

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 15th July 2019 at 5pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Andrea Morrissey (co-optee)
Mary Mamik, Chair
Andrew Cropley

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Sue Martin, Interim Vice Principal C&Q
Diane Booth, Head of Quality and Performance
Louise Knott, Vice Principal

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair reminded Governors/co-optees present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted.

2 WELCOME INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Steve Sutton, Jane Hawksford, Mark Williams and Jen Hope.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH JUNE 2019

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2019.

There were no matters arising.

4 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee were happy to note the update provided.

5 TLTA POLICY AND PROCEDURE 2018-2021

The Principal presented this agenda item and confirmed that very minor changes had been made which reflect the new structures or the new EIF. He confirmed that the draft policy was shared with recognised Trade Unions ahead of the joint negotiation and consultation panel on 26th

Signed :  Chair

Date:

June 2019. Unison confirmed that they were content with the amendments immediately but UCU stated that they needed a week to review the amendments. Responses were received from UCU on 4th July 2019 but the regional representative then immediately went on leave for four weeks. The college has responded to the comments from UCU and awaits further confirmation from the regional representative that she is content with the revised draft. Once the responses are received, it will be necessary for the policy to be launched in August in time for the start of the new academic year.

He explained that points raised by the unions included:

- The extended observation window, which is from September to February. He explained that, from a practical perspective, this is best for staff to enable development.
- More information regarding apprenticeships and the alignment with HE development. This is something that is 'different' but the college feels is necessary to bring it up to date.
- Change in reference from a learning walk to an observation as this aligns with the EIF.

As an overview, he confirmed that the changes in the main were to reflect the differing operational structure. The policy makes reference to staff needing to manage disruption in lessons. This is needed to reflect what will happen when Ofsted next visit.

The Committee considered the policy and procedure in detail and were happy to approve the revised paper.

AGREED:

- a) To note the content of the update provided;
- b) Approve the draft Teaching, Learning, Training and Assessment Policy and Procedure 2018-2021.

6 HE

The Vice Principal drew the Committee's attention to her detailed report and provided updates in a number of areas.

- 1) Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) annual statement

She drew members' attention to the document provided and explained that there was one complaint made which was escalated to OIAHE. This was from a student who was dissatisfied with their final year grades. This is something that the OIAHE would not consider eligible as assessments and eventual grades are considered by an exam board which is overseen by the college's university partner. She confirmed that it is usual for the college to have a very low number of complaints.

- 2) OfS registration conditions

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

She drew the Committee's attention to the five points raised in her report and confirmed that the college has met all of the general terms and conditions, these needing to be in place for August. Specific conditions exist relating to the college's financial and leadership stability. The letter of registration dated 1st February 2019 noted 'serious concerns over your management and governance arrangements following the FE Commissioner's report'. The OfS stated that they would seek regular updates from the ESFA, and it is safe to assume that the ESFA have been updating the OfS with progress, including appointments to the Board of Governors and substantive and permanent Principal. The second condition related to the college not responding to ILR data verification processes (for four consecutive years under the HEFCE); the OfS therefore will be monitoring the college's returns very closely. To date in this academic year, the college has met all the conditions of data submission and validation via the OfS. The college is therefore able to evidence an improved track record.

3) OfS Access and Participation Plan

The Vice Principal advised that, following the last meeting of the Committee, the college's Access and Participation Plan was submitted via the OfS portal. The college has received an email communication from them seeking further clarification on a number of points. The deadline for response was 11th July and was submitted on 10th. Slight amendments have had to be made to the plan and these were explained. She confirmed that the Access and Participation Plan has now been amended to cover all aspects raised.

She advised that there is a national issue regarding care leavers, with only 6% of care leavers accessing study at HE level. Some changes were required to align with the '12 by 24 national strategy'. She confirmed that the college has committed to doubling its number of HE students who are care leavers. Historically the college has not recorded care leaver information, and this will now need to change. She explained that the college has done a lot of work regarding LAC learners, and care leaver information can sit alongside this strategy with support being available. There are circa 150 16-18 year old LAC learners.

