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CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject: Learning for Leading	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☒
Prepared by: James Ayling	**Date:** 9 October 2018

Purpose: To inform Committee members of the updated matching of Board members to programme areas.

Linked to Strategic Goal 3: Provide a high quality College experience.

Executive Summary:

It was agreed at the meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee held on 31 May 2018 that the structure of the Learning for Leading initiative be updated for the next academic year with a move to linking Board members to programme areas. The intention is that Board members be linked with those now carrying out the new Curriculum Learning Managers roles and others representing specific areas of the College.

Please see attached table for your linked programme area and contact details for lead personnel.

The Committee may wish to discuss any proposed amendments to the operation of the Scheme.

A copy of the visit by S Shinton to the Creative and Digital Industries on 25 May is also attached for information.

Recommendation: Committee note the position.

Previous Committee Approvals:

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

Regional Board Learning for Leading Scheme – October 2018

Linked areas

Name	Linked with:	Post holder and contact details
T Jakimciw	Digitalisation of Learning and ISLT	Scott Moncrieff (Head of ISLT) Tel: 01896 662555 smoncrieff@borderscollege.ac.uk
I Ireland	Curriculum Learning Manager for Health & Social Care	Lesley Anderson Tel: 01896 662538 lesleyanderson@borderscollege.ac.uk
B McGrath	Curriculum Learning Manager for STEM	Jimmy Louth Tel: 01896 662626 jlouth@borderscollege.ac.uk
E Acaster	Curriculum Learning Manager for Early Education & Supported Programmes	Joan Cairney Tel: 01896 662591 jcairney@borderscollege.ac.uk
D Peace	Curriculum Learning Manager for Sport & Outdoor Activities	Darren Burns Tel: 01896 662566 dburns@borderscollege.ac.uk
V Grant	Curriculum Learning Manager for Rural Skills	Mary Thomson Tel: 01896 662670
L Parkes	Curriculum Learning Manager for Construction Skills	Andy Winwood Tel: 01896 662667 awinwood@borderscollege.ac.uk
J Gaddie	Curriculum Learning Manager for Creative Industries	Heather Fisher Tel: 01896 662988 hfisher@borderscollege.ac.uk
S Ker	Students Association Support Officer	Amy Hamilton Tel: 01896 662541 ahamilton@borderscollege.ac.uk
N McIlwraith	Curriculum Learning Manager for Essential Skills and Transitions	Veronica Blackwood Tel: 01896 662589 vblackwood@borderscollege.ac.uk
S Shinton	Equalities	Janet Robertson (Director of Business Performance and Improvement) Tel: 01896 662528 jrobertson@borderscollege.ac.uk
D Johnson	Curriculum Learning Manager for Business, Event & Heritage Tourism	Joanne George Tel: 01896 662978 jgeorge@borderscollege.ac.uk

BORDERS COLLEGE REGIONAL BOARD

LEARNING FOR LEADING REPORT

Board Member: Dr Sara Shinton

Faculty: Creative and Digital Industries, Dr Greg Steel

Date of Visit: May 25th 2018

Summary of activities undertaken during visit:

- **Discussion with Greg Steele, Programme Leader**
- **Tour of studios, classrooms and classrooms**
- **Conversations with other faculty staff**

Positive Impressions:

- As with all my interactions with College staff, I'm struck by the pastoral support for students in this Faculty. They are seen as individuals and where possible within the constraints imposed by reporting and qualification frameworks, their needs are well supported. The work of the Achievement Coaches was again praised.
- The streamlining of programming teaching with schools (in JavaScript) so students develop their knowledge and skills throughout the different levels of study, rather than having their progress and ability to produce more challenging outputs impaired by having to learn other languages.
- The quality of the admission process which provides prospective students with a strong sense of the demands and approaches of the courses and gives staff an insight into their skills, attitudes and commitment.
- The quality of student work produced in spaces which are likely to be detrimental to their creativity.
- Numbers of students on courses, particularly in technical computer science courses.
- The redesign of the project aspects of courses to ensure students apply their learning on a problem-solving basis, drawing on a range of knowledge from different modules, rather than "silo-ed" projects which don't encourage holistic understanding of their subject.
- A new lecturer has recently joined and had a positive impact after some issues with a previous appointee and class discipline.
- The outreach activities of the Faculty with Code Club and attendance at

this year's Bang Goes The Borders.

Areas which should be brought to the attention of the College Management:

- This visit was undertaken in the midst of restructuring which has created uncertainty. Despite this, the visit was very positive and I'm grateful to Greg, his colleagues and students for the time they gave. It should be noted that the restructuring moves computer science from the creative and digital industries faculty into STEM creating a risk that the appeal of these course could be reduced. The location of computer science with the creative subjects may mitigate this, but the connections should be retained if possible. A staff room shared between creative and digital staff would also mitigate this.

- There is a **high incidence of autism and related developmental disorders and mental health problems** on the computer science courses. The classroom environments contribute to the impact of these disorders on affected students and their peers as noise levels are high, other screens are visible and there have been some issues with discipline. Although there are clear constraints on space, given the levels of autism and related issues, I'd recommend advice be sought from advisors to see if this could **be mitigated with some simple re-thinking of the use of space**.

- The removal of an A3 printer from the Visual Communications studio had a significant impact on the creativity and work produced by students. Although the faculty are very sympathetic to the sustainability agenda, in this case **the need for this equipment was clearly communicated, but apparently disregarded**. I understand that the printer will be replaced for the next academic year but it leads onto my next point.

- When classrooms, studios and other work spaces are fitted, equipped and furnished there seems to be a lack of understanding of the needs of students and staff on creative programmes. For future refurbishment or classroom fitting, it's important that staff and students are fully consulted and their insights heeded when equipment and furniture is installed. The need for consultation is evident in the Visual Communications studio where students have to sit with their backs to the lecturer when they use computers. When they work collaboratively with other students they can't use desktops whilst facing each other.

- Student numbers in this faculty are healthy and likely to stay so, but space is tight. Students on creative progammes need studio space which must be factored in when student numbers are considered. With the introduction of ceramics, more space will have to be found. Another studio in a store cupboard is not a solution.

- Some courses are taught by part-time staff who never overlap. On a creative course where there is an element of subjective interpretation of the topics, it's important that staff can spend time together to ensure the students receive consistent information. This has to be additionally costed. Although unlikely to happen, one solution would be to have more space so more classes can be taught at a time. This would also increase interaction

between students which would be a benefit.

- The pastoral support by staff is undermined by the nature of the assessment and award process from the SQA. This makes little or no allowance for students who need flexibility in order to complete qualifications at a different pace, particularly those with mental health problems and other impairments. If the Board could consider this and make a request to SQA to reconsider its course coding approach for students with mental health issues, this would transform the experience of these students. Interventions with students because of concerns about performance indicators are causes of anxiety in students and although staff are aware of this, they feel they have little choice but to do this.

Further information required or requested:

- **None, although should the College develop a strategy for supporting students with mental health, it's essential that this Faculty are closely involved.**