

# CITYLIT

INSPIRING PASSIONS · REALISING AMBITIONS

Meeting	<b>Student Panel</b>
Date	<b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 5:30-7:00pm</b> – online via Zoom
Attendees	City Lit: Karin Kalfus (KK), Dragana Ramsden (DR), Wendy McKaig (WM), Simon Goodier (SG)  Student Governor: Clancy Davies  Student Panel Members: 8 panel members attended.
Notes	Melanie Headley (MH)

## Summary of discussions:

1.0	<b>KK</b>	Welcome and ground rules
2.0	<b>WM</b>	<p>Exec update</p> <p><u>FE Commissioner Visit</u> – Currently the college is in formal financial intervention. This entails a routine set of visits from the FE Commission to measure progress against the recommendations shared with the college after their diagnostic visit in January. Four recommendations were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Improve the financial health of the college and prepare a financial recovery plan</li><li>2. Achievement rates for students on accredited courses:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Ensure that achievement rates are in line with the national benchmarks</li><li>b. Reduce the gap between students with learning difficulties and those without</li></ol></li><li>3. Curriculum model: Improve profitability margins within the overall curriculum. Focused on the annual curriculum planning and budgeting process.</li><li>4. Recruitment of (new) chair of governors: Use a service available through the Department of Education governor search facility. This recommendation has been closed off as City Lit was already into the process of recruiting a replacement for outgoing chair of governors Moira Gibb, who is standing down in December 2022</li></ol> <p>The rest of the recommendations have been closed off with a note that the FE Commission team will continue to visit/monitor progress against the financial health recommendation. There is a recognition that the college is still in formal intervention and confidence that the leadership/management are aware of the actions that</p>

need to be taken. They are satisfied sufficient progress is being made. The Principal continues to engage with the FE Commissioner team outside of the formal visits. Based on the current financial plan, there is the possibility that the college we will be out of formal intervention by the end of the next academic year, if not then by the following year.

Department of Education Multiply Initiative – National campaign to improve adult numeracy skills. There is a recognition of the link between having GCSE grade C level competency in maths and better work/salary prospects for people and the ability to manage personal/family finances confidently. There is funding attached to the campaign and City Lit has submitted a proposal for a project spanning 3 years. Currently working with the GLA to finalise the project plan. The plan is to launch some of the initiatives in the next academic year. This is an opportunity to:

- look at how to teach maths in a creative way,
- how it can be embedded in other subjects,
- how to work with employers to deliver the most contextualised skills for their staff.

Simon Goodier will be leading the project along with his team in the Universal Skills department.

Equality, diversity and inclusion - The college will be focusing on equality, diversity and inclusion in the next academic year, which will be launched at the annual staff/tutor conference in September. The initiatives will be rolling out in September spanning staff, students and curriculum.

Systems improvements – Rolling out a new piece of software intended to support courses where students have to make an application e.g. the ceramics diploma, art foundation, psychology and counselling (diploma). This should make it a seamless journey for the student. Curriculum processes are being mapped by the systems development team.

This software would eliminate the need for students to phone in to enroll once authorized for the course. The system is currently at the testing stage with staff. Panel members may be called upon to test the system from a student prospective.

Student help center - The online student help center is being worked on to improve the content. A form is being developed to direct student queries to the most appropriate team, particularly those seeking digital support.