She advised that the college has a good relationship with the virtual head in Nottinghamshire, and this should help to continue to support care leavers.

4) OfS Transparency Return

The Vice Principal explained that the college's data is so limited that not much is published, but assurance was given that there are no significant issues.

5) Other OfS correspondence

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

She advised that the college receives a weekly roundup of communications from the OfS, and perhaps of particular note for Governors is their guidance on effective practice in formulating Access and Participation Plans. Guidance includes advice for governing bodies on their composition, in that governing bodies may wish to consider whether they have members who have specialist knowledge of the HE sector and whether governing bodies are diverse in terms of gender, BMAE and disability and formalised links to the team responsible for developing the access and participation plan.

6) HE withdrawals

She provided data in response to an action point requested by the Finance and Estates Committee earlier in the year. Key points noted were:

- 10 students withdrew prior to the 30th October deadline. Of these, four were students moving in to their second year.
- 19 students have withdrawn post-30th October. Of those, two were second year students.
- Three students are pending withdrawal.
- Five students have taken a break in study, mainly as a result of medical conditions.

She provided assurance that a rigorous process is undertaken with any individuals to review whether a withdrawal is appropriate. In the main, the reasons for withdrawal relate to non-attendance.

Of the potential withdrawals this year:

- 13 relate to non-attendance with the student missing too much coursework to catch up.
- Nine were personal or medical.
- Eight were job-related.
- One student changed institution.

She confirmed that the percentage of withdrawals is circa 7/8%.

7) HE strategy and KPIs

She advised that work on developing the college's HE Strategy has been put on hold pending discussions with two university partners. Clearly, should the college decide to go in to partnership with one or both, this will add a very different direction of travel. She confirmed that proposals will be presented to the September Board.

Principal

Sept. 2019

8) National student survey results

She confirmed that results were published on 5th July and form part of the learner voice paper later in the meeting.

9) Progress against actions identified within the SED

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

She confirmed:

- Good work has taken place within the year on employability; links have been made within most curriculum areas with employers, who are increasingly enriching programmes with live briefs and work placement. Frameworks will be further enhanced in 19/20.
- The college has developed a learning gain framework (the value added), which will see students assessed for starting point, not only in terms of academic achievement but employability skills with progress measured systematically throughout the year.
- All policies and procedures are now compliant with OIAHE guidance and published on the college's website.

As an overview, she confirmed that the college has made really good progress this year against any actions raised in the prior year and the last QAA. HE provision is now much more coordinated and consistent and there is confidence that the metrics can be measured. She explained that the college now has a HE management forum in place where staff can share good practice.

One committee member questioned whether or not the college works with larger companies who have graduate programmes in place. She expressed the view that these would be really positive links and would give the college an opportunity to align its offer with what employers want to see.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

7

LEARNER VOICE REPORT

The Vice Principal introduced her detailed report and confirmed that two sets of survey results have been received since the last report to the committee. As an overview, she advised that this was not a positive position but that this has to be taken within the context of exceptional results last year. She indicated that results show that the college may have a communication issue with students in both FE and HE, particularly regarding any changes that are made.

Key matters noted were:

1) FE exit survey, all learners

The college conducts regular student surveys through QDP services, the most recent of which was an exit survey. 2,227 students participated in the survey, which provides a good representation of the college on campus community as a whole. Full survey results were shared and key points brought to the committee's attention were:

