



MINUTES OF CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7TH DECEMBER 2017

Present:	Peter Clark	External Governor
	Diane Cothey	Co-opted Member
	Richie Dunk	External Governor
	Roy Everett	Co-opted Member
	Jenny Grainger	External Governor
	Pete Sanderson	External Governor – Chair
	Katie Walker	Staff Governor
In Attendance:	David Clapham	Head of HS & HEAPS
	Julia Gray	Assistant Principal (Quality & Learner Services)
	Rachael Hennigan	Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality)
	Lesley Venables	Clerk to the Corporation

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

34 Apologies for absence were received from John Rees (Principal/CEO), Stephen Hegarty (Student Governor) and Mark Lowe (Student Governor).

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

35 Declarations of interest were received from Pete Sanderson and Katie Walker in respect of minutes 55 to 68.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

36 **Resolved -** That, with two minor amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 5th October 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

MATTERS ARISING

37 The Committee noted that the majority of matters arising had either been completed or were featured on the agenda.

38 Information was provided on achievement rates by level for 16-19 Basic Skills English and maths (minute 17 refers). This indicated an outcome of 83% overall for 2016/2017, which was 26.2% percentage points higher than the national average and placed Calderdale in the top 15% of colleges. Results in this area had improved for all levels in 2016/2017.

39 Governors questioned why achievement rates were much lower for Level 2 learners and were advised that these qualifications were the equivalent of GCSEs and reflected the national rate of performance. The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality) reported that achievement rates for Level 1 maths resulted from the difficulty of the examination, rather than poor teaching, learning and assessment. The College had introduced a system whereby learners took 'mock' examinations during March and further practice papers until the actual end of year tests.

40 Under minute 18, the Head of HE reported that national benchmarking data on degree classifications was not yet available, but would be presented to the Committee's next meeting.

OVERALL COLLEGE PERFORMANCE REPORT

41 The Assistant Principal (Quality & Learner Services) presented for information a report on performance to date in 2017/2018.

Attendance

42 The College's attendance level for Education and Training programmes was 2.3PP below the identified target and for English and Maths 4PP under target (although for 19+ learners the target had been met). The under-performance in English and Maths was due to changes to the timetabling of lessons. Attendance on HE courses was in line with the College target of 90%. The majority of curriculum areas were performing below target, with attendance in Construction & Technology 6.4% below and Maths 3.8% below.

Progress

43 Each learner had been classified according to the risk of them leaving their course and achieving their expected outcomes. A total of 53% of students presented no significant risk, 23.2% were at 'medium' risk, 9.2% were at 'high' risk and 5.7% were progressing at an outstanding level. Targets had not yet been set for 13% of learners, who were mainly studying teacher education and professional programmes.

44 The Committee asked whether the results of this process could be compared to those of other FE institutions. The Vice-Principal advised that this was not possible in any systematic manner, as the classification process had been developed in-house and would not necessarily be replicated by other colleges to enable a comparison to be made.

45 Staff were currently working on the accuracy of the risk identifications for each learner to ensure that these were applied consistently across the College. Progress risks were monitored four times a year and it was noted that the judgements made by staff were now more robust, being based on a formal assessment of a piece of work as opposed to personal impressions.

46 Differences in the rate of learner progress between English and Maths were highlighted. Governors were informed that the lower level of performance for Maths was partly due to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, which was a major focus for 2017/2018.

47 A total of 9% of the student cohort was considered to be at high risk of leaving the College and not achieving expected levels of progress. Staff now had a clearer and earlier indication of the number of learners in this category, which enabled them to introduce effective interventions to change behaviours and impact positively on outcomes.

Retention

48 Overall the rate of retention was 98.2%, which was 0.4PP below the same point last year. The Vice-Principal advised that the most up-to-date ILR indicated that performance was in line with 2016/2017. For HE programmes, the level of performance was 92.1%, which was above the previous year's level. Although retention on Teacher Education courses was 5.9PP below the same point in 2016/2017, it had still exceeded the College target.

49 The Assistant Principal reported that the main areas of concern were Construction & Technology and Creative, Digital & Enterprise, where retention was 1.8% and 0.5% lower than 2016/2017 for 16-18 year old learners. The former was partly due to a number of level 4 disciplinary issues and some exclusions.

50 No discernible differences were identified in the KPIs on attendance, progress and retention in relation to groups with and without protected characteristics, with the exception of ethnicity (but this was based on small numbers).

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2016/2017

51 The Committee received the draft Self-Assessment Report for 2016/2017 and the proposed grades which would be recommended for approval by the Board. It was noted that the SAR had been through a robust validation process, with involvement from governors and external organisations. The grades assigned to each of the Ofsted criteria were considered to be realistic.