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	<p><u>Student course information</u> - A review is underway of information received by students regarding their course to ensure that the information is clear and helpful.</p> <p><u>Payment plans</u> – Developing software to simplify the way students can set up payment plans for courses. Planned for roll out in the next academic year.</p> <p>Online learning - An online learning development group has been formed to find the best product to secure the future of City Lit online. The group continues to look for a product which is an improvement of the current system. A software demonstration is scheduled for 27 July. Other companies have been identified, who may have a system more appropriate for City Lit’s type of learning.</p> <p><u>In person courses</u> - The big focus across the college is to have the most successful start to the year. More courses will be returning to the building.</p> <p><u>Student Center</u> - Tomorrow the working group will be meeting regarding the reopening of the student center. It is likely to be a phased reopening in the coming academic year.</p> <p>Q: Has there been a shift in enrolments. Is there a preference for in person or online?</p> <p>WM: There was a survey of students across the School of Culture and Communication (modern/classical languages, humanities, creative writing). They have had predominantly online curriculum, with very little moving back to the building. The student preference was 50/50.</p> <p>The majority of the curriculum was online which allowed people outside of London to engage as students. It is straightforward for subject areas such as visual arts where equipment is needed. It is challenging for knowledge/skills base courses where students can have an equally good learning experience online and in person.</p> <p>Peoples working patterns have changed (working from home). A number of people, who would attend the college after work, are now working from home. The college is open to continually monitoring enrolment patterns and adapting.</p>
DR	Update on past topics

		<p>The key topic of the last student panel meeting was sexual harassment in education, and what City Lit needs to do in order to understand the issue.</p> <p><u>What has been done with the ideas shared by the panel:</u></p> <p>Student facing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student induction will include reference to sexual harassment. A 2-minute animation is being created, which will be shared with students as part of their induction. Includes information about student support, events, the importance of equality &amp; diversity safeguarding and sexual harassment.</li> </ul> <p>Tutors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributed advice note on managing student social groups, e.g. WhatsApp</li> <li>• Training for Deaf English and maths tutors for September. This will be rolled out to other groups of tutors</li> <li>• A new suite of training for tutors on managing 'mild' discriminatory/offensive comments in class</li> </ul> <p>Managers/Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student panel's suggestions shared with all curriculum managers and the Quality Committee of the governing body</li> <li>• Curriculum managers intend to use the report in their meetings with their tutors</li> <li>• Remind managers of longer courses to support their tutors to reiterate safeguarding information on those courses more regularly</li> </ul> <p>All staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information about sexual harassment in education settings included in the safeguarding staff update</li> </ul> <p>Panel member comment – Good to see what the tangible steps and outcomes were from the panel meeting. The fact that it was circulated received and considered by different members of the college in different ways. Hope it adds to making City Lit a safer place for everyone.</p>
3.0	CG	<p>Clancy Davies –Student Governor</p> <p>Role of Student Governor</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not rubber-stamping job and have the opportunity to have a real impact. Not there as a class representative, but for direct experience as a student. The role is to bring that experience to the board, and you are listened to.</li><li>• The panels work on safeguarding was presented to the board in a clear report which had impact</li><li>• Normally an elected position, but was not because of the pandemic. A number of people applied, submitted statements and were interviewed.</li><li>• There is a considerable workload, with the requirement to attend a number of meetings through the year and read reports.</li><li>• The board looks at various topics; wide ranging policies, how external factors affect the college and technical suggestions in relation to the website.</li><li>• The Student Governor is well supported in their role</li><li>• Experience with the student panel, declaring a medical condition, engagement with the complaint process has proved invaluable in the role.</li><li>• Undertook training for trustees, however the main qualification is being a City Lit student.</li><li>• The Quality Committee which the Student Governor sits on is constantly reviewing itself (and the college) and is open to criticism and praise.</li><li>• Rewarding role with great responsibility. There are certain legal requirements for the role. The Student Governor becomes a Director and is registered at Companies House.</li><li>• Stood on a platform that the library should be supported, as it is an important resource, particularly for students who do not have access to broadband, private space, or are unable to afford software for their courses. It is important for human contact as well as information. It is an inclusive space where some of the City Lit communities meet (Deaf students and those with learning disabilities).</li></ul>
4.0	KK	<p>Terms of reference</p> <p>In the past, student panel membership was 3 years, currently 2. There are pros and cons for the current length of membership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ A shorter term means recruiting more people more often</li><li>○ Difficult to build relationships with panel members</li><li>○ Shorter terms - more people with different perspectives</li></ul> <p>Setting the agenda</p>

The agenda is set according to what is being developed by the college. There should be more opportunities for students to bring in topics for discussion.