- Survey responses provided are benchmarked against 93 other colleges.
- Engagement rates are roughly similar between years, making comparison statistically relevant.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- Across all areas of the survey, the college has seen a slight decline in satisfaction against the year previous. Whilst it would be easy to blame a challenging year, it must be recognised that this may have played a part in staff engagement with the survey and thus the outcomes.
- However, over a four-year trend, the college has shown an improvement in the areas of tests and assessments (+3%) and personal development behaviour and welfare (+3%), with equal ratings in overall experience and next steps/progression. Disappointingly, the results show a downward picture under the category of 'teaching and learning', with significant differences between last year identified as English skills have improved, college contact in terms of absence and targets and progress being monitored. Cross-college facilities and services have shown a downward trend over the four years, with fluctuations in terms of the responses over the time.
- Against national benchmark, the college is in the top 25% for general cross-college facilities and services and in the top half of benchmarked colleges for all of the sections. This is a difference to last years' survey where the college was placed in the top 25% for all sections.
- Areas where the college is significantly above benchmark in terms of individual questions are the correction of spelling and grammar, encouraged to take responsibility for own learning, tutors challenge me to do my best, monitoring of targets and progress, feedback helped me improve, opportunities for wider learning and college listens and tries to improve things.
- Areas where the college needs to do further work in terms of benchmarks are improvement of English skills, absence notification and the programme meeting expectations.

As an overview she indicated that the results were by no means disastrous but were disappointing. A challenge from the committee is that the college needs to be able to explain the results to Ofsted. In terms of absence notification, the committee questioned whether this was a system issue. The Vice Principal expressed the view that this was unlikely and that it is more to do with a lack of clarity between admin support and learning mentors. She provided assurance that the position has been changed ready for 19/20.

In relation to English skills, she explained that this was probably a consequence of the decision taken to reduce the number of taught hours last year, and this is being reviewed. She confirmed that the college is currently sharing the results of the survey with departments and Assistant Principals, with each area tasked with examining issues and incorporating areas for development within SARs and QIPs. The Committee questioned whether data is sufficiently broken down for specific areas. The Vice Principal confirmed that this is the case for FE but not yet for HE. She expressed the view that whole college processes to capture learner voice could be more structured and that this would help

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

to pick up themes.

The Committee questioned whether feedback on the learner survey results is provided to students. It was confirmed that this is, for their own areas, but not on a whole college basis yet. A suggestion from one member of the committee is that instead of 'you said, we did', it would be more collaborative to amend this to 'you said, together we did'.

In reviewing the results, the recommendation from the committee was to focus on the top three issues. It was confirmed that the aggregate report does look at the most significant variances in terms of negative responses/decline in responses. The committee asked where this data is now tracked. It was confirmed that this is through the QIP every month and through PMRs, which take place every 6 weeks. It was confirmed that there are face to face learner voice meetings in October, February and April and that these will be in progress review weeks. A challenge from the committee was that they want assurance regarding improved communication next year.

2) National Student Survey (HE)

As an overview, the Vice Principal indicated that the college was showing a worsening position in terms of satisfaction and that again this has been impacted by communication. Key points brought to the committee's attention were:

- In 2018, the college was at or significantly above benchmark in all questions. 2019 presents a much more mixed picture. None of the areas are significantly above benchmark but learning opportunities, assessment and feedback, academic support, learning resources, learning community, student voice and student union are at or slightly above benchmark.
- Overall satisfaction levels are 81.4% compared to a national rate of 83% and last year's satisfaction level of 89.8%.
- There is one area where the college is below benchmark in pretty much every question, and that is in the area of organisation and management. Question 17 in particular – 'any changes with the course or teaching have been communicated effectively' – is significantly different to benchmark, i.e. 59.4% agreed compared to a benchmark of 77.42%.

She indicated that communication is sent via email, SMS, etc., but there is clearly more that needs to be done. Staff are supposed to have one to one updates with students, but this did not happen. A key aspect of dissatisfaction relates to teaching consistency. She indicated that the results are likely to be influenced by the opinion of students on the children and young services course, as there was a lot of staff illness last year.

3) Face to face learner voice

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The Vice Principal drew Governors' attention to the nine points raised in her report. She confirmed that points raised show a lack of coordination between tutors. A challenge from the committee was to ensure that the new Heads of Department address and avoid this going forward. They indicated that some of the issues raised clearly show poor planning and this has to be addressed. Assurance was given to the Committee that leaders are aware of the issues and are providing clarity in terms of expectations.

One issue raised was in relation to site security and it was acknowledged that the reduction in the number of entrances will address this, and that what the college needs to do is constantly reassure learners that this is a safe environment.

