

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday 23rd February 2017 at 5.00 pm

GOVERNORS John Holford, Chair
PRESENT: Mark Williams
Jane Hawksford
Marc Jones

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Patricia Harman, Interim Deputy Principal: Teaching & Learning
Amanda Jogela, Director Quality and Performance
Eleanor Taylor, Head of Higher Education and International
Lucy Howes, Staff Observer for the academic year
Louise Knott, VP Communications, Engagement & Student Experience
Julian Smith, Director Learning and Innovation (from 1.3.17) attending as an observer for this meeting

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

17.01 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interests in matters to be discussed. No interests were declared. Standing interests were noted.

17.02 WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Jane Hawksford, Marc Jones and Julian Smith were welcomed to their first meeting of this Committee. Apologies for absence were noted from Dame Asha Khemka DBE, Chris Hatherall, Lesley Roberts and Paul Rana. The Clerk advised that Jean Marriot had stepped down from her position as Student Governor given that she has put her HE course on hold because of ill health.

Before proceeding with the meeting the Chair advised that agenda item 13 would be removed from the intended discussions today. The VP Communications, Engagement & Student Experience indicated that she would wish to review the format and presentation of data. She confirmed that it would be emailed out to Committee members by 10th March 2017 and, if there is a need to discuss following circulation by email, then it would be rescheduled for consideration at the June meeting together with further learner voice reports planned at that time.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

17.03 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8TH DECEMBER 2016 & ANY MATTERS ARISING

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2016.

There were no matters arising.

17.04 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Members reviewed the table and were happy to note the content of the update provided.

17.05 QIP 2016/17

Amanda Jogela introduced this item and confirmed that an update on the QIP had been prepared in January prior to the Ofsted inspection. As an overall comment she confirmed that the College was making good progress and indicated that another review and update was planned for April 2017. She indicated that at inspection Ofsted had commented favourably on the self-assessment report and the QIP. They were of the view that they were both rigorous. It was agreed that this was a good position, particularly as this was something picked up as an improvement action in the prior inspection.

The Committee reviewed the update and impact summaries for the 13 actions identified. In terms of future reporting it was confirmed that an executive summary would be provided which would pick out and summarise areas that are still a focus/concern, where there remain issues or the timetable for completion of the action is not moving forward as anticipated.

Amanda Jogela

15th June 2017

17.06 ATTENDANCE, RETENTION AND WITHDRAWALS

Amanda Jogela introduced this item and a number of matters were discussed:

- a) Attendance – she reminded the Committee that the College’s target for attendance is 95%, however it is expected that all students aspire to 100%. The College’s current attendance for classroom based learning, excluding maths and English, is 91.5% and for maths and English programmes only 85.5% which is a 6% difference.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- b) Whilst an area for improvement, she indicated that this is not as significant a gap as Ofsted are seeing elsewhere and at inspection it was explained that gaps in excess of 10% have been seen in the sector. The overall position in terms of the gap requires improvement but is not as bad as seen elsewhere in the sector. The school with the largest difference is English, maths and Academic Studies. Further drill down identifies that the worst attendance relates to students studying Functional Skills English and Level 2 (69.7%), all 62 students (with the exception of 3) are adults. GCSE maths has better attendance than GCSE English by 6.7%.

In terms of attendance, members' attention was drawn to page 41 and table 3. This is the poorest performing area but assurance was given that there are very low numbers of students and therefore in terms of volumes the small numbers lead to the biggest variations.

Q

- c) In year retention as at February 2017 – the overall in year retention for classroom based learning (Ofsted rules applied) is 97.3% as of February 2017. The retention for 16-18 students (97.5%) compared to 95.5% for 19+ students. High needs students have high levels of retention 98.7%. The Committee questioned whether this was comparable with the prior year position and it was explained that it was.
- d) Withdrawals – members' attention was drawn to page 39 and section 6 of the report which details withdrawals. At the 'after 42 day' position, the College is looking okay, however the 'prior to 42 days' is higher than expected and is an area for further review. It was explained that feedback from students has indicated that there were many who were influenced by the fact that induction was only seven hours and therefore this may have been insufficient to fully engage the students. Changes to induction for September 2017 are planned to address the issue.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

17.07 ACHIEVEMENT RATES

Amanda Jogela introduced this item and indicated that for her the focus was on value added. Members' attention was drawn to page 50 and the comparison between 15/16 and 16/17 learners. She explained that there were more learners who would now be measured on a value added basis and therefore it is important that this becomes a greater focus. She indicated that all students were on plan to achieve their learning target, however they were not in terms of their stretch target and that this will be something that needs to be reviewed going forward.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

