

Minutes of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (FE)
held remotely on Monday 29 June 2020

- Present:** Mr John Nicol (Chair)
Mrs Kate Murrie
Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Ms Katie Seekings
Miss Hannah Jones (Student Governor)
- In attendance:** Mr Ben Gamble (Head of Further Education)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)

The meeting was quorate as five Members were present.

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the last meeting: 26 November 2019

It was agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes as a true record. There were no matters arising.

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

4. Quality Assurance

- I. Overall retention for 2019/20 was 96% evidencing a closing of the gap between 16-18 and 19+ retention. There was a minor downturn in achievement affected by 3 students out of 40; specific reasons had been provided in the report anonymously. Governors agreed year-end retention was good.
- II. Applications for 2020/21 have increased by 28% this year. There is a significant increase in Digital Futures and Level 3 Art and Design. A Governor asked reasons for the increase which could be driven by schools' liaison with years 9-11. Acceptances are 11% better than last year although there is a decrease in applications for Foundation Art and Design. Traditionally some applicants make late applications to the Foundation programme after A Level results have been published. The impact of COVID-19 on acceptances was an unknown factor. Registry will contact applicants next week.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report, key issues and supporting statistics

5. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

FE and Foundation students completed their studies last week. During the lockdown all programmes moved to online learning delivered using MS Teams. Art and Design programmes became project based. Performing Arts have been communicating regularly with students and provided activities including morning exercise and bootcamp.

The College followed Government guidance and extended opening to first year students from 15 June with c45% of students choosing to attend College. There was a focus on progression activities for HE.

The Head of FE outlined the robust process to set grades for students following the COVID-19 pandemic. An explanation was provided how 'trajectory' grades have been awarded to students towards final qualifications. Quantitative and qualitative information was used to evaluate data; including attendance, previous grades, progression and attitude towards work, building knowledge, student skills set and timelines of submission of work. Additional needs and extenuating circumstances were also taken into account. All grades and feedback from students was submitted to the exam boards. A summary of the grade profile for UAL programmes was outlined by distinction, merit, pass and fail with benchmarks and explanations. DfE will release UAL results to students on 12 August.

The same process was used to calculate GCSE English and Maths results which would be moderated externally. Results will be realised to students on 20 August. English compared similarly to last year with a marginal improvement in maths. The groups were more differentiated this year. There is a different dynamic as teachers have set grades based on progress, work ethic, attendance, mock exams, ranking and subject to quality assurance. The decision on final grades remains with the examination board who could change grades based on teacher assessments. It is possible that students could challenge results and may require support if they are unhappy with their grades. This was likely to be a national issue.

There was discussion about the potential impact the lockdown could have on 2nd year students concluding that they could be less risk taking in their work and behaviour. Current 1st year students will not have completed a final year project and exhibition. The format of GCSEs could change next year which could impact on how students do their work and become less risk averse. Students could require wellbeing support following lockdown. Students with a trajectory grade 3 in English and Maths will need to complete GCSE courses with a potential shortfall in learning since lockdown in March meaning the curriculum will have to be tailored. The Additional Learning Support (ALS) team have converted some teaching into digital resources for students, such as report and essay writing. Students will be provided with course reading material in the summer to support their learning.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report on teaching and learning during COVID-19 lockdown, process to set grades and predicted outcomes

6. Identification of Key Risks

- I. Challenge and potential enquiries by parents or students into grades awarded as a result of COVID-19.
- II. Challenge of transition for students to make up for lost learning skills as a result of COVID-19.
- III. Digital curriculum recruitment and delivery
- IV. Art and Design Level 1 and 2 which is a small team and new way of working
- V. GCSE maths
- VI. Ofsted EIF

7. Any other business

- I. Governors commended staff on their hard work and actions taken to ensure teaching and learning continued during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- II. The Student Governor commented that there had been positive feedback from students on the College's response to the lockdown. Governors reiterated appreciation to SLT, staff and students for their

contribution agreeing that it would be timely to send an email to staff and students from Governors. **ACTION: CLERK TO GOVERNORS/CHAIR**

Minutes of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee
(HE and FE Combined Meeting)
held remotely on Monday 29 June 2020

Present: Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Mrs Kate Murrie
Mr Tim Newsholme
Mr John Nicol
Mr Mike Rookes (Chair of the meeting)
Ms Katie Seekings
Miss Hannah Jones (Student Governor FE)

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

The meeting was quorate as seven Members were present.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Jenny Hodgeman (Student Governor HE).

2. Minutes of the last meeting

It was agreed that Mike Rookes, as chair of the meeting, should sign the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2019 as a true record.

Matters arising

The Head of FE explained that it was difficult to report the specific number of actual students flagged with safeguarding issues using MyConcern. Governors agreed the Self Assessment Report would address this annually by reporting the number of students who have achieved successfully who were identified with safeguarding issues.

The safeguarding policy had been approved including a more recent appendix to the policy following the COVID-19 pandemic. All staff have signed up to the policy.

HE students have been provided with guidance and encouraged to register with a GP and to vote. This process has been embedded into students' annual induction.

The AQ&S HE Committee had discussed the complaints policy at the previous meeting. A report on complaints is provided annually in November.

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

3. Prevent Self Assessment

The Head of FE presented the prevent risk assessment and action plan which were RAG rated. There was discussion about areas requiring further action. The College has areas for students to use for prayer; however, these have not been signposted clearly; these will be signposted and bookable from September. Promoting British Values is incorporated in the curriculum which will also be added to the behaviour and disciplinary policy and made more explicit throughout the College. Staff training

is good; however, more direct training will be provided.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the prevent self assessment

4. Teaching and Learning Cross-College Working Group

The Head of HE and Head of FE have been working with the group building collaborative working in teaching and learning. Examples include pedagogies and wider teaching and learning. A moderation framework is being developed to stretch the teaching and learning observation process. This will also focus on Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (EIF) to build excellent teaching. The teaching and learning process will be piloted for HE at the start of term.

A Governor asked if lessons had been observed during lockdown. Online peer appraisals had been conducted in Performing Arts. Teaching in Art and Design has been less formal and therefore difficult to observe.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note progress of the Teaching and Learning Cross-College Working Group

5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (including Access and Participation)

The Principal reminded Governors that OfS had required a 5-year Access and Participation Plan (APP) to ensure the higher education experience and outcomes for under-represented groups of students is improved.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group has been established with its first meeting convened last week focusing on how the group will work and its role. This dovetails into the APP and is paramount to ensure it is embedded throughout the whole College. Membership will include staff and student representation.

The Principal's presentation to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group was shared which outlined its purpose and the aims of the APP to ensure inclusivity, diversity and support for students to achieve successful outcomes.

Discussion progressed to key messages to change thinking on racist behaviour and use of inappropriate language. There was a comment that group communications to students are often more effective than emails. Timetables will permit additional face to face communication throughout the year. There was a suggestion to include an address to freshers on the College's policy of zero tolerance to discrimination. The Principal would invite staff and students to comment on the Student Charter and work with the Student Union and Student Council. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

A Governor asked if restorative justice was used to address issues. It was confirmed that this is embedded in the Disciplinary Policy. There was a suggestion to deliver training sessions about prejudice language and acceptability linked to an Art College and how this is expressed. The Principal confirmed that staff development will include equality and diversity at the end of term. A student exhibition on culture is also being arranged.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report on measures to embed equality and diversity noting that there is appetite from staff and student bodies to engage

6. Student Disciplinary Policy

A summary of the revised policy would be circulated for approval once legal advice had been obtained. This would cover behaviour expectations, managing expectations and disciplinary action. The student charter and code of conduct have been merged incorporating expectations from students. The disciplinary process

has several stages which can be escalated to a higher stage depending on the disciplinary issue. A Governor asked how many times the policy could be used for a student; support and challenge meetings would be arranged with an option for stages to be de-escalated. The importance of management supporting staff and consistent application of the policy was highlighted and accepted. Overall it was agreed that the policy offers flexibility. There was a hypothetical question asking if there was an incident of bullying was there capacity for the College to take action whilst protecting the student being bullied. Where possible this would be taken into account; however, it is not always possible to act in the best interests of all students. Colleges are not required to report racist behaviour to local authorities but any incident would be logged on MyConcern and would be viewed by Ofsted.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the summary Student Disciplinary Policy agreeing that the revised policy would be sent to the Committee for approval **ACTION: HEAD OF FE**

7. Draft minutes of the Academic Board

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2020

8. Annual items for Committee

The Committee agreed: -

- To appoint Katie Seekings and John Nicol as Chair of AQ&S HE and FE Committee respectively
- The Committee effectively met its terms of reference
- No changes were proposed to the terms of reference

9. Any other business

No items.

10. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Tuesday 24 November 2020 with the HE: 2.00 pm, combined meeting: 3.30 pm and HE: 4.00 pm.

Minutes of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (HE)
held remotely on Monday 29 June 2020

Present: Mr Mike Rookes (Chair)
Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Mr Tim Newsholme
Ms Katie Seekings
Miss Hannah Jones

In attendance: Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)
Mr Justin Gregory (Head of Higher Education)

The meeting was quorate as five Members were present

1. **Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Mrs Jenny Hodgeman.

2. **Declaration of Interests**
There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting: 26 November 2019**
It was agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes as a true record.

Matters arising would be covered on the agenda with the exception of issues relating to communication and feedback to students. SLT are working closely with the Student Council which has improved communication. The Head of HE commented that these are focused meetings with invaluable comments from students.

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting

4. **Recruitment and Enrolment**
Overall full-time retention for 2019/20 was 95% against a 3-year average of 90%. There was a marginal decrease in Level 6 retention. Governors agreed that overall retention was good.

To date 328 FTE applications are predicted with 99 firm acceptances to date against a budget of 104. There was discussion about applications by course noting that Film Making will not be offered this year based on applications; this could be a progression route for FE Digital Futures next year. A Governor raised The Courtyard with a suggestion to develop this relationship further. Applications to Jewellery and Textile Design are similar to competitors in the sector. The Textile Design course is being rebranded to include its industrial design elements. There was another suggestion to ensure career and employability outcomes are publicised.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the report and statistics

5. Office for Students (OfS) and regulatory matters

- I. The Head of HE updated Governors on papers prepared for March 2020 meeting giving a presentation on graduate outcomes data. Data is weighted by TEF and it is important that the College contextualise its data. The trajectory of graduate careers and descriptions of their work would be provided; there have been high response rates from graduates. Governors were reminded that OfS had identified data on graduate outcome progression as an area for the College to improve. Launchgrad will be administered by the administration team in future releasing the Manager to be assigned to teaching and learning in the short term.
- II. UWTSD's partnership review's memorandum of agreement had been extended until December due to COVID-19.
- III. Compliance to Consumer Markets Authority (CMA) had been enhanced by COVID-19. It is crucial that the College accurately articulates course content, structure, fees and costs; these are sent to applicants with offers. This information is also accessible on the website. The mode of study is being described taking COVID-19 into account. This includes pre-course and on course information along with potential changes. To ensure effective communication, several tools will be used including the website and the Student Council. It was acknowledged that the student experience will be different following COVID-19. Guidance will be provided to staff to ensure CMA guidelines are met.

OfS have issued additional guidance to institutions in response to COVID-19. Colleges are required to communicate curriculum delivery plans for 2020/21. The College has published scenarios on the website which have also been issued to applicants. The College is planning on campus course delivery with access to workshops but will retain some online teaching. The College has a response plan in the event that there is another lockdown. It had also been acknowledged that some students may be shielding or not want to come to campus with options provided to deliver programmes without the campus experience.

The Committee agreed:

- To note progress to date to ensure the College meets OfS and regulatory requirements

6. Quality Improvement

- I. Assessment and achievement for Level 4 and 5, and Level 6 programmes in 2020 was provided taking account the impact of COVID-19. There are a high proportion of practical assessments on programmes. The College loaned students equipment during lockdown to support them to complete practical work at home. UWTSD have established extra-ordinary regulations, including extensions to course deadlines, to allow additional time for submission of work. The Level 6 deadline is in September with an option of early submission. It is anticipated that workshops will be open during August with a protocol agreed to ensure timescales and social distancing is achieved. 12 days provision at the forges has been agreed with HLNSC for blacksmithing students. To date, it has been agreed that students must submit work or their work to date will be assessed. There is a potential risk if localised lockdown is required in the future.

A Governor asked if contingency plans are in place which was confirmed. MS Teams has been used effectively with staff and students having embraced digital teaching and learning positively. Student wellbeing is also being supported throughout lockdown. Some students had found it

difficult to engage in learning even with support, whereas others became more focused and engaged with less distraction. Peer to peer communication provides alternative support and benefits. A breakdown of Teams communications between staff and students showed high usage. Graphs showing usage outside of lockdown were also requested. **ACTION: HEAD OF HE.**

A Governor asked about student morale. The Student Union are working to ensure communication and social interaction continues during lockdown. This included bar nights and a big drawing group in an attempt to keep morale high. Activities will also be arranged for student transition next year including hosting question and answer events. The Student Union were commended for their hard work to support students.

- II. A summary of HE development for 2020/21, including revalidation of courses and progress of consultation following staff and student workshops, was noted. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and graduate outcomes' workshops are also being used to design the curriculum. The strategy will be used to underpin the student experience. The College is working to complete these by the end of September for submission to UWTSD in December. MA Photography and MA Curating will be offered this year. There will be a single MA specification with programme specifications developed for each MA within this structure. There was a question if these have been tested with confirmation that these have been tested with graduates and students. A creative PGCE is being developed as several students want to progress to teaching. It was recognised that the employment situation following COVID-19 could cause growth in MA applications.
- III. The OIA annual statement was presented. In future the Committee would receive reports showing key themes of complaints.
- IV. The Complaints Policy had been updated last year. Subsequently the policy would be reviewed to offer the option of an investigation by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. Legal advice will be sought on the policy before requesting final approval. Senior and middle managers would undergo training on investigating and managing formal complaints. It is intended to make the policy an unthreatening process and use complaints to improve the student experience.
- V. The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) had not provided updates on the subject pilot. TEF have changed their processes to use benchmark data in addition to the institution's NSS results and graduate outcomes data. The College will focus on value added, constant internal improvements and driving its quality structures.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the quality reports and progress

7. Identification of Key Risks

- I. COVID-19 creates wide uncertainty to recruitment and working methods causing unpredictable changes which absorb staff time
- II. Student recruitment
- III. CMA (due to COVID-19) and specifying offer to students
- IV. TEF

8. Any Other Business

There were no items.