4) Learner voice 19/20 – a framework

The Vice Principal advised that the college has been reviewing its framework for learner voice for the next academic year and, as well as changes proposed to the student union, the college is also proposing a number of improvements to the learner voice framework. These include:

- That feedback from students is collected by level as well as course area. This will mean that staff pull together focus groups by level rather than bringing together all learner reps within one meeting. The intention is to ensure more collaborative and working to identify solutions, e.g. a LAC group.
- Learner voice (your voice), whilst productive this year, may have sometimes lacked a little structure and focus. The college is proposing to bring key things to each your voice meeting as follows:
Term 1 – induction and settling in;
Term 2 – progression, employability and work readiness;
Term 3 – summary and overview: good and bad things.
- Learner reps have fed back that often they feel that they provide feedback but don't get engaged with solutions. This year this the college has trialled a mental health strategy group for students, which has been successful in leading some of the developments for students themselves; this approach will be used much more next year.
- Jen Hope has offered to review the college's learner engagement strategies and this will take place over the summer. Learning and best practice will then be built in to the published framework and will be brought to this committee in the autumn term.

Vice
Principal

Nov. 2019

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

8 SAFEGUARDING

As an overview, the Vice Principal indicated that the college is continuing to see an increase in the number of referrals and the level of complexity. She indicated that concerns regarding referrals with partners is

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

decreasing as the number of partners used is reducing. The one exception here is the Inspire and Achieve Foundation, which is an organisation that supports very vulnerable individuals.

In terms of the Safeguarding Development Plan, she indicated that results from the learner exit survey would indicate that improvements made to student tutorials this year had an impact in a number of ways, including:

- I know how to keep myself safe on the internet (100%)
- I have received training on radicalisation and extremism (93%)
- I feel safe at college (95%)

Whilst there is an improvement on the number of students who have recognised they have received training on radicalisation and extremism, this will continue to be an area of focus for next year. She advised that the college has continued to work with employers on the need for them to report safeguarding concerns to the college. Whilst work-based safeguarding referrals still represent the minority of referrals, we have seen a number start to come from employers over the last three months.

She informed the Committee that the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document has been revised and a final version will be published on 2nd September. Changes proposed to the document are not substantive but include:

- References being made to upskirting (taking a photograph under a person's clothing without their knowledge), which is now a criminal offence.
- New paragraphs on serious violence, which includes preventing gang and youth violence and criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults (county lines).

In relation to the latter, she confirmed that Mansfield is a risk area in relation to county lines, therefore, the college does need to review its procedures. The committee indicated that they would specifically like to see county line updates in future reports. The Vice Principal confirmed that there have been no referrals because of this in 18/19. She confirmed that the college's safeguarding procedure will be reviewed over the summer and that a final draft will be brought to the Corporation Board in September for approval.

Vice
Principal

Sept. 2019

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

9

CEIG UPDATE

The Vice Principal introduced her detailed report and key matters noted were:

- In June 2018, Governors approved a careers programme for the college and an action plan that would get the college to full compliance by 2020.
- Good progress is being made across the action plan.
- In May 2019, the college was reaccruited for the matrix standard.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- In March/April, the college used the Government's compass tool to self-assess against Gatsby benchmarks. This demonstrated that the college was 88% compliant with the benchmarks, which is a good place to be 18 months from full implementation. The main area for development rested with encounters with employers. We believe that we are not capturing everything that is happening within curriculum teams in some cases, but recognise that we have still some distance to travel to meet this aspect.
- Since March the college has been working with employers to develop a set of employability standards. This will be used next academic year to measure students in terms of their work readiness. We have simplified the standards for use with employers, along with the college seeking to provide each employer with the profile of a young person. This will go live in college in September and be launched through Mansfield and Ashfield 2020 in the autumn.
- We have been approached by the local authority to provide supported internships from September 2019. It is likely that the first batch of these will be through Kings Mill Hospital, with a meeting with managers planned for the week commencing 8th July.
- In tandem, the work that the college has been doing on work readiness has led to the college being asked to be part of a pilot programme with two other providers, whereby curriculum designed for employability will be audited and recommendations made. Two departments are to take part in the pilot, and this will be really useful in terms of curriculum intent.
- Systems and system development continue to be an issue for the college. The college launched a career development plan for every student last year and this will be further enhanced, however, the college is currently working with Connect and Start Profile to examine online resources for careers education. We have also been contacted by City & Guilds in relation to their own software. She confirmed that the college was receiving demonstrations in August. A challenge from the committee was to review at least three systems to get a clear idea as to pros and cons.

