

MINUTES

Meeting:	QUALITY, STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE	Date:	19/06/2019
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, Kari Quant and Mike Willmot (HE Lead Governor). Student Governors by invitation – Mitch Neale.		
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 The following governor was present at the meeting as an observer: Helen Hawksworth.		
APOLOGIES:	Josh Harry, Nigel Merchant, Mitch Neale, Chris Pemberton, Group Vice-Principal, Quality and Curriculum Management (GVP – Q&CM) and Kari Quant.		

27/19. **Declarations of Interest**

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

28/19. **Minutes – 08 April 2019** (Appendix – Agenda Item 3)

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 08 April 2019, were approved and signed as a true record.

29/19. **Matters Arising**

None.

30/19. **Progress Grades – Period 4** (Appendix – Agenda Item 4)

The SLT officers present updated the Committee on Progress Grade Period 4 for A levels and vocational provision (previously circulated), being the fourth set of progress grades for the academic year. The College was now able to track changes between collection points as well as equivalent points in different years.

Regarding Year 2 A level provision –

- Retention for all Year 2 A levels was 87.8%, (benchmarked against Nick Allen's Six Dimensions project which showed retention in year 2 A level programmes in sixth form colleges at 82.9%). However, the Committee directed that some subjects which had not performed against

individual subject benchmarks would need action in their quality improvement plans for 2019/20. The Chair of the Committee, who had been involved in the College's Self-Assessment process confirmed that curriculum and programme leaders responsible for subject areas achieving below target, were challenged on their outcomes and to produce robust improvement plans going forward.

- Average attendance had fallen to 91% - below the benchmark of 91.8%, due to the impact of the NEU dispute with the College. The Committee requested a more detailed analysis of this to be presented at the July Board meeting.
- High grades for A level Year 2 had improved to 46.8%, with 34.3% (2018 - 35.2%) predicted now to be over target and 75.3% (2018 - 79.7%) to be meeting their target. 51.6% was the actual high grades figure for 2018. The Committee noted that the current cohort had a lower GCSE average attainment so actual outcomes might be lower. However, current value added analysis through ALPS Connect suggested a quality indicator of between 2 and 5 (depending on which side of split grades students actually performed at) where the 2018 actual score was 3. Notwithstanding the lower ability profile, the Committee expressed concern that public perception would link lower level results with the impact of the recent dispute.
- Teachers' professional judgements for the latest Progress Grades reflected a predicted pass rate of 98.7% (2018 - 99.5%) where 98.7% was the actual pass rate for 2018. Intervention work was on-going with student entries identified in the grade categories E and E/U, including students pending reviews under the fitness to study procedures.
- The College had again put in place supervised study sessions at English Bridge and Welsh Bridge campuses. Some subjects put revision sessions in place over Easter and the May half term. In May, there were sessions delivered by Maths & Further Maths, Psychology, Film Studies and Media Studies.
- High grades for the BTEC Subsidiary Diploma at Level 3 reflected significant numbers predicted to meet their targets and also achieve high grades, continuing the high standards set in previous years.
- Retention for Year 1 A level courses was 92.6% and the Committee directed that low outcomes would need addressing at the planning stage for 2019/20, and should include English Language, Geography, History A level Media Studies and Sociology.
- At end of year assessments, interventions for individuals would come through student / subject teacher discussions and the provision of a UCAS grade and reference combined with 1:1 sessions with the student support tutors. The Committee acknowledged the need to improve the high grade position and build towards an improvement on the predicted outcomes for 2018/19.
- Average attendance had fallen from 94.2 to 93.2%.
- Year 1 outcomes for high grade judgements had stabilised at 49.44% (49.4% PG3, 46.2% at PG2 and 43.7% at PG1). "Meeting targets" was now 75.8% (75.3% PG3, 73.2 % PG 2 and 71.8% PG1) and those over target 29% (28.4% PG3, 5.2% PG2 and 21.7% for PG1).
- Pass rates would indicate 98.9% - an improvement on 98.5% for PG3 (97.9 % at PG2). An indication that actions put in place for individuals to improve were having a positive impact.

