

MINUTES

Meeting:	QUALITY, STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE	Date:	12/11//2018
Location:	ROOM B.17, LONDON ROAD CAMPUS	Time:	5.30 p.m.
Membership:	Andy Allen, Christine Davies, Gordon Channon (ex-officio, Chair of the Board), Christina Gore, Josh Harry, Nigel Merchant and Mike Willmot (HE Lead Governor). Student Governor by invitation – Meg Chandler.		
IN ATTENDANCE:	Members of the Senior Leadership Team: Catherine Armstrong, Group Vice Principal - Curriculum Support and Business Development (GVP – CS&BD) Paul Morgan, Director of A Level Studies (DoALS); Chris Pemberton, Group Vice-Principal, Quality and Curriculum Management (GVP – Q&CM); and Clerk to the Board - Tracy Cottee		
APOLOGIES:	None.		

Prior to the meeting, C. Davies welcomed –

- the newly-appointed Academic Staff Governor (EB/WB campuses), Josh Harry, to his first Committee meeting;
- the newly-appointed 16 – 18 Student Governor, Meg Chandler, to her first Committee meeting; and
- all Committee members to the first meeting of the year.

38/18. **Election of Chair**

Having been proposed by G. Channon and seconded by N. Merchant, it was

Resolved: That Christine Davies be appointed Chair of the Committee.

Chris Davies in the Chair.

39/18. **Declarations of Interest**

A. Allen declared an interest as an employee of Harper Adams University.

40/18. **Minutes – 02 July 2018**

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 02 July 2018, were approved and signed as a true record, subject to the following

41/18. **Matters Arising**

None.

42/18. **Key Performance Targets: Targets and Progress 2018 – 2019** (Appendix No 4a)

The Committee reviewed a report (previously circulated) providing the latest progress against the College's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2018 – 2019, which also compared performance against final results for 2016 - 2017.

43/18. **Progress Grades – Period 1** (Appendix No. 5)

The SLT officers present updated the Committee on Progress Grade Period 1 for A levels and vocational provision (previously circulated). This was the first entered set of progress grades for the academic year 2018 - 2019.

Regarding vocational provision, the GVP – Q&CM reported that

- All course review meetings had taken place with new, realistic targets in place for 2018 – 2019;
- Interventions had already started with the most significantly at risk or lower-performing areas being the first as part of this cycle.

Regarding academic provision, the DoALS reported that

- The high grades percentage was, at present, low compared with 2017 – 2018, with areas for further work already identified. However, the College had in place robust structures and processes in place to support students and teachers to improve this percentage;
- Interventions would be planned in meetings with Programme Leaders to assess students at risk and those under-achieving to put together an action plan for change;
- Staff were working towards mock exams in January 2019 and coursework;

After hearing details of the College's processes in place to encourage students to achieve and progress, the Committee expressed support for the approaches taken.

44/18. **Apprenticeships** (Appendix No. 6)

The Committee considered a summary (previously circulated) of the College's and sub-contracted apprenticeship provision with respect to enrolment and achievement.

- Achievement for 2017 – 2018 was 67.2% - below the College target set. However, this was an improvement of 6.2% on 2016 - 2017 data and was 0.2% above National Average. The 2018 – 2019 Target was 75%, unchanged from 2016 – 2017;
- Enrolment Summary to date;
- Attendance - 81.7%;
- An appointment had been made to the vacant post of Manager in September 2018;
- Employer Reviews were now being undertaken by a dedicated team to enable more open and honest feedback – employers had welcoming this new approach for easing communication;
- The College had introduced Milestones for progress checks for each apprentice using Smart Assessor which would risk rate those falling behind expected progress and flag targeted actions plans to be created;
- Schools Sports Apprentices had commenced July 2018;
- Side-by-side training had been conducted with assessors and would be accessed through Smart Assessor for use with apprentices;
- All College based apprentices had received a welcome talk from the GVP CS & BD. A welcome letter and information on safeguarding and a student handbook were being sent to work based apprentices. In addition, an employer newsletter was currently being written and would be produced each term;
- A review of the new guidelines for Prevent Strategy for work based learners had been discussed with the assessors and an external training session on best practice for assessment had been delivered

The Committee sought assurance that the College was on track to improve the rate of timely completions going forward, as effective management was important for both students and employers. In response, the GVP CS & BD explained that a number of processes had been put in place to improve timely completions.

