

**Draft Minutes of the
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee
held on Tuesday 6 December 2016 at 8.00am
in Room 814 at the Matthew Boulton Campus**

Present:	Apologies:
Veronica Docherty (VD) (Chair)	Jenni Ord (JO)
Keith Horton (KH)	Henry Millin (HM)
Andrew Cleaves (AC)	
Sonia Crook- Lake (SCL)	
In Attendance:	
Louise Jones (LJ)	
Liam Nevin (LN)	
Kim Vaughan (KV) (For item 5)	
Tony Dennant (TD) (For item 6)	
Kim Vaughan (KV) (For item 7)	

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jenni Ord.

Declarations of Interest

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

Item 1 - Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 21 June 2016

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Matters Arising and Action Log

VD introduced the action log and LJ advised that the linking of the complaints report to performance data was a matter that she would be asking the new Director of Quality to review as part of a refresh of the quality framework.

It was noted and agreed that a more realistic date for reviewing the quality strategy and developing proposals for improved equality impact assessment was the end of March 2017.

Item 2 – Self Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan

LJ introduced the report and advised that the SAR reflected performance for the 2015-16 academic year. The format followed the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework.

VD noted that the College was now a term into the academic year and it would also be useful to assess progress. LJ advised that there would be an in-year position statement that would address progress and which would be used for the Ofsted inspection, but this was not a component of the SAR which was a review document.

LJ advised the committee that some final amendments were needed to the document before submission to the Corporation. Achievement numbers had changed slightly with education and training now 81% and employer responsive training at 70%.

The committee were advised that the teaching and learning and assessment grade was limiting so that the grade for overall effectiveness could not be higher than this. The document had been externally moderated through Ofsted trained inspectors and the evidence to substantiate the judgements was robust. Following Corporation approval the document would need to be submitted to Ofsted by the end of December.

Thereafter LJ advised on the underlying trends behind the headline achievement rates. Whilst achievement rates in classroom learning was overall the same as 2014-15 there had been an increase of 3% with 16-18 students and a decline in 19+ achievements. The College had reduced provision of short courses by approximately 6,000, and these had historically higher achievement rates. Accordingly the balance of provision was now more focussed on qualifications with longer study programmes. The backdrop to these results was a 20% reduction in staffing at the start of the academic year. Progress with delivery of apprenticeships was good with substantial rates of improvement in four areas, such that outcomes were now only slightly below the national average.

VD stated that it would be helpful for governors to see an analysis of the changes in short course provision and its impact on outcomes.

LJ advised that VD had emailed some questions about the College's performance in the national context and also the extent to which "value added" progress had been addressed. LJ advised that national statistics for 2015/16 were not available until May and the College was therefore measuring against 2014/15 "all institutions" measures. There was not a nationally recognised method of measuring added value across all courses although the College was using comparative data for A levels and BTEC courses. It was recognised that more needed to be done on this generally but particularly in relation to English and Maths where an in-year assessment of progress was important.

LJ then advised on the QIP content and stated that there were six areas of focus with a project plan attached to each strand. Progress on these project strands would be reported at each committee meeting. Each project had a designated owner who would be responsible for achieving the milestones and targets within their plans and which would inform the progress and impact statements that would be reported to the Committee. The improvement statements specified what success would look like.

VD and KH stated that they would wish to see milestones and RAG ratings against the QIP activities so that the Committee could take an overview of progress against the most important measures of success and also to give the document the necessary focus in driving improvements. LJ agreed to extract these from the project plans in order to provide this visibility to governors. The "progress" "impact" and "RAG rating" sections of the report would accordingly be updated and circulated to the Committee in mid- January.

VD also proposed and it was agreed that the Committee undertake a deep dive into selected areas of the QIP at its next meeting in order to make a qualitative assessment of progress.

Thereafter VD noted that some aspects of the QIP were matters that had featured in the previous QIP and that this suggested that some practices regarded as essential had not been embedded.

The Principal agreed with this analysis and LJ added that the matters addressed by the QIP all reflected issues that the College needed to do better.

SCL asked about the consequences for staff who were not complying with expectations in relation to these matters and LJ explained the processes in use to monitor performance, hold to account and provide support to teams.

KH concluded the debate by commending the approach to the SAR which provided an honest appraisal of the College's performance

The Principal assured the Committee that the purpose of the QIP as a more streamlined document was to ensure that it was used more effectively as the key performance management tool for academic quality and that the governors comments were helpful in refining the content and ensuring that focus.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the SAR and the QIP be recommended to the Corporation for approval**

Item 3 – Annual Summary of Complaints

LJ introduced the report and referring to the discussion in relation to the action log advised that the new Director of Quality would be reviewing how the College used intelligence from its complaints report as part of an overall review of the quality framework.

In summary, the report demonstrated an increase in complaints from the previous year, but this was in keeping with the College's encouragement of complaints as a tool to drive service improvements. The pattern of complaints did generally corroborate the areas for improvement identified in the SAR and actions had been taken to address a number of themes arising from the complaints. This included addressing gaps in staffing, fewer timetable changes, and a very substantial reduction in cancelled classes.

VD stated that the Committee had previously identified the benefit of analysis of complements as well as complaints and the Principal acknowledged this as an area that still needed to be addressed.

KH stated that he had expected to see an analysis of outcomes including details of whether complaints had been upheld or not. LJ stated that College's approach was not geared towards such a finding. The importance of the complaint was in the perception of the complainant and the emphasis was on reaching an outcome having explored all options.

There being no further debate

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted**

Item 4 – Induction Survey

LJ summarised the report and advised that there had been a 5% increase in student satisfaction compared to last year but that the College was still in the bottom quartile of Colleges nationally. Improvements in scores also reflected changes made to address staffing shortages, improved timetabling and reduce cancelled classes. In addition, more students now knew their target grades, and there were improvements in perception of safety and understanding of Fundamental British Values.