17.08 STUDY PROGRAMMES UPDATE

The Committee reviewed the report provided and key matters noted were:

- At the end of January 2016/17 2487 students were enrolled to 16-19 study programmes.
- Attendance as at 10th February 2017 ranged from 90.3% to 93.7% for the vocational programmes, an improvement from the previous year and 73.4% to 88.6% for maths and English across the Schools of Learning. Attendance is monitored regularly and is a focus for all curriculum teams.
- In 2016/17 40.2% of students had not attained GCSE A*-C English and 41.9% had not attained GCSE A*-C maths on entry to their study programmes.
- Students completed initial and diagnostic assessment for maths and English and have been enrolled to the appropriate qualification i.e. GCSE or functional skills. Those who have GCSE grade D on entry have been enrolled to GCSE as have the majority who entered with grade E GCSE. The results of the GCSE mock exams show an improvement on the outcomes for the previous year.
- Improvement strategies for maths and English continue. Staffing for maths and English remains a concern due to absence and performance which continues to be managed. Recruiting suitably qualified and experienced staff remains a challenge.
- The proportion of students who have completed or have a confirmed external work placement to date in 2016/17 is currently 57.1%, this was 43.4% at the same point last year. This should ensure that the figure for 2015/16 is exceeded by the end of the academic year.

The Committee considered the spread of students enrolled to study programmes as set out in section 2.2. It was acknowledged that some Schools of Learning have greater numbers than others with the highest being in Care and Education Studies. It was confirmed that students are enrolled to a vocational qualification or A-Levels, maths and English if they have not attained GCSE grade A*-C and different elements of wider learning including work placements.

In terms of attendance, it was noted as lower for maths and English than for the main qualification of the study programme.

The Committee discussed the number of students who join the College without A*-C in maths and English. It was explained that some students did not have either or both. This is a slight reduction in terms of percentages on the prior year position but is still a significant number of students.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

It was explained that to meet the conditions of funding, students who have a grade D GCSE in English or maths should continue to study GCSE. In addition, students who have a grade E GCSE undertook an initial and diagnostic assessment and the majority are also studying GCSE rather than Functional skills level 2. It was explained that the position in relation to the grade E is different to that in 2015/16 as they would have predominantly been on Functional skills courses in the prior year. Anyone lower than an E will be doing Functional Skills at level 1 or entry level.

Members' attention was also drawn to the fact that the changes to the grading system for GCSE maths and English qualifications is now in place and will be used for the 2017 exam series. The previous grading of A*-G has been replaced by a new grading scale of 9-1. The government agenda is for students to attain a 'good' pass in GCSE maths and English. The view is that this may likely be set at grade 5. A grade 4 will continue to be classified as a level 2 achievement. Members' attention was drawn to appendix A which gives the OFQUAL grading scale comparisons.

In terms of performance measures, it was explained that there is a piece of work to do and that systems are being reviewed.

In terms of work experience and work placements, the Committee was advised that the College is in a better position than compared with the same point in the prior year, however there is still more to do. Members reviewed the table of placements broken down by Schools of Learning in section 6.3. It was commented that the high percentage in Care and Education Studies relates to the fact that many of the courses in this School of Learning have mandatory work placements and these have been built up over many years. Generally it was confirmed that securing high quality work placements remains an ongoing challenge and assurance was given that it is a focus.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.09 EXTERNAL VERIFICATION AND KEY OUTCOMES

Amanda Jogela introduced this item and confirmed that:

- The College has had verbal feedback from two BTEC quality monitoring reviews in January 2017. Subsequently the College has received one written report which was very positive. The second written report is awaited, this is in relation to work based learning, but again it is expected to be positive.
- Currently there are 22 external verifier visits planned in 2017 between February and the end of the academic year covering a range of curriculum areas.
- There were seven outstanding actions for the construction crafts curriculum area following an external verifier visit at the end of June 2016.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

Since this period all actions have been closed off and sanctions lifted and again assurance was given of a positive position.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.10 TEACHING, LEARNING, TRAINING & ASSESSMENT

Amanda Jogela introduced this item and drew members' attention to the executive summary where it was confirmed:

- a) Summary of on campus teaching, learning and assessment observations
- The College's teaching, learning and assessment observation policy was revised at the end of the autumn term and as a result graded observations have been suspended with the exception of partner provider/subcontractor provision.
 - All delivery staff will receive five individual learning walks per academic year. These can either be curriculum specific or cross college.
 - Centralised records show that seven developmental observations have been conducted during the autumn term and learning walks have routinely taken place within all Schools of Learning.
 - The number of learning walks within the Vision Business Unit were significantly lower than in the Schools of Learning during the autumn term. It was explained that this is because students who are enrolled through the VBU are not usually on campus and therefore logistically it is more difficult to complete these. It was explained that for VBU there are other quality assurance mechanisms in place other than learning walks. Assurance was given that these mechanisms and processes do a similar job.
 - Key strengths during the autumn term – motivated and keen to learn, stretch and challenge, acquire knowledge, skills and understanding and questioning
 - Key areas for development during the autumn term – learning environment, aims, learning outcomes or action plans and setting targets appropriate to each student.
- b) Summary of off campus teaching, learning and assessment observations – it was explained that these have been RAG rated and targeted on the basis of risk.
- 266 partner provider staff were delivering to College students during the autumn term. This number fluctuates throughout the academic year due to an increase of new partners and termination of contracts with others and is continuously reviewed to ensure that observations are completed where required.
 - Of the 42 standard observations completed during the autumn term, the grade profile shows 74.1% of sessions were graded good or better.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

This evidences a 2.4% increase in good or better teaching in comparison to the same point in 2016.

- Of the 15 re-observations completed during the autumn term, nine sessions were graded good (60%) and six sessions were graded as requires improvement (40 %).

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.11 QUALITY CURRICULUM REVIEWS

Q Amanda Jogela introduced this item and confirmed that 18 FE quality curriculum reviews were completed in January 2017, five HE quality reviews were completed in December 2016 and four WRT industry reviews are scheduled for February 2017. The Committee questioned what exactly is involved in a 'curriculum review'. Members' attention was drawn to page 64 and section 3 of the document which confirms that they include:

- Position statements
- QIP progress
- Data analysis (attendance, retention and progress)
- Review of learning walks
- Effectiveness of staff development
- Marked work
- Audits, progress and impact
- Learner voice
- EV
- IV

It was confirmed that the review team undertake document reviews as well as face to face discussions. Each review is expected to take one hour. Outcomes will involve targeted support and action plans for each area. It is the internal quality internal team who set the agendas for the reviews. It was explained that the process in itself gives the senior team a level of confidence that the curriculum managers do/do not know their own students and the areas of focus needed.

It was explained that the College undertakes 'learner journey reviews' for work based learning students instead of learning walks.

It was noted that the next round of FE quality reviews are scheduled for March 2017.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

17.12 HE UPDATE

Eleanor Taylor introduced her written report and reminded the Committee of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF changes).

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

She circulated a copy of a letter received from HEFCE dated 8th February 2017, this confirms that there were no initial points of concern following the original assessment.

Under the revised operating model, greater emphasis will be placed on a providers' periodic review process as the key mechanism to improve economic outcomes and the student academic experience. HEFCE will verify the approach each prover takes to its own periodic review processes through a one off scrutiny process due for WNC 2019-2020. The Committee were reminded that there is more emphasis now on the role of governors. Members' attention was drawn to section 2.6 as these are the core metrics on which the TEF award would be based. Those areas highlighted as green are considered as good and those areas highlighted as blue requires focus and improvement.

In terms of changes, the Committee was advised that the College is planning to subscribe to UCAS and is submitting an application for an Access Agreement. The latter would allow the College to increase its fees.

Q

The Committee questioned what the significance is to the College of UCAS membership. It was explained that all full time admissions will go through UCAS from 2018. The expectation is that this will lead to an increase in the number of applications and will generally raise awareness of College provision. The Committee was advised that UCAS membership costs are not insignificant. There is a membership fee plus a fee per application. In addition to this it is expected that additional staff resource will be required to manage the process. Although it is expected that membership of UCAS will lead to an increase in the number of applications, it is expected that there will be a reduction in the conversion rate that currently exists through the direct application route.

In terms of fees and access arrangements, it was explained that there is a good set of processes currently in place and the intention is to build upon this. The College hopes to be able to offer more flexibility regarding part time and mature students and also at the same time provide a regional LEP focus.

In terms of UCAS, the College will initially be running a dual system. One note of caution raised was the lack of student accommodation in the Mansfield area, this may limit the conversion rate of applications.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.13 **LEARNER VOICE**

As indicated at the beginning of the meeting this item has been withdrawn and will be reviewed and updated and circulated by email on or before 10th March 2017.