The Committee also sought an update on the College's preparations for a probable OFSTED Inspection. The Team was currently completing the self-assessment which had yet to go through verification. The Apprenticeship Lead Governor reported that he would be meeting with the GVP CS & BD this Term.

44/18. **Higher Education Update** (Appendix No. 7)

Summary of all Higher Education External Examiners (HE EE) Reports for 2017 – 2018

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated), providing a general overview, highlighting good practice, common themes and key areas of concern in the external examiner reports received for 2017 - 2018.

All HE EE reports had been shared with students through Moodle and discussion during Tutorials. Course representatives had been specifically asked for comment on the reports at their student consultatives.

Consultative Overview – Summer 2017 – 2018

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) providing an overview of the feedback from HE students. The focus during the Summer Term 2018, had been learning resources, learning community, student voice and persona development and had been conducted by the HE and Education Lead and Quality Assurance Co-Ordinator.

- Feedback from students had been positive; they felt that they had ample opportunity throughout the year to feedback and express their opinions and considered these to have been acted on;
- The new HE Centre was now open and operational and the Committee suggested that some of the feedback issues would be more than addressed by the new facilities in the Centre. The Committee Chair and HE Lead Governor had both recently visited the Centre and reported back positively to the Committee. The Clerk confirmed that all governors would be invited to view the Centre this Term;
- Whilst the facilities in the Centre were a marked improvement, it was recognised that there was further progress to be made with respect to on-site ICT facilities.

The HE Lead Governor reported that he had recently met with the HE and Education Lead and was highly reassured on student satisfaction and recruitment.

The GVP – Q&CM reported that, contrary to expectations, the Office for Students was seeking from HE providers a statement return for 2017 – 2018, that the governing body was assured about the quality of higher education provision. In view of the deadline for completion of the assurance return, the Committee

Resolved: That, in view of the recent QAA visit and positive outcome, which had been reported to the Board, the outcomes of the HE EE report and consultative overview and the recent assurance visits conducted by the HE Lead Governor, it was confirmed that, for the academic year 2017 – 2018 and up to the date of signing the Return -

1. The governing body has received and discussed a report and accompanying action plan relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes. This included evidence from the provider's own periodic review

- processes, which fully involve students and include embedded external peer or professional review; and
2. The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust and appropriate; and
 3. The standards of awards for which the College was responsible have been appropriately maintained

And that the Return be submitted and signed by the accountable officer as a governor on behalf of all governors on this basis by the 3 December 2018 deadline.

45/18. **Student Voice – Analysis of the Learner Leaver Survey - July 2018** (Appendix 8)

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) setting out the key issues raised at the student forums in 2017 – 2018 and actions taken in order to respond to students' views.

The Committee reviewed the overview of findings, the main points being -

- The Learner Leaving Survey 2017/2018, was conducted between May and July 2018. Students on all campuses had been invited to participate. 1,628 students participated in total (851 Vocational learners and 777 Academic learners). Vocational participants were divided between 13.37% part-time and 86.63% full-time;
- 2017/18 was the first time that a “group wide” leaving survey (devised by a project group) was implemented and the first time that Survey Monkey was used for this purpose;
- Apart from the question that asked learners if they felt safe, the most “common” data was that which asked whether students “would recommend the College”. 94.56% Vocational learners strongly agreed/agreed, whilst 93.48% of Academic learners strongly agreed/agreed. Overall satisfaction with the College from participants was high at 92.02%;
- A key finding was that, overall, 95.64% of Vocational learners and 96.16% of Academic learners felt safe within the College environment. However, the Committee identified that 88 participants overall skipped the question. This was disappointing and something to be avoided going forward;
- Student experience remained positive. The majority of students felt they had learned a lot and tended to be happy with their choice of course and with Shrewsbury Colleges Group.

The priorities for action arising from the 2017 - 2018 Learner Leaver Survey were:

- To change the title to “Student Leaver” rather than “Learner Leaver” in line with other key documents;
- To continue to improve all aspects of “Assessment and Feedback” but especially the prompt return and usefulness of feedback and the perceived fairness of assessment and marking;
- Combine Vocational and Academic Surveys as much as possible and use tools that can specifically identify the course/subject/level;
- Review the design of survey (e.g.) comment boxes to be used consistently for all questions or not at all;
- To continue to improve the learners resources and social spaces;
- To improve the participation rate of all learners; and
- To further improve the satisfaction level of all learners

The GVP – Q&CM reported that, going forward, Survey methodology would be improved to provide the opportunity to drill-down into the data. The Committee agreed and supported the College’s plans to improve how the data is collected going forward. The next Survey would be presented to the Committee in January 2019.