52 Each curriculum area had also been graded as 'good' or grade '2', with the exception of Construction & Technology, which was still assessed as 'requiring improvement'. However, it was recognised that substantial progress had been made in this area, but the College would continue to raise the level of teaching, learning and assessment.

53 The Committee complimented management on the quality of the report.

54 **Resolved -** That the Board **be RECOMMENDED** to approve the Self-Assessment Report for 2016/2017

HIGHER EDUCATION SELF-EVALUATION DOCUMENT 2016/2017

55 The Head of HE & HEAPS Manager presented the HE Self-Evaluation Document, which set out the performance of the College's HE provision. Governors noted that, unlike the SAR, no gradings were assigned to the criteria against which performance was measured.

56 New regulatory requirements, the Teaching Excellence Framework and revised guidance had all been incorporated into the document.

57 There had been a good conversion rate of applications to enrolments, which compared favourably to applications to UCAS from College learners. The publication of information about HE programmes was felt to meet the external requirements, but was still an area for further development.

58 Staff had had an increased level of engagement with the College's marketing agency and this would be built on in 2017/2018. It was recognised that this area was vital given that enrolments were 10% below the identified target.

59 The College had been awarded Silver status under the Teaching Excellence Framework, which reflected the quality of its HE provision. Some issues of organisational management had been raised in student surveys during 2016/2017, which would require attention in the current year.

60 Outcomes for learners had improved from 59% in 2014/2015 to 80% in 2016/2017. A number of significant gaps in achievement levels had been identified as part of the SED preparation, which required further analysis. Some were attributable to a small group of learners within a particular demographic. The Head of HS & HEAPS reported that addressing these gaps would form part of the College's work on its Access Agreement.

61 A total of 2 complaints had been made in relation to HE programmes, both of which had been resolved and had not resulted in appeals. Staff were currently reviewing how any 'concerns' expressed by learners should be tackled.

62 Course changes and closures had not been evaluated in the previous version of the SED. A process had now been devised for changes to Open University courses, however, the new validation schedule was considered to be an area for improvement. The latter required confirmation as soon as possible so that programmes could be marketed and applicants informed of any significant amendments.

63 Governors noted that the student cohort reflected the diversity of the Calderdale population. An Access Agreement would be implemented from September 2018, which would encourage applications from a wider catchment area.

64 The Committee commented that the summary of the strengths and areas for improvement was not mirrored in the accompanying SED. There should also be a link to the SAR for HE and the College Action Plan. The Head of HS & HEAPS was asked to bring back to the Committee a more focused report on the areas for development.

65 It was agreed that the Board would be asked to approve the 2017/2018 version of the SED and this item would be added to the timetable of business for the year. Governors felt that the report needed information on the key metrics for maintaining the College's TEF Silver status and moving towards a 'Gold' grading, together with the main issues on improving HE performance.

66 The outcomes of the SED would be added to the College Action Plan and strengths/weaknesses required external benchmarking, to enable governors and management to determine the level of progress. A comparison of performance against that of other UK HEIs and FE colleges offering HE courses would be presented to the next meeting.

67 The Committee questioned the relatively high proportion of 3rd class and unclassified degrees and was advised that this was now part of the risk assessment process being used for other cohorts of learners, which would enable staff to track and monitor progress more effectively.

68 **Resolved** - That the Self-Evaluation Document for 2016/2017 be approved

D Clapham left the meeting at this point.

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

69 The Assistant Principal presented a report on safeguarding issues in the Autumn Term. A total of 6 incidents involving the police had occurred, with 5 learners suspended from the College at the moment. There had been 6 Child in Need meetings, 2 learners under the Care & Adolescent Mental Health Services and no referrals to the Prevent Team.

70 An annual report on safeguarding for 2016/2017 would be presented to the December Board meeting for information.

TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

71 Governors received a report on Teaching, Learning & Assessment, which set out the revised procedures for observing lessons, to enable a more robust assessment of performance throughout the academic year. A further report on the impact of these measures would be presented to the Committee's March 2018 meeting.

72 Targeted interventions had been introduced in curriculum areas, including weekly CPD sessions for staff in departments such as Construction & Technology and Maths. Extensive training had taken place during the Autumn Term and would continue for the rest of the year.

73 Questions were raised over the performance of lecturers in Maths compared to English and were advised that this had been affected by a national shortage of experienced tutors and the level of engagement amongst learners.

74 It was suggested that the next Governor Development Day should include an activity relating to Maths (and English).

ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE BOARD

75 The Committee agreed a list of items that would be reported to the Board on 14th December 2017:

- Reports on Performance against Key Performance Indicators, Teaching, Learning & Assessment and Safeguarding was received.
- The Self-Assessment Report was recommended for approval by the Board and the Committee approved the Self-Evaluation Document .

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

22nd March 2018, 5.00 p.m.