



Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance & Standards Committee, held on Monday 12 March 2018, 6.00pm in the Boardroom.

Present: Stuart Fraser (Acting Chair)
 Sarkis Mazmanian
 Doug Trengove (Staff Member)
 Gareth Byrne (Co-opted)
 Yvonne Kelly (Principal/CEO)
 Bailey Stephenson-Dielhenn (Student Governor)
 Georgie Brind (Student Governor)

In attendance: Victoria Eastwood (Clerk to the Corporation)
 Caryn Swart (Chief Operating Officer)
 Brendan James (Head of Higher Level Skills – up to Agenda Item 8)

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and introductions were made.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Lisa Dee.

2. Declarations of Interest

Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. None were anticipated.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Monday 27 November 2017

The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday 27 November 2017, were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

An update on outstanding actions from the November 2017 Committee meeting were provided:

| Agenda Item | Action | Responsibility | By (deadline) | Update |
|-------------|--|----------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| | The Committee to ensure that the Corporation are aware of the substantial governance changes with regards to Higher Education. | Chair | Ongoing- next Corporation Meeting. | Ongoing |
| 8. | SAR and QIP to be presented to the December Corporation for approval. | Clerk | 11 December 2017 | Complete |
| 15. | Update on numbers/funding and profile on | Clerk | 11 December 2017 | Complete |

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| | Apprenticeships to be provided at the December Corporation Meeting. | | | |
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There were no additional matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

5. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee

The Clerk advised that in previous discussions, Stuart Fraser had agreed to act as Vice Chair of the Committee and as Acting Chair for the meeting this evening. It was agreed that Sarkis Mazmanian would take the role of Acting Chair for the June Committee Meeting, after which discussions would take place on how best to fill the role for the next academic year. This was unanimously agreed.

Approved: That Stuart Fraser be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee. That the role of Chair be rotated until the end of the academic year – Stuart Fraser to act as Chair for the March meeting and Sarkis Mazmanian to take the Chair for the June Meeting.

6. Apprenticeship Termly Report

This agenda item had been removed from the Agenda as it was to be discussed in length at the Policy & Resources Committee.

7. Higher Level Skills incl HE Strategy SED & Action Plan

The Head of Higher Level Skills (H HLS) provided an update on the HE Self-Evaluation Document (SED) advising that progress had been made against all actions. Discussion took place on the strengths of the higher level skills delivery and the Committee were referred to the detailed action plan which highlighted the following areas for improvement and the measures being taken to address these:

- Variable quality and compliance at levels 4 and 5;
- Lower retention and achievement at levels 4 and 5;
- Low internal progression from level 3 (21%);
- Lower level of student satisfaction in relation to course organisation and the timeliness of feedback at level 4 and 5;
- Insufficient access to independent learning spaces;
- Lower levels of enrichment and enhancement in Business, computing and engineering;
- Decline in female participation;
- Lower retention and achievement for students with declared learning difficulties and disabilities.

The Chair asked whether the areas for improvement were included in the College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The Chief Operating Officer (COO) replied that the FE QIP derived from the College SAR and the actions within the SED resulted from the QAA review held in 2015. Discussions were taking place internally to combine both aspects.

The Chair questioned whether the Office for Students (OfS) was the equivalent of Ofsted for HE. The H HLS responded that the OfS brought together the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Office for Fair Access (OFFA), the Department of Education (DfE) and the Privy Council. The OfS was now the single regulator of the English HE market place. Members were informed that the OfS would oversee the competitive market place, student choice, Competition and Market Authority (CMA), Equal Access, ensure value for money for students and the taxpayers, quality assurance and degree awarding powers such and, as such, could grant Degree Awarding Powers (DAP) but could also revoke these powers.

THE HHLS advised the Committee that institutions would be required to subscribe to the OfS. The cost was not yet known but indications from the consultation showed that HE population was favourable. The estimated cost for BDC would be in the region of £17,000 - £25,000 per year. Registration would commence from 3 April 2018 and the following key evidence required included:

- An access and participation statement
- Consumer protection law self-assessment
- A student protection plan
- A self-assessment statement on management and governance

The HHLS informed the Committee that the key document was the Student Protection Plan as this ensured that students could continue their studies in the event that either the College or one of its HEI partners was removed from the register. This would require conversations with our partners as in most cases the College's fee was less than at the partner institution and the Consumer Markets Authority would not agree to fees being charged to the students being increased by a different provider.

The College would make its application under the Approved (Fee Cap category) – those that wanted access to public funding and grants, such as teaching and research grants.

Sarkis Mazmanian commented that with reference to the student surveys, positive responses had increased by 1% but negative responses had increased by 10%. The HHLS replied that the National Student Survey had removed the results when students selected 'neither agree nor disagree' leaving only the positive or negative results. A lot of students had selected this option and this therefore affected the results.

The Principal suggested that the metrics were included in the format for the next meeting to provide a picture of in-year data and ensure the Committee were confident that the provision was travelling in the right direction.

In response to a question from the Chair, the HHLS commented that there was always a risk of 'over surveying' students but it was crucial to be able to hear their voice. He advised that the HE Student Forum was very proactive and steps were being taking to improve the student survey. The Principal added that the College was aiming for instant feedback from surveys to be able to address issues as soon as they arose.

Sarkis Mazmanian stated that, on average, the College seemed to always be a little below benchmark and asked if there were any concerns. The HHLS responded that the benchmarks were the TEF benchmarks and it was currently a fluctuating picture. Low numbers in some areas had a significant impact on the data and this needed to be monitored on a monthly basis.

In response to a question from the Chair, the HHLS advised that the College had excellent relationships with Canterbury and UEL and there were opportunities for local progression.

