



MINUTES
of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee
held on Wednesday 1 April 2020 held remotely

Present: - Mr Igor Andronov (Chair of the meeting)
Ms Sally Cassels
Mrs Debbie Lambert
Mr Jeremy Nicholls
Mr Ian Peake (Principal)

In attendance: - Mrs Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)
Mrs Jo Ricketts (Deputy Principal)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)

The meeting was quorate as five Members were present. In the absence of the Chair, Governors appointed Igor Andronov to chair the meeting. In future papers would be focused to essential items in view of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic

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| <p>1. Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Mrs Laura Johnston who had been unable to return to the UK due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> | |
| <p>2. Declaration of Interests None declared.</p> | |
| <p>3. I. Approval of the Minutes of the last Meeting The Committee agreed that Igor Andronov as Chair of the meeting, should sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>II. Matters arising from the Minutes The Deputy Principal had requested further information from tutors regarding the score of the satisfaction rate for IT and learning resources from students who completed the NSS survey.</p> | |
| <p><u>The Committee agreed:</u> -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">To approve the minutes | |
| <p>4. Student Outcomes and Student Experience The Deputy Principal presented the reports.</p> <p>I. Retention 2019/20 for all qualifications and ages is slightly better than last year at 95%. Retention at Oswestry Campus was marginally lower than other faculties as most of the level 3 curriculum is set up as two-year programmes and hence withdrawals in year 1 will impact this academic year. Walford Campus had been set an achievable target for retention based on 2018/19 retention.</p> | |

- II. Attendance 2019/20 was good at 91.7% overall for full time programmes. This will be difficult to measure following the COVID-19 pandemic; like for like comparisons will only be made year on year to March 2020. Governors wanted assurance that student progress will be robustly measured with confirmation that systems have been embedded to track communication with students and learning. Students who fail to engage in learning will be followed up. A Governor asked if teaching and learning will continue for 2nd year Level 3 students with confirmation that tutors are continuing to engage all students. Ofqual has not announced details for GCSE and A Level results to date. Staff are working collectively to provide continual engagement and support to students. There was a question if this is consistent across the College? It was noted that guidance has been provided to staff to ensure consistency in support provided for students. A small percentage of students have not engaged with protocols established. This will be addressed with letters being sent to parents of students under 18 years. Some students do not have IT equipment or broadband capacity at home so teachers are using different mechanisms for their teaching and learning. English and Maths attendance has improved compared to this point last year; however, some faculties' attendance remains below target.
- III. Student progress 2019/20 was reported as at January. The new MIS system will track progress three times in the academic year. Progress was reported by faculties and campuses showing the percentage of students below, on or below target. This is a new process with progress assessed by tutors. There was a question about progress with confirmation that a student who is below target at this point in the year is not necessarily at risk of leaving or failing their programme. GCSE Maths and English, and Functional Skills Maths and English has been assessed. Students have a target to achieve one grade of progress. Apprenticeships showed 90% progress for all programmes. In general, there was some uncertainty about the accuracy of progress tracking based on the new system introduced and wide range of student progress reported. This would be determined by final achievement rates. This year there will not be exams as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- IV. Apprenticeship 2019/20 progress by age groups of 16-18, 19+ and 24+ for overall and timely achievement to date was presented. The best-case achievement would be 80.9% overall and 68.5% for timely achievement.
- V. Learner voice 2019/20 overall data was good. A summary of results for HLC in 2017/18 and HLNSC in 2018/19 and 2019/20 was provided to give comparisons. Results are generally consistent with improvements to distance travelled. The score for developing skills in English and the summary for next steps had reduced; these are different questions to those in previous years' surveys. The number of respondents this year was similar to last year which included all full-time and a percentage of part-time programmes. Campuses have distinctive cultures which is reflected in the survey. Land-based campuses had lower satisfaction scores; however, comparators across the land-based sector showed the College's score compared favourably. Management are drilling down results further by faculty.

- VI. National Achievement Rate Tables 2018/19 showed a breakdown of GFE comparators, achievement, retention and pass rates. There was a marginal shortfall compared with GFE comparators for 16-18 and 19+ learners, all ages and all levels. These are calculated combining retention and achievement; additional work was required to improve retention. The College will discuss actions to improve pass rates of courses identified in serious concern. ESOL, English and Maths achievement had impacted on the overall results with achievement below 80% relating to 2800 enrolments. Some ESOL students did not complete all parts of the functional skill qualification previously and this would have impacted negatively on results. ESOL students are following ESOL Skills for Life qualifications this academic year. The College's achievement of GCSE grades 9-4 in English was equal to or better than the national comparator where Maths was below. Apprenticeship overall and timely achievement was above the national comparator. The Deputy Principal will analyse course data in detail and work closely with faculties to address.
- VII. DofE Performance Table Headlines. DfE had issued separate reports for HLC and NSC. DfE would provide headlines of merged data which will be published and reported at the next meeting.
- VIII. Courses identified in serious concern. The Deputy Principal outlined the written report explaining that meetings have been held with course teams and Assistant Principals to agree actions. Progress to March 2020 was provided before the impact of COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee agreed: -

To note the reports

5. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- I. A summary of observation of teaching and learning was presented which had focused on planning, assessment and progress, and delivery and learning environment. 165 observations had taken place grading more lessons as effective than highly effective and a few teachers requiring support. Four standardisation sessions were delivered to observers with practical exercises using videos to ensure grades are consistent. The Deputy Principal will forward a summary of the self assessment of teaching and learning to Governors once collated.
- II. There was discussion about teaching and learning delivery and the impact of COVID-19. The Search and Governance Committee had previously agreed briefings would be provided to Governors at the Board meeting at the end of April. Five key campuses are opening for limited hours for essential key staff. Systems and processes are being changed to respond to COVID-19 with a COBRA Committee established who meet daily to address key issues. CMT are working relentlessly to facilitate the change to delivery methods. The College is providing teaching and learning remotely to students with staff adapting positively. Support is being provided to teachers who are finding it difficult to deliver teaching remotely. The majority of students are engaging in their studies remotely; there has not been formal feedback to date. Teaching and Learning is being delivered using various mechanisms including Microsoft Teams, Zoom and post to interact with students. Details of students who are not engaging remotely will be contacted by letter to support them to engage in learning. Assessment

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methods to certificate students are unknown at this stage. A tracking system has been embedded to measure wellbeing and mental health. The safeguarding teams are engaging regularly with vulnerable students, their parents, guardians and social workers. New safeguarding guidelines are being prepared to address working from home. A Governor asked if the floods in February had impacted on teaching and learning; this had reduced attendance, particularly at Holme Lacy Campus where the main access road was closed for several weeks. It was acknowledged that circumstances are unusual this year; however, if the current pace is maintained, it was not anticipated that there will be any detriment on results. Arrangements for students to complete practical assessments during the summer may be required.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report
- To record appreciation to CMT, staff and students for their tremendous efforts to continue to operate and achieve successful outcomes.

6. Leadership and Management

- I. Equality and Diversity Report. A summary of issues discussed by the Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity Committee in March was outlined. Learner performance by the protected characteristics showed minimal differences by gender, ethnicity learning difficulty, disability or health problems and high needs students. Governors agreed that retention was high in all groups.
- II. Child Protection and Safeguarding Report. Staff development would be delivered remotely with updates provided for staff on safeguarding whilst working remotely and from home. Issues logged on MyConcern are addressed with referrals made to Social Services as required. A Governor asked if students are able to contact the College to speak to their personal tutor, team leader or a member of safeguarding team which was confirmed. A brief guide with contact details was being prepared for students and parents. 401 students have been recorded on MyConcern this year, the majority of issues relating to anxiety, emotional health, mental health, self-harm and wellbeing. The Director of Personnel informed the meeting that she was working on a COVID-19 appendix to the College's Safeguarding and child protection policy which would outline the College's approach to safeguarding during this period.
- III. Quality
 - a. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) had been prepared noting that COVID-19 could impact progress. It will be challenging to continue to operate remotely in the longer term. There was further discussion and questions about the QIP from Governors which were answered.
 - b. A draft Self Evaluation Document for HE had been provided for information which would be amended further. Recruitment to primary and outdoor education, offered in partnership with University of Worcester, was not delivered last year based on low numbers of applications. It is unlikely to recruit in year 1 in 2020/21.
 - c. Strategic Higher Education Committee minutes 11

December 2019 were noted.

- d. Sub contracting provision had been increased during the academic year as the College had recruited fewer adult learners. The College has two partners, The Skills Network, who deliver booklet and distance learning programmes, and Shropshire Football Association, delivering coaching; the latter is not expected to deliver the full contract allocation due to COVID-19. There are robust quality control systems including each sub-contractor providing a self-assessment report and quality improvement plan. MIS have audited paperwork and systems. The College is working with Shropshire FA to ensure staff complete Prevent training.

IV. HLNSC Conduct Policy: This had been discussed and agreed by the F&E Committee and was presented for further comments.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the reports
- To approve the HLNSC Conduct Policy which had also been approved by the F&E Committee

8. Any other business and comments

- I. To improve the process to arrange Governors' participation in learning walks in future it was agreed that the Clerk would set up contacts between the Governor and Team Leader to arrange directly. The Deputy Principal would be copied into correspondence.
- II. The Chair informed Governors that the next Board meeting on 28 April would commence at 4 pm without a separate workshop with updates from senior managers how the College is continuing to operate and the impact of COVID-19.
- III. The Chair thanked CMT and staff for their efforts to ensure ongoing teaching and learning is provided. He also thanked Governors for their commitment.

9. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 17 June 2020 commencing at 3.15 pm.

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: **Date:**