

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 28th February 2024 at 4.30 pm in Skills Park and via MS Teams

Present: Angela Cross-Durrant (Chair), Julie Kapsalis (CEO/Principal), Rory Boggett, Nadine Guy, Charley Johnson, Slavina Kalendzhieva, Katie King, Amie Lovell, Lynn Reddick, Nick Vaughan-Barratt.

In Attendance: Andy Cowan (Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality, Nicki Adams (Assistant Principal Quality & Innovation, Lisa Moynihan (Assistant Principal Learning Support & Learner Experience), Susanne Wicks (Head of Governance).

1	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies for absence were received from Giuliana Pieri and Rory Boggett.
2	Declarations of Interest
	The CEO/Principal declared that she is an unremunerated Director of Nescot Enterprises Ltd. (NEL).
3	Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising
a	The Committee approved the minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting held on 15 th November 2023.
b	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>T Levels</u>: The Deputy Principal updated the Committee on the introduction of T Levels, which will start with Animal Care from September 2024, a year before the mandatory introduction date. He described the challenge in recruiting applicants for Digital and Electro-Technical courses and Construction.</p> <p><u>Access to Student Data</u>: The Committee discussed the issue that was raised after the previous meeting, about staff access to learner data. It was acknowledged that Nescot's approach is common across the sector, but the Committee agreed that efforts should continue to ensure data security and appropriate management of access. The Deputy Principal pointed out the benefits of staff being able to access students' information, including the ability to add or access information about a student they might not teach, which could relate to their behaviour or wellbeing. However, he reassured the Committee that sensitive information, such as safeguarding, is not available to all staff.</p> <p><u>Learning Walks</u>: The Deputy Principal described the purpose and format of lesson visits, otherwise referred to as learning walks.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Information</u>: The Deputy Principal updated the Committee on the sharing of student safeguarding information from their schools to Nescot. He confirmed that the process of sharing the files has improved, and is carried out electronically as far as possible, which mitigates the risks to data security.</p>

	<p><u>Media Students</u>: NVB confirmed that he worked with some Year 3 Film and TV Students and suggested that they may benefit from greater exposure to teachers with experience of working in the industry. With regard to exposure to workplace skills for teachers, The Deputy Principal advised that he met recently with Georgina Angele, Surrey's Strategic Careers Hub Lead, and heard about plans to launch a Teacher Placement Careers Day Programme. She has asked Nescot to nominate five teachers to participate, through which they will spend two half-days on placement in a Game or Cyber company.</p>
4	Committee Update
	<p>The Chair explained emerging plans to include oversight of Nestots in this Committee's terms of reference, and advised further information and a report would be presented to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chair asked how the quality of the 14-16 provision is scrutinised and the Deputy Principal reassured Governors that it is closely monitored. He reported on the action taken since the Ofsted inspection in 2023, which included a review by a consultant and recruitment of a new Head of Centre who has had a very positive impact.</p> <p>Action: Head of Governance to include Nestots in the revised terms of reference for 2024-25, to be presented to the June meeting.</p>
5	Safeguarding Update
	<p>The Assistant Principal (Learning Support and Learner Experience) presented her report which was circulated prior to the meeting, and welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the temporary Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing will continue to work at Nescot for a further seven weeks, to support and mentor the newly appointed Head as she settles into her new role. The Assistant Principal described her extensive experience and the positive impact she has already made, including RAG rating cases on CPOMS (the safeguarding software used across the College).</p> <p>The Deputy Principal confirmed that he, the Assistant Principal and the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team continue to meet weekly to review all cases which are rated Red. He reminded the Committee of the spike in numbers of safeguarding cases in the autumn term, and reported that numbers have started to decline as cases are closed. The increased number was anticipated, so appropriate action was taken earlier.</p> <p>The CEO/Principal confirmed that the Safeguarding Governor is the Chair, Chris Muller, and reassured the Committee that she notifies him as soon as possible if any urgent or serious safeguarding matter arises.</p>
6	Student Voice Update
	<p>The Assistant Principal (Learning Support and Learner Experience) presented her report which was circulated prior to the meeting, and welcomed comments and questions.</p>

	<p>The Chair welcomed the inclusion of data and graphs from previous years, which enables Governors to identify and monitor trends.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal pointed out that both the Main College and Foundation student induction survey outcomes have highlighted issues relating to administrative issues, such as timetable changes, and advised that she and the Deputy Principal are developing a six-week induction programme, to be introduced in 2024-25, to ensure that students are aware of all aspects of College life, including the complaints policy, accessing pre-course information and producing clear and timely timetables.</p> <p>NVB acknowledged that some issues were identified through the surveys which need to be addressed, but welcomed the positive responses on the key areas.</p> <p>LR suggested that some services may benefit from being separated within questions. For example, <i>“I received advice to do with finance and learning support”</i>. The Deputy Principal agreed that the questions should be reviewed to ensure they are clear and explicit, and that some students may benefit from assistance when completing the survey. For example, when asked if they feel safe at College, some Foundation learners’ views may differ depending on the environment they are in.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that it may be helpful to ask second year students to complete a year-two induction survey with appropriate second year questions.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal advised that a Careers consultant has been engaged, funded by the LSIF, and will start next week. They will contact the students seeking specific careers advice, a list of whom has been compiled. In addition, Careers and Work Experience Champions will be working within curriculum areas as they know the students and employers well. LR asked if any staff member is trained to Level 6 in Careers Guidance and the Assistant Principal confirmed that the Head of Admissions and School Liaison is, and one of the School Liaison Officers will be undertaking the Level 6 programme. She acknowledged the need to recruit permanently into the role, although pointed out that this is a challenge, not only in the Education sector. The CEO/Principal added that CLT recognise the risks in this area, and although a temporary solution in place, there are plans to continue on a positive trajectory, including working closely with the Surrey Careers Hub.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Higher Education Matters</p>
	<p>The Assistant Principal (Quality and Innovation) presented her report which was circulated prior to the meeting, and welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the conditions set by the Open University following the Partnership Review and Admin Audit have a deadline and the Assistant Principal confirmed that the conditions must be met by the end of April 2024.</p> <p>With regard to student engagement, the Assistant Principal set out plans to work with the Assistant Principal (Learning Support and Learner</p>

	<p>Engagement) to develop more congruence between the student induction surveys available to various cohorts, to pick up particularly on any issues relating to EDI and student welfare.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal reminded the Committee that she would be leading the Governor briefing session on 6th March, focussing on the Access & Participation Plan and Equality Risk Register.</p> <p>Referring to the QIAP appended to the report, the Chair noted that many milestones are due to be achieved in March 2024, and the Assistant Principal undertook to update on progress at the summer term meeting.</p> <p>Action: Assistant Principal (Quality and Innovation) to present an updated QIAP to the June meeting of this Committee.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>SAR and QIP</p>
<p>a</p>	<p><u>SAR</u></p> <p>The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality presented the 2022-23 SAR and stated his intention for this document to be presented to this Committee in the autumn term on an annual basis. He advised that the SAR was informed by Heads of Curriculum (HoCs) and their feedback and data, much of which has been collated manually, which is very time-consuming. The Deputy Principal confirmed that discussions are underway with the Head of MIS to develop systems to enable colleagues to access data more efficiently in future.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal (Quality and Innovation) added that many of the HoCs who have contributed to the SAR were newly appointed so were not familiar with the self-assessment process. This year, they are all participating in quality review and standardisation as part of the quality matrix, and have started to make predictions around key judgements and student achievement, which will be discussed as part of the next RIF cycle. The practice adopted this year will enable HoCs to produce more data-driven statements alongside quantitative statements, and they will be supported to develop their use of evaluative language.</p> <p>NVB welcomed a shorter version of the SAR, but suggested that it could be even shorter through simplifying some of the wording. The Deputy Principal confirmed that as qualifying data becomes more readily available, the SAR is likely to become shorter. The Chair suggested that colleagues be encouraged to use bullet points and that it might be useful to include the College's Strategic Objectives in the SAR.</p> <p>LR asked why some, but not all areas include an 'evidence' column alongside 'key strengths' and 'key areas for improvement'. The Deputy Principal advised that each section used the information available to them, and data and evidence will be included as it becomes available. The Committee agreed that data and evidence would be helpful for all areas.</p>

b	<p><u>QIP</u></p> <p>The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality presented the QIP and welcomed comments and questions. He advised that the QIP has been simplified to focus on objectives and actions, with the aim of developing the curriculum, outcomes and high-quality teaching and learning. The Assistant Principal (Quality and Innovation) referred to the feedback from NVB about the SAR and added that the actions will be distilled into a prioritised set of objectives.</p> <p>The Chair sought colleagues' views on which issues were likely to roll over to the next academic year and the Deputy Principal replied that any quantifiable objective not achieved would continue to next year. However, as this is part of a process of continuous improvement, the Committee may have a view on which objectives they see as higher risk and which merit further monitoring next year. The Chair suggested that it would be useful for the Committee to receive information on trends which would inform their thinking, and demonstrate a journey of improvement, enabling staff and Governors to see where on the journey the College is. The Deputy Principal advised that this will be achieved via the development of a data dashboard which will make information easily accessible.</p> <p>NVB asked if staff are asked to produce more data each year, and the Deputy Principal outlined his plan for all data to be readily available, rather than asking staff to collate it manually, which should reduce their workload.</p>
7	16-18 Student Attendance and Withdrawals
	<p>The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality presented the report and welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal highlighted that the learners who stay in college achieve well, and the number of withdrawals is one of the key factors impacting on the overall achievement rate. He described the focus on retention this year which should result in an improvement of around 30% on last year. NG asked why students withdraw and the Deputy Principal explained that there are many reasons, but last year it was largely due to anxiety.</p> <p>The Committee noted that student rates of attendance reflect the national picture, and the Deputy Principal advised that students often re-engage after a period of non-attendance. The Assistant Principal (Quality and Innovation) added that the attendance is a key indicator of risk, and students for whom attendance is an issue are RAG rated and monitored by HoCs. NG asked what strategies are in place to mitigate absence during exam periods and the Deputy Principal replied that intervention is offered early in the year, including small group tuition sessions for English and Maths, alongside more subject-specific actions. The Assistant Principal also described the trauma-informed practice undertaken in the 14-16 provision which is a good model for positive reinforcement, and which will be rolled out across the College.</p>

	JW asked about the impact of student withdrawals on income and the Deputy Principal confirmed that for Adult Learners and Apprentices, there is an impact, but for the 16-19 cohort there is not, although poor attendance among the latter will have an effect on overall achievement rates.				
8	Equality and Diversity Update				
	<p>The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality summarised the updates with regard to EDI and welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>Governors noted that Nescot will participate in the consultation on the Government’s guidance on gender questioning children, which the Assistant Principal (Learner Support and Learning Experience) will collate, including the feedback from focus groups. Generally, the FE sector is not wholly supportive of some of the recommendations in the report.</p> <p>The Chair relayed a comment from Giuliana Pieri, who was not able to attend the meeting, regarding difficulty in recruiting staff with particular interest in EDI. The Deputy Principal undertook to pass it on to HR colleagues.</p> <p>Governors received the updated EDI Policy and questioned if they do fulfil the responsibility set out in the report: “<i>Governors have a significant role in creating and maintaining an inclusive organisation where all can work, learn and reach their full potential</i>”. It was agreed that the Chair would raise this at the next Corporation meeting.</p> <p>Action: ACD to suggest that the Corporation appoint an EDI Governor at the meeting on 22nd March.</p> <p>NG asked if the College Leadership Team reflects the diversity of the student body and the Deputy Principal acknowledged that this has been recognised as an area for improvement. The CEO/Principal confirmed the need to take action and better manage talent, and to ensure that all possible routes are explored to increase diversity among staff. She welcomed the appointment of an EDI governor to challenge and support senior colleagues in this area.</p>				
11	Any Other Business				
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>a</td> <td>Having attended the IoT launch earlier in the day, NVB commended the contribution of the students involved who were the stars of the show.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b</td> <td>The Chair advised that NG would be resigning from the Corporation as she and her family plan to relocate in the summer. The Committee expressed their regret that NG would be leaving but wished her well for the future.</td> </tr> </table>	a	Having attended the IoT launch earlier in the day, NVB commended the contribution of the students involved who were the stars of the show.	b	The Chair advised that NG would be resigning from the Corporation as she and her family plan to relocate in the summer. The Committee expressed their regret that NG would be leaving but wished her well for the future.
a	Having attended the IoT launch earlier in the day, NVB commended the contribution of the students involved who were the stars of the show.				
b	The Chair advised that NG would be resigning from the Corporation as she and her family plan to relocate in the summer. The Committee expressed their regret that NG would be leaving but wished her well for the future.				
12	Date and Time of the Next Meeting				
	Wednesday 5 th June 2024 at 4.30 pm				

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm



Decisions:

The Committee approved:

- The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2024.

Actions

- Head of Governance to include Nestots in the revised terms of reference for 2024-25, to be presented to the June meeting.
- Assistant Principal (Quality and Innovation) to present an updated QIAP to the June meeting of this Committee.
- ACD to suggest that the Corporation appoint an EDI Governor at the meeting on 22nd March.