LK

10.3.2017

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

17.14 SAFEGUARDING

Louise Knott introduced this item and confirmed that work with potentially at risk vulnerable students has continued and there are currently 908 identified students on programme within the different groups who have been identified as potentially at risk of not achieving their qualifications. The student coaches have had 2211 interventions with students since the beginning of September. It was noted that this is a significant increase.

It was explained that there has been a change in the safeguarding team structure with their focus expanded to include monitoring of attendance, coursework, pastoral, refugees, safeguarding and financial. These were areas that the College was not previously specifically tracking for those identified as at risk and vulnerable. The broader scope in itself will lead to a higher level of need. The broader view looks at triggers that may lead to safeguarding need, this has been a purposive approach. The College is trying to prevent a need arising rather than acting upon a need situation. There is generally raised awareness. It was acknowledged that some students can fall in to more than one of the groups identified as set out in table 3.2.

In terms of future developments, it was explained that the College is looking to set a far tighter attendance threshold for support and intervention. The initial view is 90% and no less than this so that maximum impact can be obtained through early intervention.

In terms of a Prevent update, it was confirmed that online radicalisation is now the highest perceived risk.

In terms of the safeguarding development plan for 2016/17, the work with partners continues to be a high priority due to the changing nature of the group and ensuring compliance and good practice, however the low number of incidents reported from partners is being explored and actioned. She expressed the view that it did not seem right that partners have fewer referrals than College activity. To try and address this, apprentices in the work place can now self-refer directly to the College and the reliance upon employer systems should reduce. It was confirmed that a steering group has been established to look at the partner referral position. Good discussions have taken place and agreed actions have been identified.

Members' attention was drawn to page 93 which summarises a number of safeguarding incidents reported. The College is continuing to see an increase. The Committee questioned why this might be and it was explained that there has been a lot of awareness raising training. Unfortunately the College is also seeing an increase in the number of students self-harming and the level of mental ill health is steadily on the increase.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

In terms of the data provided, the Committee agreed that the trends seen with partners do not look right and the belief is that it is a referral issue in terms of practices and processes, rather than being seen as evidence of less safeguarding concerns.

It was explained that there is still more work to do in terms of student knowledge about what happens regarding the impact of a Prevent referral. The Committee was advised of the College's processes in terms of internal and external steps. It is very much a supportive process, however in some instances it is perceived to be more of a punishment. This is something that needs to be changed in terms of student understanding.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.15 E&D ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

Members' attention was drawn to the written report and key matters noted were:

- At 16-18 there is a 5% achievement gap between males and females. This is related to the poor performance of construction in 2015/16 which is a predominantly male area. This, coupled with a continuing improved picture within Hair and Beauty and Childcare, which is predominantly female, has resulted in this gap.
- The College has put a rapid improvement plan in place for construction in 2016/17 and whilst it is too early to report on impact, in year attendance and retention data shows no gaps in gender as at 10th February 2017.
- BAME students tend to do better than white British students across the age range. At 16-18 however the relatively small number of students positively skews the data. The College has examined the data by gender and ethnicity to see whether national trends in the under achievement of white boys continues within the College, and this is not the case. White British boys tend to do at least well and in some cases better than white British females.
- Students with learning difficulties and disabilities – the College is showing a gap in achievement at both ages whereby students who have some form of learning difficulty or disability under achieve. However this data reflects those students who have declared a disability within their application form or upon enrolment. It is not therefore reflective of those students who are supported by the ALS teams.
- For those students supported by the ALS team at 16-18, they outperform those students who are not supported by 3%. At 19+ there is an 8% achievement gap whereby those students who are supported by the ALS team under achieve.

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

- In 2015/16 the College supported 37 19+ students through ALS. As such the under achievement of one student has a disproportionately negative impact on the data. The gap in achievement has been narrowed to six students, three of whom did not pass at all and three who partially passed their course.
- At 16-18, high needs students outperform non high needs learners by 5%. At 19+ high needs learners underperform by 9%. In 2015/16 there were only 26 learners who were supported through high needs funding and as such the underachievement of one learner can have a significant impact upon data.
- Looked after children in particular tend to underperform against their peers, this is a particular note for those who are in foster care (-25%). However there are relatively few learners (15) within this category and as such data is negatively skewed. Retention was an issue last year at 74%. In year data for 2016/17 would indicate that retention currently stands at 98% with attendance slightly behind college averages at 89% therefore there is a risk.
- The main achievement gap of note within the HE student population relates to gender where females underperform by 4% with a 6% gap in retention. This relates specifically to quality issues on the Children and Young Peoples Services course which is predominantly female and has been reported previously to this Committee.