A challenge from the committee was whether the development items and work required is picked up in the QIPs. It was confirmed that they are.

In terms of the systems to be used, it was explained that the careers and enterprise company development of a system which would be free has been delayed, which is a frustration to the college.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

10

COMMITTEE REVIEW

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The Committee took the opportunity to review their own performance for 18/19 and to discuss membership for the next academic year and the draft work plan proposed. The Committee questioned whether three meetings a year was sufficient given the known challenges. The Committee felt that, if only three meetings take place, there would be a need to increase the length of time needed for each meeting. The Clerk advised that historically there was a separate meeting each year to review the SAR and the SED, but that this had not been planned for the next academic year. The view of the Committee was that the SAR and the SED process should be split out as a separate workshop meeting, with this meeting to take place in September. All Governors are to be invited, but the workshop will be of particular interest to the link Governors agreed for the curriculum areas. It was agreed that, at this September meeting, there would be an earlier review of the SAR and SED and also consideration of the review process itself. Also to be reported at this meeting are annual reports on safeguarding and E&D, as these will be included within the SAR and SED process. It was agreed that the interim Vice Principal and Diane Booth would review dates and then give feedback to the Clerk so this could be arranged.

Interim VP

July 2019

In terms of self-assessment, two points were raised:

- Credit was given to the interim Vice Principal in relation to the improvements in data presentation, albeit it was acknowledged that this is still a work in progress. All agreed that visual development of data presentation is a key priority.
- Governor attendance at this Committee was raised as an area for improvement. It was acknowledged that attendance has been 'hit and miss', and that the Committee needs to work towards consistent attendance. The suggestion made was the development of Governor KPIs for the next academic year, with attendance being one aspect.

The Committee Chair expressed the view that greater challenge is needed regarding quality next year and that this needs to be a whole board approach. It was acknowledged that, in the next academic year, the Board's focus will not be dominated by the college's finances. The Clerk confirmed that she annually produces a Board report in September and this will cover Governor attendance and training and development. She indicated that she would also ask the Chairman of the Board to flag up the importance of this Committee and suggest that an open invite to all Governors be extended. A challenge from the Committee is that they want clear improvement points from every meeting. Another suggestion was that more training and/or engagement opportunities be provided/created for Committee co-optees.

Given the absence of some committee members, the Clerk was asked to contact Steve Sutton, Mark Williams, Jane Hawksford and Jen Hope for their views on the Committee's effectiveness for 18/19.

Clerk

July 2019

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The Committee then went on to discuss membership for 19/20 and all agreed that membership was strong but that it could be improved by extending an invitation to the new academic staff Governor, and also to see whether the college can recruit an individual with HE experience and knowledge.

A challenge from the committee was that they would wish to lift their conversations to a more strategic level next year, and all felt that repositioning work on this may be helpful.

The Committee then went on to discuss the work plan proposed and it was accepted as a sound framework. It was agreed that the meeting date in November may be slightly too early and the interim Vice Principal and Diane Booth were asked to review. The Clerk cross-referenced the action progress report, and it was agreed that the November 2019 meeting would also include data on:

- Early conversions;
- Day 42 withdrawals;
- Early attendance statistics;
- Progress of learners from their starting points.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

11 **AOB**

There were no items of additional business.

12 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

It was acknowledged that the Clerk would work to schedule a SAR/SED workshop in September 2019.

Meeting closed at 6.55pm.

Interim VP

Nov 2019

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: