

**Minutes of the
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee
held on Tuesday 2 June 2015 at 8.00am
in Room 814 at the Matthew Boulton Campus**

Present:	Apologies:
	Gala Albas (GA)
Veronica Docherty (VD) (Chair)	
Jenni Ord (JD)	
Dagen Thompson (Staff Member) (DT)	
Andrew Cleaves (Principal and Chief Executive)	
In Attendance:	
Adrian Morris (Vice Principal Teaching and Learning) (AM)	
Louise Jones (Executive Director Quality and HR) (LJ)	
Mukesh Kumar (Vice Principal College and Partnerships) (MK)	
Liam Nevin (Company Secretary) LN	

Apologies for Absence

Gala Albas.

Declarations of Interest

There were none save for those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

Item 1 - Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 2 June 2015

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Matters Arising

The Action Log was noted. It was agreed that the status of items would not be recorded as "pending" and that a target date would be given even if this was provisional. It was further noted that the National Student Survey was currently being analysed and the details would be reported to the next meeting of the committee. The FE Choices survey was expected in the autumn but a firm date could not be given at this point.

The Principal updated the committee on the feedback from the Ofsted inspection, the outcome of which corresponded closely with the College's self-assessment. On reflection the Principal felt that there were three key areas requiring concerted improvement;

- (i) Teaching learning and assessment were not improving quickly or strongly enough and in some areas the College was not performing as well as it thought.
- (ii) English and Maths were not well embedded and some provision was below an acceptable standard
- (iii) Performance in respect of world of work and programmes of study was not sufficiently robust.

In addition, inconsistency in standards was an overarching theme.

JO noted the poor performance within health and social care apprenticeships and felt that this needed to be a particular area of focus.

VD noted that whilst Learner Walks were not a methodical assessment of performance her own observations during these had reflected the Ofsted findings, confirming that they were a useful tool to support formal teaching and learning assessment methods.

The Principal advised that a post inspection action plan would be developed in the next month for presentation to the Corporation and this would be incorporated into the QIP. In addition, a sector leader would be appointed to support the Executive's delivery of the plan.

Item 2 – Quality Improvement Plan Update

AM introduced this item and reminded the committee that the paper had been written prior to the Ofsted inspection. In light of the inspection, the judgements concerning the pace and extent of progress would be reconsidered.

The committee were advised that a particular focus was being directed to three areas where progress was inadequate:

- Targets for student achievement
- Attendance at functional skills
- HE provision

JO noted the need for data to be disaggregated across colleges in order to highlight different levels of performance

VD stated that the first term Review Board was critical to driving necessary changes to provision in order to benefit the then current cohort of students. AM advised that the Quality Assurance Boards met more frequently and their focus on poorer performing areas supported the Termly Review Boards.

JO was assured that the Quality Improvement Plan was being used by teaching staff to drive improvement standards in the provision of teaching, and she noted that this would be a useful point for governors to test in a learning walk.

VD questioned whether the Quality Team had sufficient capacity to support the required improvements. AM advised that the focus of the team was moving towards guidance and assurance but that the implementation of quality improvements needed to be an integral business focus of academic staff under the direction of AM.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

That the committee note the focus of the Executive on the following:

- **To continue to monitor the progress of all actions**
- **To ensure all students have target grades in place and have good feedback so that they know how to improve**
- **To continue to support improvements in the Functional Skill teams and monitor the impact on a regular basis.**
- **To continue to drive improvements through the apprenticeship improvement project.**

Item 3 – Performance Forecast Term 3

AM introduced the report and advised that the Termly Review Boards had focussed on subject sector areas for the first time and the College forecast success rate was broadly at the national rate for 13/14 but 5.5% below target. Based on these projections the College outturn would demonstrate a 2% improvement on the previous year.

Within this aggregate projection it was important to note that the forecast for 16-18 classroom based learning was 7.6% below college target but would represent an improvement of approximately 3.5% on 13/14 performance, whilst 19+ classroom based learning success rates were projected to fall by approximately 2% from the 13/14 performance. The forecast success rate for apprenticeships was projected to increase by approximately 15%.

AM advised that there had been modest improvements in value added scores but too many students were not reaching their potential. The Principal endorsed this point and stated that improvement in value-added scores is a key performance measure for the College and attainment at ALPS grades 7 or 8 was not satisfactory.

VD asked for the committee to receive further information on the ALPS value added grading system in order that further consideration could be given to the College's aspirations in this respect.

The Committee thereafter reviewed the apprenticeship forecast success rates and it was agreed that it would be presented with greater granularity of data on the types of apprenticeships. This would help to develop a clearer understanding of the College's strengths as it developed its growth strategy.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the report and the focus of the Executive as set out below:

- **Managers and the Quality Team continue to target improvements in success rates and quality of provision**
- **The Quality Team to monitor actions to improve through Quality Improvement Plans and provide internal consultancy as appropriate**
- **BRAG forecasts to be maintained on a monthly basis and central recording of progress reviews**
- **The Quality Team to continue working with the Reporting Team to develop BI Dashboard reporting of Apprenticeship performance and also similar reporting of CBL and HE performance.**
- **The Quality Team to support implementation of a cross college strategy to improve A level value added**

Item 4 – Big Teaching and Learning Survey Report 2015

MK introduced the report and advised that 10,606 students had responded, being 53% of all students. This was a significant improvement on the previous year but was still low compared to other providers.

There had been a 2% increase in satisfaction, but at 61% this remained substantially below the target of 85%. MK thereafter summarised the key messages arising from the survey and noted that these correlated with the Ofsted inspection findings.

VD asked whether student satisfaction by College site could be correlated with the performance of the College. The Principal advised that there was anecdotal evidence of this but that a statistical analysis was an important action arising from the survey results.

JO stated that the paper did not provide the necessary information to demonstrate how the College would address the findings and communicate its intentions to students. It was important for the College to demonstrate that it had listened to and acted upon the feedback. The Principal advised that a report would be presented to the next committee meeting setting out the steps taken by the Executive to address this suggestion and these would be incorporated into action plans developed by the Heads of Colleges. These action plans would be incorporated into the College's existing planning and delivery processes.

VD noted that a comprehensive picture of student feedback should also include data on student complaints.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee note the report and the intentions of the Executive to implement the survey recommendations with regard to the matters set out in the pre-amble to this resolution.**

Item 5 – Equality and Diversity Annual Report

LJ introduced the report the purpose of which was to update the Committee on equality and diversity from 2013/14 to date and to propose objectives to be recommended to the Corporation for the next two years. There had been good progress in respect of the four objectives for 2013/14 and the Ofsted inspectors had made favourable observations on observed practices.

VD requested further information on the extent of gender and ethnic under-representation in College courses and details of how the Executive would seek to address disparities.

JO confirmed that as the nominated governor her opinions had been incorporated into the report and questioned whether the existing targets should be retained. This was agreed with the proviso that the proposed "objectives" for 2014/15 to 2016/17 as identified in the report should be incorporated as actions into the relevant College planning and delivery processes

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee recommend to the Corporation the approval of the annual equality and diversity report**
- **That the objectives for 2014/15 to 2016/17 remain unchanged**

Item 6 – Review of Committee Terms of Reference

LN introduced this item and advised the committee that the terms of reference had not been reviewed since 2011 and the changes now proposed were designed to more accurately reflect the activity of the Committee.

It was noted that the proposed terms of reference needed amendment to reflect the responsibility of the committee to oversee the College's policy and performance in respect of equality and diversity

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That subject to the amendment agreed in the pre-amble to this minute, the amended terms of reference proposed for the Committee be recommended to the Corporation.**

Any Other Business

VD questioned progress with the College's voluntary severance programme and its likely impact on course provision. The Principal advised that the deadline for applications had been extended until the 5th June and that analysis of applications would then take place. This would be done in concert with progression and timetabling

Date of the next meeting – To be confirmed

Signed:  (Chair)

Dated: 8/12/15