In the past it was suggested the panel can put forward topics which:

- address a need and aim to improve the overall student experience
- require a discussion needing multiple perspectives

Panel exercise

- Length of student panel membership – is 2 years too short?
- How do we broaden representation?
- What can we do to enable the student panel to drive the agenda more?

In discussions with the Universal Skills area (English, maths, ESOL, digital skills) to see how more of their students can be involved. Need to engage with the Centre for Deaf Education to make it easier for Deaf students to join the panel.

SG – Universal Skills under represented. There is a need to promote the panel more widely with those students. Perhaps students be given a taster of the work that the panel does; a video clip? ESOL students may be support and encouragement to apply. There would be the opportunity for them to develop their language skills.

Panel feedback

- Add an agenda item for 5-10 minutes to share ideas for topics, suggestions, brainstorming
- Contributing ideas via an anonymous form. Suggestions could be picked up at a later meeting
- Presenting ideas is a skill. City Lit could provide support on how to develop an idea
- Panel members may struggle with what are relevant topics. Ideas presented may be niche. Within a class, there are a wide range of students with different levels of experience/backgrounds who are there to learn the same thing. There is a City Lit student experience. Encouraging students to find those commonalities may help them generate the right kinds of questions/topics.
- There are students who have never been to City Lit, others attend in person and hybrid model. There are topics that would arise from this diversity.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There should be opportunities for online/hybrid learners to meet in person</li><li>• If the goal is to recruit and communicate with more Deaf students, where can City Lit engage/recruit/communicate with students and how? Deaf day – promoting the panel. Word of mouth is powerful</li><li>• Promote the panel at college events: theatre performances, Celtic day<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ KK – advertise the panel throughout the year. It is advertised in term 1. We need to keep the awareness going throughout the year</li></ul></li><li>• Term could be between 2 and 3 years. Make the term 2 years with an optional additional year.</li><li>• Agenda issued in advance of the meeting to allow for the submission of ideas. At that point, would learn whether the topics are appropriate, whether further work is required or aligns with work already in progress</li><li>• Use AOB to introduce topics<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ KK from next year, there will be a mix of in person and online meetings</li><li>○ Return to 2 hour in person meetings</li></ul></li><li>• A potential model for student panel that could work to enable contribution from wider group that I have seen at work is having a fixed number of panel members that serve the 2-3 years and a place that is kept open/flexible or rotates across different individuals. Might help generate broader reach of the panel.</li></ul> <p>KK – Email with any further thoughts</p>
5.0		<p>Course evaluations and GLA London Learner Survey</p> <p>At the end of courses, students are sent a City Lit course evaluation form, however the return rate is variable. This year, the college is required to send out/promote the London Learner Survey. The survey was sent out for longer/skills based courses. As the return rate has been low, the survey has been extended to all courses. At the start of courses, students may receive an invite to complete the (15 minute) survey.</p> <p>KK - Have tutors been promoting the survey?</p> <p>Panel member comment – Has been on an long course, has not had the survey, nor have students who are participating in other courses. No panel members have received the survey.</p>

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		<p>KK – The survey is sent at the beginning of a course and was introduced this academic year, so students who have already started a longer course would not receive it.</p> <p>Suggestion – The survey should be promoted on the website</p> <p>KK – Are course evaluations being promoted in class?</p> <p>Some panel members have received the evaluation form. Always fill in the evaluation form Not all tutors promoting/flagging the end of course eval. Has consistently received evaluation forms, but not aware of the GLA survey</p> <p>Suggestion – if the survey is lengthy, perhaps the Mayor’s office should offer an incentive (supermarket vouchers). It would make sense to send the survey to students on longer courses as they are invested in the course. They would have a lot to share. The return rate is likely to be low for short(er) courses.</p>
6.0		<p>Overrun buffer/Questions</p> <p>The next meeting will be in November. KK will contact members to ask whether they wish to continue with the panel. KK will be in touch in September.</p>