The Committee asked if students had been involved in the planning of the Survey, in addition to testing and suggested that surveys going forward might benefit from student input at the planning stage.

46/18. **Complaints & Compliments Report 2017 – 2018** (Appendix No. 9)

The GVP – Q&CM submitted a report detailing complaints/compliments received during 2017 – 2018 (previously circulated).

The Committee reviewed the recommendations arising from the report, namely -

- In 2017 – 18, the Shrewsbury Colleges Group received 73 written complaints;
- The complaints were diverse in theme, ranging from complaints about courses, tutors to student behaviour in the local campus vicinity/town;
- There were 51 written compliments received in 2017-18 for Shrewsbury Colleges Group.

The GVP – Q&CM reported that students were encouraged to come forward if there were any issues of concern. The College had moved away from a defensive position when receiving a complaint, to considering any complaint as feedback to improve the College's service to students. The Committee supported this approach.

The Committee identified the relatively high number of complaints received regarding vocational curriculum/course/staff related and the number of complaints related to student behaviour. Regarding the latter, the majority of these complaints were generated by behaviour off-site.

The Committee supported the key recommendations arising from the report, namely -

- To address student behaviour in Induction through the Curriculum Leader and in tutorials throughout the year to include expected behaviour in College and the local community. The Principal/CEO will also lay out his expectations at his welcome speech. Staff rota will exist to monitor behaviour;
- To increase E&D awareness in tutorials from the start in the academic year to target the consequences of inappropriate behaviour or language; and
- Staff to always ensure clarity and fairness when talking to students.

47/18. **Equality and Diversity Committee – Lead Governor Report** (Appendix 10)

The E&D Link Governor presented a report (previously circulated).

The following key issues were brought to the Committee's attention.–

- The Equality & Diversity Committee had met once since the last Committee meeting – 27 September 2018;
- Equality Essentials Module - staff completion and training was ongoing. HR was following-up and had been set a timeframe. The Lead Governor was maintaining a strong focus on this, as it was important and had stressed this to the Committee. The Committee supported this approach;
- The Committee had reviewed the results of the Learner Survey and Induction Survey relative to the profile of students and demographics;
- Regarding Higher Education, a plan was being investigated for a student social space additional to The Hub to be located in The Darwin Centre. The Committee had asked for the installation of a hearing Loop in the Darwin Centre to be investigated;
- The Committee had received a briefing on the experience of exam concessions and the process and actions arising from this would be monitored by the Committee going forward;
- The Committee had agreed to focus on how the College could share good practice of E&D, British Values, and Embedding across curriculum areas/campuses at its next meeting;
- The E&D Lead Governor had also met with the Chair of the Committee this Term.

48/18. **Safeguarding Committee - Lead Governor Report** (Appendix 11)

The Safeguarding Lead Governor presented a report (previously circulated).

- The Safeguarding Committee had yet to meet this Term – the meeting was due to take place on 28 November 2018.
- The Committee will maintain a strong focus on core safeguarding issues such as –
 - staff training and the wearing of badges whilst on sites, with updates at every meeting on how many staff were left to undertake the mandatory development;
 - Looked After Young People;
 - Safeguarding Caseloads at each site, analysing for trends. Mental health and related issues continued to generate the majority of cases;
- The Committee would receive the Safeguarding Annual Report 2017 – 2018 prior to its submission to the Board meeting in December 2018;
- The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance had been slightly revised and the Committee would review its implementation in the College.

The Safeguarding Lead Governor had arranged to meet with both the Director, Curriculum Support and the Safeguarding Manager to receive assurance and updates on the College's Safeguarding framework.

49/18. **Risk**

As part of the discussions on the College's Risk Register and Board Assurance Framework, the Audit Committee had requested that each committee, at each meeting, examine those risks within its remit and ensure that they had either been identified or adequately discussed at the meeting.

The Committee concluded that the risks identified were adequate and that there had been sufficient discussion of the issues at the meeting; particularly with respect to students not achieving predicted grades.

50/18. **Committee Self-Assessment** (Appendix 13)

The Chair invited Committee members, including officers, to submit by email their completed committee assessments before the end of the week.

51/18. **Date of Next Meeting** – 28 January 2019. Venue – Classroom B.17, London Road Campus.

The meeting concluded at 7.11 p.m.