Regarding Vocational provision –

- In-Year Retention Rate stands = 95.7% (96.4% for PG3). (2017/18, Overall Retention 93.5% at year-end). The teams had worked hard across the board to keep students on track to ensure they achieve their programme of study. The Committee reviewed areas of lowest retention and sought assurance on improvement interventions.
- The attendance for Vocational provision had improved from the same point in the academic year in 2017/18. Standing at 90.1% overall attendance (85.6% for the same provision in 2017/18). One quarter of subject areas were over 90% overall attendance and 2/3 over 88% overall attendance. The Committee reviewed areas with below target attendance. A range of interventions had continued including the appointment mid -year of a new progression specialist focussed on attendance in Construction, a stricter approach to adult attenders, the increased use of the disciplinary process linked to attendance and links to progression targets. English and maths attendance had improved 1.7% (79.7% overall same point 2018/18).

- Headline for progress grade 4 predictions completed in May for year 1 had increased from PG 3 to 40.2% high grades, 81.7% MTG, with 36.1% predicted to achieve above target. For year 2, high grades had dropped slightly from PG 3 to 89.8% high grades, 75.3% MTG but with an increase of those achieving over target to 37%. Both years were predicting higher MTG than at PG 4 2018. The Committee reviewed areas of concern include Level 2 Health and Social Care which had been affected by staffing issues (not related to the dispute). Staff had been providing additional teaching sessions to support students.
- English and maths predictions for GCSE 4+ were currently higher than expected and considerably higher than progress 3 in 2017/18.
- The Committee noted the successful impact of the Head of Programme on outcomes and performance in vocational Art & Design.

31/19. **Apprenticeships Update** (Appendix – Agenda Item 5)

The GVP – CS&BD presented an update (previously circulated) of the College’s sub-contracted apprenticeship provision with respect to enrolment and achievement.

- The 2018 – 2019 Achievement Target was 75%. Predictions were – Achievement 74.2% (last report = 77%) and Timely 53.7% (last report = 68%). This was above the national benchmark;
- Enrolment Summary;
- Attendance - Currently at 68.9% (last report = 90.1%) - a decrease due to delivery being completed and assessments being in the workplace;
- Observations were underway with SBC for their enrolled apprentices;
- Recent appointments made for Carpentry and Joinery and Plumbing assessors were having a big impact on addressing the completion and out of funding apprentices;
- KPIs had been agreed with each assessor for them to be monitored against in 1:1 meetings and annual performance reviews; and
- Off the Job review had been undertaken to ensure compliance for audit purposes.

32/19. **H.E. Quality Improvement Plan 20018 – 2019** (Appendix - Agenda Item 6)

The Committee reviewed the latest update of the HE Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) (previously circulated). The Committee was advised by the GVP – CS&BD that it had been confirmed that the College had been accepted onto the Register by the Office for Students. The results of this year’s Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) assessments had been announced and the College had received a Bronze. The Committee passed on its congratulations to the HE Lead. The HE Lead Governor reported that he would be meeting the HE Lead in July.

33/19. **Student Voice 2018/19 – May Update** (Appendix – Agenda Item 7)

The Committee reviewed an update report on the College’s Student Voice activities (previously circulated).

Key activities since the last report to the Committee included -

- Student Union Executive Q&A with the Principal/CEO across all campuses, which had been welcomed. A number of issues had been raised, including timetabling, social spaces, mental health services, estates and tutorial, with all actions having been addressed and closed. A governor had attended two of the meetings and the Safeguarding Lead Governor feedback that, based on the meeting she had attended, members of the SUE appeared highly motivated and engaged.
- Fundraisers for the students’ chosen charity this year (Shropshire Mind) had been timetabled; the main focus being Mental Health Awareness Week in May. The “Tea and Chat” events to reduce stress and anxiety prior to exams held over all three campuses had been particularly well-received by all attendees and students were keen to build on this pilot and make “Tea and Chat” a regular feature in 2019-20. The Committee commended this project.

- A new student-led debating club had commenced at English Bridge Campus, with attendance growing due to positive student experience.
- End of Year events were underway.
- SUE Officers had attended the last three Mental Health and Well-being meetings. This has helped to raise the profile of the SUE as well as developing the SUE Officers' understanding of the range of support, particularly with regards to Health and Well-being, available in College. As a result, students had set up an online survey to capture what students felt about the information and support available in College and how it could be advertised more effectively;
- The Student Union Executive for 2019/20, had now been formed with three new officer roles being created. The Environment Officer role would be actively involved with the new College Sustainability Group. There are also plans to start a new lunchtime environmental group in the new academic year. The HE Lead Governor advised the Committee of the work in this field being undertaken by a member of staff. The Committee expressed its support for College environmental initiatives and directed that, as part of the governance evaluation process for 2019/20, the Search & Governance Committee consider the most appropriate committee to consider environmental issues at a strategic level.