The results also pointed to areas for improvement including English and Maths provision, dealing with the needs of students on the Autistic Spectrum, the quality of teaching generally, and the issuing of bus passes.

KH asked how this information fed into the College's quality regime noting that the table at page 9 of the report had identified a number of areas that were RAG rated "red". LJ confirmed that this was addressed through the departmental QIPs and these were updated termly to reflect evidence collected during the term. The extent of "red" RAG rated areas was an accurate reflection that some areas had a range of improvements that were required.

VD asked whether the issues raised linked to areas of poor performance in the SSAs. LJ advised that the data was used by her in a targeted way with the Heads of Faculty to focus on matters such as the number of students who didn't know their target grades.

There being no further debate

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted.**

Item 5 – Annual Report on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

KV introduced the report and advised the Committee on the steps taken to embed Fundamental British Values within the College including through staff training, inductions and tutorials. In addition, the College had reviewed its internet protection protocols and was satisfied that filtering systems were working effectively to block student access to inappropriate websites when using the College's network. A bigger challenge for the College was how students used their personal devices that were not connected to the College network.

In addition, the College was still refining how it monitored search terms used by students so that it could proactively address potential safeguarding matters. This was still a work in progress because whilst active monitoring had allowed for intervention in some cases, the outcome of current monitoring protocols was that too many hits were being produced to investigate.

The Principal advised that further work was being done to revise the approach to monitoring and produce a more limited data field that could be effectively managed. The Corporation would be kept informed of developments.

With regard to Safeguarding KV advised that there was an increase in referrals from the previous year but that this was a positive reflection on staff training and student awareness. Safeguarding was found to be effective in the last Ofsted inspection but nevertheless the Big Teaching and Learning Survey had identified some concerns with bullying that were now being addressed through induction.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the Committee note the report and refer it to the Corporation**

Item 6 – Harborne Academy Performance Update

TD introduced the report and summarised the results from the summer exams. This had culminated in a -0.18 progress 8 score which was acknowledged as disappointing. Since this time the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher had left the Academy and interim head teacher was overseeing a programme of improvements including additional focus on mock examinations and coaching and support on teaching, learning and assessment.

The Principal advised that he had visited the Academy twice in recent months and was impressed by the momentum of improvement activity. A further Ofsted inspection was expected during this academic year and an inspection outcome of "good" was achievable.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the report be noted.**

Item 7 – HE Performance Review 2015/16

SW introduced the report and advised that the Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) set out the details around the quality of student experience and academic outcomes in 2015/16 for the College's HE provision. In summary the key points to note were:

- The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) review had been successful with all Quality Code expectations met.
- Overall success rates had improved from 57.6% in 2014-15 to 64.6% in 2015-16 but remained significantly under the College target of 85%
- Overall progression rates had improved by 3.6% to 79.5% but remained significantly under the College target of 87%
- Overall attrition rates had declined from 24.1% in 2014 to 20.5% in 2015 which was in line with the College's target to achieve 15% for starters in 2017-18
- Overall student numbers had declined from 850 to 691 in 2015-16

Thereafter SW explained that the Corporation was now required to submit to HEFCE a quality assessment return in the form set out in the appendices to the paper and which confirmed that the Corporation had addressed various matters relating to the standard of provision, continuous improvement and student outcomes. These were all matters addressed in the AMR.

The Principal noted that the decline in recruitment reflected an increasingly competitive environment with HE institutions competing with the College for the types of students that it had historically recruited.

KH asked about the quality regime for HE and the extent to which it linked into the FE quality control process. SW stated that whilst some of the HE and FE delivery challenges were the same, the HE quality assurance process was independent.

KH stated that as with the QIP, governors would draw assurance from completion of the progress and impact columns in the report and RAG rating of these. LJ agreed that she would discuss this with SW after the meeting to ensure that she was clear on the feedback given earlier in relation to the FE QIP.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- (i) **That the Committee endorse and recommend to the Corporation that the CAMR 2015-16 evidences that:**
- **The student academic experience and the student learning outcomes have been reviewed for 2015-16**
 - **The impact of key enhancement objectives for 2015-16 have been evaluated**
 - **Poor performance has been identified and key enhancement objectives developed to improve performance in 2016-17**

- Associated risks have been identified and mitigated against by the identified enhancement objectives and key actions to be delivered in 2016-17 through a closely monitored and scrutinised HE Quality Improvement Plan
- (ii) The Committee recommend to the Corporation that the Principal sign the assurance statement required by the Higher Education Funding Council as appended to this report.

Item 8 – Employer Survey

LJ introduced this report and advised that approximately 1/3 of the College’s employers had responded. The satisfaction rate was the same as last year and the Executive were not content with this and would be examining the feedback to identify improvements that it could make to build on those already introduced in the last few months.

The Principal advised that Executive leads would be allocated to key accounts and he would be looking to engage governors in this process by drawing more effectively on their market knowledge and contacts.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- That the report be noted

Item 9 – Annual Work Programme

LN summarised the work programme for the committee over the academic year, and advised that this would need to be amended to reflect agreement during the meeting; that the QIP project plans are reported to each meeting of the Committee and that a deep dive on selected areas be undertaken.

VD stated that the period of time between meetings may require other forms of communication with committee members to assess progress in key areas. It was agreed that updates could be provided by email or if necessary, telephone conferences arranged, and that LN would discuss the detail with VD outside of the meeting.

Any Other Business

There was no other business

Date of the next meeting – 7 March 2017

Signed:.....(Chair)

Dated:.....