

Minutes of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (FE)
held on Monday 19 March 2018

Present: Mr John Nicol (Chair)
Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Mrs Kate Murrie
Mr Tim Newsholme

In attendance: Mr Ben Gamble (Head of Further Education)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)

The meeting was quorate as four Members were present. The Chair suggested that as reporting was now straightforward, staff could be invited to meetings to provide updates on their areas.

ACTION: HEAD OF FE/CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interests
No declarations

3. Minutes of the last meeting: 28 November 2017

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

4. Quality Assurance

- I. Retention remains high at 97%. An example was provided evidencing how a student who had moved from the area was being supported to enable them to complete a level 2 programme by commuting two days a week. Students had been enrolled on 1-year programmes for the Level 3 Music Diploma before being enrolled onto the second year.

Applications showed a 26% decrease compared to last year; however, this was not a true comparison as progression week had not taken place for level 2 Performing Arts and Art and Design students. Open evenings and open studios have been held since preparing the report which are likely to increase applications. The Marketing Team is working with partner schools to ensure applications have been submitted with on-going events arranged for 11-16 year olds. It was noted that there is a demographic decline in Herefordshire and that the removal of some creative subjects in the school curriculum could have an impact on applications. There was discussion about the Foundation course and if this was required by HEIs for post-graduate courses; this was not a requirement but some universities still request it.

- II. Attendance is good at 92.5% overall, marginally below target. A live dashboard had been introduced to monitor attendance which was included in the report. Unauthorised absence of c50% related to sickness and the heavy snowfall. FEMT have been tasked to identify and target students in curriculum areas with poor attendance. Visits, trips and gigs impact on English and Maths attendance. To mitigate this, students who would miss

English and Maths sessions are required to complete these in advance of any visits etc. A Governor asked about support for students with poor attendance. Support is provided, including that by the Well Being Officer. Some groups are small, such as looked after children. Governors requested an anonymous report on students with poor attendance to specifically monitor if their attendance improves.

ACTION: HEAD OF FE

Discussion progressed to ALS support which is provided within curriculum areas. A Governor asked if Foundation students have contextual studies with a different tutor; noting that these are continuously tracked with cover provided by staff.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note reports

5. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Head of FE reminded Governors that the nine teaching standards had been developed in consultation with staff and piloted as the professional teaching standards (PTS). Staff had been invited to train to become observers. Key subjects had been selected for observations with non-specialist observers completing paired observations as the pilot with the majority of observations completed. Ratings are scored on BRAG ratings (blue, red amber, green) with feedback collated against each standard. This showed that equality, diversity and inclusion scored the highest percentage of amber grades. Actions were listed in the report to address findings. A Governor asked how action plans would be prepared and monitored with an explanation provided noting these will be live documents. Action plans will be maintained centrally by Personnel. A question followed if observations will be linked to staff appraisals and pay progression. Feedback is requested from the observation team and staff. Currently progression scales are not in place and the College follows AoC recommendations for staff pay.

A Governor asked how staff had responded to the PTS and how these were being embedded. PTS had been outlined as part of staff development with staff given the opportunity for questions. Staff will be given feedback.

A Governor commented that it was positive that observers no longer observe their own areas as per the previous observation scheme. Staff with different scores would be teamed up to work together to develop key areas. To ensure consistency, the same observation team would return to observe the same elements and lessons.

Clarification on the frequency of observations was raised noting that the coaching and observation cycle ensure staff have at least one full observation each year with follow up observations termly thereafter. This would include observations for staff who had blue rag rated observations.

A Governor asked if students are involved in the observation process. The Head of FE responded that SLT had decided to embed the new system initially with students to be involved at a later stage. This feedback will be incorporated into reports to the Committee.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report on teaching, learning and assessment
- To thank the HoFE for developing and effectively embedding the scheme

6. Leadership and Management

- I. Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) 2017/18 had been embedded with

staff. Course Leaders and their teams completed the PIP and provide progress reports. Actions taken are RAG rated as opposed to targets to achieve. FEMT have discussed the PIP with a further analysis after Easter. Course Leaders are denoted as responsible for actions in the PIP; however, actions are frequently completed by their teams.

Governors' attention was drawn to the English and Maths report showing the high grade targets. Functional Skills exams will change from paper copy exams to be completed online enabling students to sit exams throughout the year. Functional Skills Maths predicted a pass rate of 33% (7 students) in February; actual results showed a 61% pass rate with 13 students achieving. The prediction for English is 11.24%. GCSE mocks have been arranged to track progress under exam conditions. There is uncertainty about English since the new English GCSE qualification was introduced this year. English have trialled reader pens and SLT have approved ten additional reader pens. Three students have access arrangements.

- II. Safeguarding and Prevent was reported using MyConcern data. One concern accounted for each individual issue raised. The current report shows the number of concerns but in future a summary of the number of students the concerns relate to will be reported to identify if there are multiple students or a small group. A link to retention and achievement would also identify if students' progress had been affected.

ACTION: HEAD OF FE

Additional staff have been trained to Level 5 safeguarding including the IT Manager and recently appointed Well-Being Officer who has had a significant input into safeguarding. MyConcern had been fully embedded since the last meeting. The safeguarding policy is regularly updated and presented to the Committee.

- III. GCSE English and Maths and Functional Skills had been discussed as part of the PIP.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note reports

7. Identification of Key Risks

- I. GCSE English and Maths, Functional Skills results
- II. Work experience
- III. Applications 2018

8. Any other business

The Principal informed Governors of a curriculum development to deliver a bespoke Level 3 programme Digital Futures (animation, computer games, VR, coding and design). This would be a UAL qualification. There will be a specific target market which will be different to other courses offered. A member of staff will be responsible to develop the course, market and deliver it. Market research is being undertaken in schools to identify study routes and progression.

Minutes of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee
(HE and FE Combined Meeting)
held on Monday 19 March 2018

Present: Dr Elizabeth Halford (Chair)
Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Mrs Alison McLean
Mrs Kate Murrie
Mr Tim Newsholme
Mr John Nicol

In attendance: Mr Jim Walmsley (Vice Principal)
Mr Ben Gamble (Head of Further Education)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)

The meeting was quorate as six Members were present.

9. Apologies for absence

Mr Mike Rookes and Ms Mairead McVeigh

10. I. Minutes of the last meeting

Dr Halford signed the minutes of the last meetings held on 28 November 2017 as a true record.

II. Matters arising

These would be addressed in reports to the AQ&S Committee (FE).

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

11. Any other business

A suggestion was made to include FE Governors in OfS discussion noting that this would be reported to all Governors at the next Board meeting.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

12. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Monday 18 June 2018 with the HE: 2.00 pm, combined meeting: 3.15 pm and FE: 3.45 pm.

Minutes of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (HE)
held on Monday 19 March 2018

Present: Dr Elizabeth Halford (Chair)
Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Mrs Alison McLean

In attendance: Mr Jim Walmsley (Vice Principal)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)
Ms Sarah-Jane Crowson (Scholarship Development Manager) 17-19

The meeting was quorate as three Members were present

- 13. Apologies for absence**
Mr Mike Rookes and Ms Mairead McVeigh

Declaration of Interests
No declarations

- 15. Minutes of the last meeting: 28 November 2017**
- I. Approval of the minutes**
 - II. Matters arising from the minutes**
Data and curriculum development will be reported in confidential minutes.
 - III. Action list**
The Vice Principal explained that exceptional circumstances and illness had meant actions had not been completed. These would be carried forward and reported at the next meeting in June. Transitional arrangements were likely to be required pending the Vice Principal's retirement. Several issues related to OfS which might require an additional committee meeting to address.
ACTION: VICE PRINCIPAL

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

- 16. Under graduate and post graduate data**
A confidential minute was recorded

- 17. Update on HEFCE and Office for Students (OfS)**
The Principal reminded Governors that the College had responded to the consultation. Key changes to regulation were outlined. This could include regulating to baseline requirements rather than quality improvement, improving access to HE, widening participation, and promoting new models including two year accelerated courses, transfer made easier for students, TEF becoming compulsory for providers with 500+ HE students and onerous registration including submission of a range of documents for compliance.

A question was raised about whether collaboration with a Welsh HEI could be problematic for the College because the OfS has a remit for England only.

There are four primary regulatory objectives affecting all students from all backgrounds with the ability and desire to undertake higher education: -

1. Supported to access, success and progress from HE;
2. Receive high quality academic experience and their interest protected while they study or in the event of provider, campus or course closure;
3. Able to progress into employment or further study, and qualifications hold their value over time;
4. Receive value for money.

OfS will become the regulation body in place of HEFCE from 1 April 2018. The College will need to apply for registration by 23 May 2018 with a decision anticipated mid-September 2018. The College will also apply for the approved fee cap regulation enabling the College to maximise student fees. The College's prospectus should be published 'subject to regulation'.

ACTION: VICE PRINCIPAL

There will be a post registration requirement to monitor key indicators and deliver live data throughout the year. The College needs to identify the body to submit data to as a mixed economy college and will follow OfS guidance. GuildHE and AoC have provided briefings on the requirements from OfS.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

Details of lead indicators were outlined which Governors will need to monitor. The Committee suggested asking the Chair of Governors to establish a small working group, potentially the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Chairs, to identify the impact in each area.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL/CLERK

The draft application will be shared with the Chair of the Corporation and Chair of the AQ&S Committee.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

Dissemination to staff was raised which would be via HEMT. It would be timely to factor costs into the 2019/20 budget. The Finance Director had presented a first draft budget to the F&GP Committee which was being amended for presentation to the Board in April. It would be prudent to allocate a contingency in the budget to support academic systems, staffing and consultancy for the new regulatory system.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the presentation on OfS and significant work required to prepare the application and embed

18. Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Scholarship Development Manager presented the report explaining that the student engagement project and broadening 'freedom spaces' had been developed following evidence from the NSS survey and internal survey. These also linked to the TEF action plan.

Re-Fabricate initiative is a teaching and research project piloted by the College as a 4 hour workshop. It is collaborative with c60 students, staff and external participants. Feedback has been very positive. Alternative less labour intensive delivery models were suggested such as a one day event for larger audiences, shorter sessions and incorporate in assignments.

Practices provide a useful base for the next TEF submission. A Governor asked if the College was likely to be graded a silver based on the TEF metrics at re-assessment which was anticipated.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the TEF update report
- The TEF metrics would be presented at the next Committee

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

19. HE Scholarship Project

The Scholarship Development Manager outlined the report specifically core activities including workshops, seminars, student engagement and scholarly spaces. Outputs evidenced the project had been successful and positive for the College. The Scholarship Development Manager post was funded by the Scholarship Project and it was anticipated that the College will continue to fund a similar role which would include delivery of TEF priorities.

Employability research on recent graduate outcomes had a positive response. The Scholarship Development Manager is working on learning gain by mapping technical skills, cognitive abilities and soft skills which is being triangulated with tutors.

The Committee agreed: -

- To thank the Scholarship Development Manager for preparing an informative report

20. UWTSD mid-session Exam Board 21 February 2018

A confidential minute was recorded

21. HE Curriculum Development

A confidential minute was recorded

22. Identification of Key Risks

- I. Introduction of OfS and submission of application
- II. HE enrolments
- III. HE leadership and transition following the retirement of the Vice Principal
- IV. TEF

23. Any Other Business