



**MINUTES OF CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON 5TH OCTOBER 2017**

Present:	Peter Clark	External Governor
	Diane Cothey	Co-opted Non-Governor
	Roy Everett	Co-opted Non-Governor
	Jenny Grainger	External Governor
	John Rees	Chief Executive
	Pete Sanderson	External Governor – Chair
	Katie Walker	Staff Governor
In Attendance:	Julia Gray	Assistant Principal (Quality & Learner Services)
	Rachael Hennigan	Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality)
	Lesley Venables	Clerk to the Corporation

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1 Apologies for absence were received from Richie Dunk (External Governor).

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 2 There were no declarations of interest.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

- 3 **Resolved -** That Pete Sanderson be appointed as the Committee Chair until the first meeting of the 2018/2019 academic year.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4 **Resolved -** That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to some minor amendments for clarification

MATTERS ARISING

- 5 The Committee noted that all matters arising had either been completed or were featured on the agenda.

OVERALL COLLEGE PERFORMANCE REPORT

6 The Assistant Principal (Quality & Learner Services) presented for information a report on the College's outturn performance against key curriculum indicators for 2016/2017. Governors noted that the data in the report was provisional at this stage, but that it was unlikely to change significantly prior to it being finalised.

Attendance

7 The College's overall attendance level for 2016/2017 had improved by 2.8% points, with an increase of 3.2PP for 16-18 year olds and 1.4PP for the 19+ cohort. However, the level of performance was still below the target of 90%. An analysis by curriculum area indicated that attendance had improved in every discipline with the exception of Professional Studies and Higher Education (compared to the 2015/2016 outturn).

8 Levels of punctuality were high.

9 The Committee noted the wide-ranging actions in place in 2016/2017 to drive up levels of attendance across the College, which would continue to be applied during 2017/2018. Governors were assured that management monitored attendance in a systematic and robust manner.

10 Attendance on GCSE programmes had improved overall, with the exception of 19+ English (77.3% compared to 83.7% in 2015/2016). The Committee noted the significant increase in attendance amongst 16-18 learners. This would continue to be a high priority in 2017/2018.

Achievement

11 Achievement rates for Education & Training programmes were currently 88% for 16-18s and 83.8% for 19+. At an overall figure of 85.2%, achievement levels were above the identified target and 2.8PP higher than in 2015/2016. This placed the College within the top 15% of colleges nationally and within the top 2.5% for 16-18 levels. However, 19+ achievement was in line with performance in 2015/2016 but was expected to increase further. In response to questions from the Committee, the Vice-Principal reported that this level of improvement was due to both increases in retention and pass rates.

12 Students aged 16-18 undertaking GCSE English had a pass rate of 90.05% and 90.63% for maths. The corresponding figures for the 19+ cohort were 80.43% and 78.2%. It was noted that the highest increase in performance was for English, with further work to be undertaken in maths in 2017/2018, however, Maths had improved compared to 2015/2016 by 11.1% for 16-18s and 2.4% for 19+ learners.

13 The number and proportion of grades from 4 to 9 for GCSE English had increased amongst 16-18s and was now 31.45% compared to 5.6% in 2015/2016. Over the year, high levels of support and intervention had been provided for this group of students.

14 Governors noted that, although maths students had not performed as well, this was reflective of the national picture. A new teaching team was now in place, together with regular learning walks, individualised learning plans and regular evaluation of performance.

15 The Vice-Principal reported that the reduction in achievement levels on maths programmes at 19+ was partly due to some learners being enrolled on maths GCSEs as a necessary accompaniment to their main course, but this requirement being removed at a later point, causing some students to withdraw from maths. The Committee requested that these withdrawals should be identified in future versions of the performance report.

16 The cohort for maths qualifications included a large proportion of young adults with increasing external commitments and it was important that initial advice and guidance focused on their key qualification requirements, with English and maths as secondary activities.

17 Performance on functional skills programmes had increased at all levels and all ages. An end of year report would be provided to the Committee once the data had been finalised.

18 A total of 81.6% of higher education learners had achieved an honours degree. The Committee received information on the distribution of degree classifications and noted that benchmark data for other HE Institutions would be provided in future.

19 Information on the outcomes of partner university programmes would be included in the HE Self-Evaluation Document, Governors felt that it would be useful for this to be included in the annual results report from 2017/2018.

20 For Foundation Degrees 70.8% of learners had fully achieved their qualification and the corresponding figure for HNC/HNDs was 76.59%. Two students were re-taking their course, which could impact on the overall data for this cohort.

21 Results for apprenticeships had not been finalised, due to some certificates not yet being received to enable the College to claim for the overall frameworks. However, the interim figures were 52.2% achievement for 16-18s and 55.93% for 19+ learners, with an expected level of timely achievement of 71%. Overall levels of timely achievement had increased by 3% compared to 2015/2016 and were 70%.

Retention

22 The College's retention levels were 92.9% for 16-18 learners, 93% for 19+ and 85.9% for higher education courses. Overall, retention was 0.1PP below the College target of 93%, which was an increase of 4.2PP compared to 2015/2016.

23 Governors received information on retention levels by protected characteristics, together with some additional categories such as Looked After Children. A slight gap in performance was noted between male and female students. This would be analysed further and any significant issues reported to the Committee's next meeting.

24 The Committee noted the outstanding improvement in outcomes for 2016/2017 and asked that their gratitude be communicated to staff.

Karen Robson left the meeting.

COMPLAINTS 2016/2017

25 Governors received for information a report on complaints during 2016/2017. It was noted that there had been 71 complaints, compared to 63 in 2015/2016. The highest number of complaints had been classified as relating to curriculum issues and poor tuition. The Assistant Principal advised that a number of learners from the same class had made the same complaint about the tuition by a particular member of staff.

26 The majority of complaints had been dealt with successfully, with two remaining open at the end of the academic year, one of which should be resolved shortly.

27 In response to questions from governors, the Assistant Principal reported that the category of 'other' mainly comprised estates issues. It was agreed that a separate category would be added to future versions of the report to detail this information.

28 Governors also requested that the complaints associated with poor tuition should be presented according to curriculum area, together with the action taken to address each issue. The number of complaints that had been upheld and dismissed would be included in the next annual report, together with information on referrals to the Education & Skills Funding Agency, which was the final arbiter of any disputes. Data on compliments would be added to the report.

29 The Assistant Principal reported that informal feedback or comments were invited from learners via the College's Moodle system. These were forwarded for action to the relevant member of management and progress was checked on a regular basis until the matter had been resolved.

SAFEGUARDING

30 Following the re-distribution of responsibilities between committees and the Board, an exception report on safeguarding would be provided to future meetings of the Curriculum, Quality & Standards Committee. A detailed report on the number and classification of safeguarding concerns, along with information on safeguarding arrangements within the College, would be provided to the full Board.

31 Similar arrangements would be put in place for equality, diversity and inclusion matters but with student data being reported to this Committee and staff-related information to the Financial Performance & Efficiency Committee, as part of its extended remit.

TIMETABLE OF BUSINESS 2017/2018

32 The Clerk presented a draft timetable of business for the Committee for 2017/2018. A number of amendments were suggested to align the agenda items to the terms of reference and revised reporting structures.

ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE BOARD

33 The Committee agreed a list of items that would be reported to the Board on 19th October 2017:

- Report on results for 2016/2017 indicates significant improvements in key indicators
- Annual complaints report received for information and some further refinement of reporting processes agreed
- Timetable of business for 2017/2018 was reviewed and amended
- Update provided on the way in which safeguarding issues will be reported at committee and Board meetings

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7th December 2017, 5.00 p.m.