The Committee were informed that the HE Academic Board was scheduled for 21 March 2018 and the agenda included: HE league tables, OfS, date for graduation and student forum minutes for discussion.

Sarkis Mazmanian asked if there was an update available on the College's discussions with Coventry University. The Principal advised that discussions had taken place on planning for issues in the Borough, relationship between both parties on jointly marketing an Access offer and a possible project with construction. The IoT bid had been submitted with Coventry as the Anchor Partner, however, there would still be opportunity to work collaboratively with Coventry on new programmes if the bid was not successful.

The Chair asked if the College monitored student progression after they left the HE

courses. The HHLS stated that an external survey was undertaken with students who had left to record their destinations. Students that had not progressed were followed up personally by the HHLS and a variety of different personal circumstances were noted.

The Chair thanked the HHLS for a very comprehensive report. The Clerk advised that a replacement link Governor for HE that could sit on the HE Academic Board would be sought.

Agreed: That the position be noted.

Action: That the student survey metrics be provided at the next meeting to provide a picture of in-year data.

8. Curriculum & Business Planning Priorities 2018/19

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) reported that the College had embarked on the annual planning process in December 2017, for the 2018/19 academic year. Detailed planning work was underway which would result in a Position Statement, SWOT and PEST produced for each curriculum area. These would be presented to the Executive Team for approval by the end of March 2018.

The key objectives for the planning approach were discussed and the Chair asked what were the particular areas of significance. The COO responded that retaining 16-18 numbers in STEM areas and growth in these areas alongside Health and Applied Science and Digital Creative Industries were key. To address new specialisms, digital skill development was required.

The Chair queried whether any new facilities would be required to accommodate these areas. The COO advised that the business plans included kit, capital and staffing requirements.

The Principal stated that the College was looking to expand work experience and implement a work placement programme at Level 3 in preparation for the introduction of T-levels in 2020.

Sarkis Mazmanian asked whether there was a way for students to be able to access the modules of courses through the College website. The COO replied that the plan was to declare all units and therefore make the modules available. It was noted that there was potentially an issue with links to University courses on the College website and this would be investigated.

Agreed: That the position be noted.

Action: Links to University courses on College website to be assessed to ensure they provide access to relevant modules.

9. QIP 2017/18 Update

The COO reported that the QIP was underpinned by the curriculum areas and the areas identified as Notice to Improve were provided. The key recommendations were as follows:

- Attendance monitoring and improvement strategies
- Improve TLA strategies for English and Maths
- Apprenticeships: strategies to improve QAR for Project management; H&SC and Motor Vehicle.

The COO advised that a lot of provision sat at Good but this needed to be accelerated to Excellent. A complete review of the observation process had taken place and ways to share good practice were being explored.

The Principal stated that 16-18 retention was showing improvement and adult retention was

currently strong. The COO added that the College needed to be 'hot' on retention.

The Chair asked where the current frustrations were. The COO replied that this was English and Maths. The mocks that had taken place this year had been earlier than previous years. English remained an issue but there were now three months to address these issues. Students had been surveyed after the mocks and it was evident that they welcomed any opportunity to be able to practice their exams.

Agreed: That the current position be noted.

Action: The QIP to be RAG rated as per the SED.

10. Teaching & Learning – Lesson Observations Termly Report

The Committee were informed of the summary of changes to lesson observations and that the types of standard had been amended to:

- Excellent practice
- Appropriate to standards
- Not appropriate to standards
- High Risk

The COO reported that staff whose sessions were judged not appropriate to standards were given one to one support through the learning champions initiative. The current areas with observations judged as not appropriate to standards were:

- ICT
- Business Studies
- Sport
- Media

The Chair asked if there was a degree of employer input in vocational training. The COO replied that each curriculum area was aligned to an employer.

The COO advised that learning walks were also taking place alongside formal observations. These helped to accelerate when interventions were required and assisted in motivating improvement.

Agreed: That the position be noted.

11. English and Maths Termly Report

Members were informed that there were currently 33 permanent members of staff within English and Maths and no Agency staff in this area. Attendance was improving each week but some students were at risk of failure due to none attendance – reasons identified for this included poor timetabling and learners not understanding the importance of the subject.

The COO reported that the College was trying to accelerate online learning for English and Maths. English and Maths staff were undertaking weekly CPD sessions to share practice. These sessions were used to improve tracking and diagnostic assessment and train maths teachers using Maths Mastery approaches.

Agreed: That the position be noted.

12. Learner Voice Termly Report

The COO advised that there had been great improvement in the results of the mid-year learner voice survey. Results showed that overall enjoyment of course remained at a high level and satisfactions rates on the whole were improving. The number of learners that would recommend the College to a friend had increased from 77% to 86%. The target for next year would be 90%.

The response rate to the survey required improvement as this year 1410 students

responded to the survey, which was a decrease on last years figures of 1953. It was also noted that extra work was needed in raising awareness of Prevent and improving overall satisfaction in a minority of areas.

Georgie Brind commented that the survey would achieve better results if it was issued in paper format as it was easy to 'cancel' the electronic pop up on computers.

Agreed: That the Report be received and the updated position noted.

13. Any Other Business

There was no further business.

14. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 11 June 2018 at 6.00pm.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions. The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

| Agenda Item | Action | Responsibility | By (deadline) | Update |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| | The Committee to ensure that the Corporation are aware of the substantial governance changes with regards to Higher Education. | Chair | Ongoing- next Corporation Meeting. | Ongoing |
| 7. | That the student survey metrics be provided at the next meeting to provide a picture of in-year data. | HHLS | 11 June 2018 | |
| 8. | Links to University courses on College website to be assessed to ensure they provide access to relevant modules. | COO | ASAP | |
| 9. | QIP to be RAG rated as per the HE SED. | COO | ASAP | |