34/19. **Equality and Diversity Committee – Lead Governor Report** (Appendix – Agenda Item 8)

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

The following key issues are brought to this Committee's attention.–

- Equality Essentials Module - staff completion and training was ongoing. The Committee acknowledged the focus of the E&D Lead Governor had paid off, with ever-improving completion rates.
- The Committee had considered the College's Achievement data relative to the profile of students and demographics. Whilst Achievement data was strong there were some gaps and the Committee had reviewed more information to understand the gap before exploring early interventions and comparing attendance rates. The Committee had requested interventions and further monitoring reports on areas below target; High Needs had excellent retention and consistent FS results, however.
- Regarding Higher Education, the Committee Chair had been invited to an HE Team Meeting to discuss sharing good practice of E&D, British Values, Embedding across curriculum areas/campuses.
- Regarding sharing good practice of E&D, British Values, Embedding across curriculum areas/campuses. The Committee Chair was driving forward to ensure the College training was embedded and compliant. The Committee had reviewed the British Values video developed by the College. It was considered excellent overall and something that could be developed. This would now be used throughout the College and in marketing and school liaison work.
- The Student Exit Survey 2019, had been tested by the student member of the Committee, prior to launch.
- The Committee noted that the College had effective embedding of diversity and unplanned opportunities to maximise student learning; staff are more confident, with facilitated workshops being held at the College. "Diversity & Equality Integration" was key now, with resources to share in curriculum areas and adapted to look at employability and British Values for tutorials. The Committee had highlighted that more integration was required to reach outstanding.
- The Rotary Club and Board Star Awards to recognise students who have had to overcome barriers to succeed, would be held on 27 June 2019. A record 22 Nominations had been received from across the College's provision.

The E&D Lead Governor had also met with the Chair of the Committee, with a final visit planned for July.

35/19. **Safeguarding Committee - Lead Governor Report** (Appendix – Agenda Item 9)

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

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

- The Safeguarding Lead continued to maintain a strong focus on core safeguarding issues such as staff training and the wearing of badges whilst on sites. This focus had led to ever-improving completion rates for staff training – the highest ever for the College.
- The Safeguarding Lead Governor had met this Term with the Director, Curriculum Support, the Safeguarding Manager, the Curriculum Support Leader at Welsh Bridge and the Additional Learning Support Manager, to receive assurance and updates on the College's Safeguarding framework and practices. The number of safeguarding cases continued to rise and the College was striving to meet demands by working pro-actively with partners and students, including using a member of staff who had developed a number of mental health initiatives with students and staff, including the introduction of a mental health 'triage' programme, leading to a reduction in the number of students seeking referral. However, the number of students requesting additional support or who had declared High Needs continued to increase.
- The Annual Safeguarding, PREVENT and SEND compliance audits would be moderated by the Safeguarding Committee before presentation to Board on 9 July 2019. All compliance reports were either fully compliant or on progress to compliance, as several policies required updating. The Board would receive a general update on the Government's Green Paper on Mental Health from the Director, Curriculum Support as part of the Governor Development Briefing sessions, when the Annual Safeguarding Report was presented to Board.

The Safeguarding Lead circulated to the meeting the proposed tutorial plan to embed Safeguarding. The GVP- CS&BD reported that due to the requirement to update all staff on the revised Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, the staff mental health first aid training had been deferred to the January 2020 staff training event. It was asked how the College would evaluate the effectiveness and impact on this training.

36/19. **Risk**

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.

37/19. **Committee Evaluation** (Appendix – Agenda Item 11)

The Board has agreed that self-assessment is of most benefit when boards promote the use of more high-level, developmental approaches that encourage a clear journey 'towards excellence', as compliance should be a 'given'.

At the end of the 2017 – 2018 governance cycle, the Board and each committee completed an evaluation exercise and governors were requested to undertake an individual self- assessment in July 2018. These informed the Board's self-assessment return and improvement action plan 2018 – 2019.

The Committee undertook its annual evaluation as part of the Board's governance assessment process.

38/19. **Date of Next Meeting** – the Clerk advised that the Board would approve the 2019/20 Calendar of meetings at its next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.11 p.m.