In terms of future work, equality and diversity impact data for apprenticeships needs further investigation and will be reported to the next meeting.

Louise
Knott

June 2017

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.16 STUDENT DISCIPLINE ANALYSIS

Louise Knott introduced this item and drew members' attention to section 2 which provides a summary of disciplinary information. For the full year in 2015/16, the College carried out just over 500 student disciplinaries. In the 2016/17 year to December 2016, the College has conducted 350 disciplinaries, therefore if this is extrapolated for the full year there are likely to be significantly more disciplinaries carried out. An analysis has been undertaken in relation to the incidents and these have revealed that there have been an increase in disciplinaries relating to low level behaviour or issues e.g. disrespect, peer on peer bullying. There has also been an increase in online forms of poor behaviour e.g. sexting, online abuse, chatroom bullying and texting.

A review of the position has shown that:

- Greater awareness amongst staff as a result of safeguarding training has made them more likely to act quickly to stop banter, spot peer on peer bullying and online forms of poor behaviour.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- There are issues with disciplinary processes at stage 3, often with students potentially suspended for long periods while investigations are carried out and panels convened. This has a detrimental impact on learning but also means that the students may find it hard to return to College and exacerbate the poor behaviour in the first place.
- The College has also seen a rise in safeguarding referrals and a steady increase in students presenting with significant mental health issues. In the early stages this may present as poor behaviour and be picked up through the disciplinary process.
- The College's induction processes at the start of 2016/17 did not enable the College to set out its standards and expectations very clearly.

In terms of actions it has been agreed:

- The College will review the disciplinary process and is proposing changes for 2017/18 which will shorten the length of time a student needs to be absent from College, and negate the need for a full investigation to be completed prior to a decision being made as to whether the alleged offense is a stage 3. Regular disciplinary panel dates are already in the diary so there is no longer a need to wait to convene.
- We are arranging training for our teaching staff around mental health that will enable them to spot early warning signs which may mean support can be put in place and thus avoiding behaviour escalating to a point where it results in a disciplinary.
- Finally, we have reviewed our induction processes and will ensure that in the first two weeks, a session on values, expectations and standards is delivered.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

17.17 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Patricia Harman introduced this item and it was confirmed that as this is an area of focus an update will be given at each meeting. Key matters brought to members' attention were:

- Retention for the main vocational qualifications is good. Retention for maths and English is at similar levels as students on study programmes should not be withdrawn from individual elements of their study programmes i.e. maths or English.
- Attendance with the trowel trades team is an ongoing area of concern as it is below 90%. In each of the teams, attendance at maths and English is below the attendance for vocational sessions and requires significant improvement.
- Following the last external verifier visit from City and Guilds, a sanction was put on the qualifications. This meant that certificates could not be claimed. Actions were put in place to address and the sanction has now been lifted.

PH/JS

Each meeting

Signed : _____Chair

Date:

- The whole construction and building services management team is receiving support given that staff changes have meant that as from the start of the new academic year, the three members of the management team were all new in post and did not have any experience of working at the level of the roles.

Members' attention was drawn to section 4.4 which details the support in place for the management team. It was noted that there have been staffing issues within construction crafts due to staff absence and the need to replace staff who have left the organisation. In particular the absence of the programme area leader for trowel trades has had a significant negative impact on the team and the student experience. There has been a need to engage agency staff to cover sessions which has meant changes in tutors for students.

In terms of improvement strategies, as from January 2017 quality curriculum review meetings are being held on a three weekly basis until the provision is back on track. The first round of meetings has been completed with actions identified for improvement. These are monitored to ensure completion and rapid improvements are made and sustained.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.18 **AOB**

As a matter of additional business the Committee took the opportunity to speak briefly about the Ofsted inspection. It was confirmed that the grades awarded at the verbal feedback meeting were reflected in the self-assessment report. The Ofsted report should be published on or around 8th March 2017. Any actions identified will be incorporated within a post inspection quality improvement plan that will sit alongside the QIP so that it dovetails.

17.19 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was confirmed that the next scheduled meeting is 15th June 2017 at 5pm.

Meeting closed at 7pm.

Signed : _____Chair

Date: