessions with Board colleagues and in particular, the Executive Team and key staff to ensure they can fully utilised.
- New Board members would also benefit from a combination of a discussion with the Chair and Principal pre and post their first Board meeting

Glasgow Clyde College (CDN)

1 Leadership and Strategy

- Review reporting to the board to allow space for more strategic discussion. The aim should be for high-quality low density reporting
- Consider a board 'portal' as a digital tool for document sharing and collaboration
- Progress the work on KPIs and the new dashboard
- Consider the use of co-opted members on to board committees
- Consider the timing of staff elections to allow a more effective handover
- In the context of virtual meetings and new members joining the board, consider an 'extended bio' for each member to highlight the full range of skills and experience that each member brings to the board

2 Quality of the Student Experience

- To ensure a clear focus on the quality of the student experience add a board report from management on the student experience. This would be a standing agenda item which would be the first item following the previous minutes and matters arising. The report would cover key strategic issues that may impact on the student experience and report on progress against action plans
- Consider adding 'impact on the student experience' as an addition to board papers and board decisions.
- Strategic engagement with class representatives would enhance board visibility

3 Accountability

- Consider mapping the college contribution to local economic and social wellbeing. This might involve inviting key speakers and setting time aside for less formal discussion. For example, a 30-minute slot before each board meeting with a 'hot topic' for discussion. Attendance by board members would be on a voluntary basis.

4 Effectiveness

- Consider building in some opportunities for small 'group chat' into board meetings
- Consider the recommendations in the 'Virtual Governance' report when planning the transition out of virtual meetings.

- As above in Section 3.3 Accountability consider ‘mapping’ the college contribution to local economic and social wellbeing and setting time aside for informal sessions to which key external speakers are invited

Glasgow Kelvin College (Henderson Loggie)

Henderson Loggie have used an audit reporting format including a detailed list of findings and a shorter action table which it has not been possible to copy and paste. The recommendations can be viewed on pp 9-11 on this link: [BoM-Externally-Facilitated-Board-Effectiveness-Review.pdf](http://glasgowkelvin.ac.uk/BoM-Externally-Facilitated-Board-Effectiveness-Review.pdf) (glasgowkelvin.ac.uk)

GCRB

Most recommendations are ‘desirable’. However, the recommended revision to the business report [Recommendation 1] should be given high priority.

- 1 To support the implementation of the strategic plan, to develop a comprehensive business report, for presentation to each board meeting, with improved accountability for performance to date and including variances from agreed targets, management interventions where necessary, and anticipated impact.
- 2 The creation of a board development programme to support the collective and individual priorities for the board
- 3 Chairing of meetings to include an overview of the agenda business with a focus on decisions to be taken at the meeting.
- 4 Consider the development of a stakeholder policy, formed in the light of a stakeholder mapping exercise
- 5 Consider arrangements for a louder, clearer student voice. Also, consideration could be given to observer status for a number of students from the assigned colleges.
- 6 Review the Board’s role in relation to human resource strategy and development
- 7 Establish core policy statements derived from the purposes of the GCRB and codify systems and controls that support the implementation of these GCRB policies
- 8 Review the nature and content of reporting to the GCRB to ensure that all reports are accessible and understandable. This could include clarity of recommendation, inclusion of an executive summary and including ‘learner and learning implications’ in all reports.
- 9 Consider the potential benefit to the Board from the formation of a Committee for Learning and Teaching

- 10 Consider the value to governance from considering the impact for governance from compliance with the expectations of the Code. This approach may identify ways to refine governing practice in future.
- 11 The Audit and Assurance Committee would benefit from an assurance map i.e. identifying evidence to satisfy assurance in relation to the strategic plan and strategic risk register.