

Agreed Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 24th February 2021 at 6.00pm via MS Teams

Present: Chris Muller (Chair), Lynn Reddick, Vince Romagnuolo, Nick Vaughan-Barrett, Frances Rutter (Principal)

In Attendance: Cliff Shaw (Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality), Nicki Adams (Director of HE), Dario Stevens (Vice Principal Planning & Information), Mohan Chana (Director of Strategic Partnerships) (in attendance from 7.00pm), Jamie Roberts (Staff Governor), Sandra Dessent (Clerk to the Governing Body)

13.20	1.0 Apologies for Absence												
	Apologies for absence were received from Ahmed Almeleh – HE Student Governor												
14.20	2.0 Declarations of Interest												
	<u>Mrs Frances Rutter</u> : unremunerated Director of NESCOT Enterprises Ltd, North East Surrey College of Technology Trust, NESCOT Holdings Ltd and Epsom Downs Business Centre Ltd												
15.20	3.0 Minutes of the Meeting and actions arising from meeting held on 4th November 2020												
	<p>The minutes of the meeting of the 4th November 2020 were agreed and will be signed and it was agreed they would be signed electronically by the Chair.</p> <p>The matters arising from the previous meeting were:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Review the format for reporting Equality & Diversity targets</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work in progress – see minute 22.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Update Governors on the implementation of new initiatives to support work experience placements</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work in progress – see minute 16.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Report the outcome of Google Classroom trials</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Report outcome of apprenticeship review meetings</td> </tr> <tr> <td>See minute 23.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Clerk to undertake Committee self-evaluation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>To be reported at next meeting 16th June</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9e1f2;">Formation of HE sub-committee to be investigated by the Clerk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Completed – agreed at Corporation December 2020 and first meeting to be held on Monday 7th June 2021.</td> </tr> </table>	Review the format for reporting Equality & Diversity targets	Work in progress – see minute 22.20	Update Governors on the implementation of new initiatives to support work experience placements	Work in progress – see minute 16.20	Report the outcome of Google Classroom trials	Completed	Report outcome of apprenticeship review meetings	See minute 23.20	Clerk to undertake Committee self-evaluation	To be reported at next meeting 16 th June	Formation of HE sub-committee to be investigated by the Clerk	Completed – agreed at Corporation December 2020 and first meeting to be held on Monday 7 th June 2021.
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16.20	4.0 Curriculum & Quality KPIs (January 2021)
	<p>The Vice Principal shared the updated KPIs and summary report and the headline points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance for the academic year to date: FE 86.9%, HE 89.7% • Attendance for English & Maths had improved since he last report to 65% and 64% respectively. • FE retention rates remained high at 98% but students not returning after the Christmas break may be reflected in the figure for the next report • HE Retention had declined slightly to 94%, mainly due to financial/personal reasons. • Undergraduate continuation rates were 70% and below the national average of 86%. It was noted that actions were in place to address the issues. • It was unlikely that work-experience targets would be achieved due to COVID-19 restrictions, however staff were working to explore alternatives and ensure that all students had some form of work-related activities in the year. • Whilst great efforts were being made, Apprenticeship achievement rates continued to be affected by COVID-19. <p>The Committee was assured that the College could demonstrate that an extensive range of career activities were being offered to students in order to mitigate the risk of under graduates and apprentices under achieving.</p> <p><u>Focus Paper – Student Destinations</u></p> <p>The Vice Principal presented a paper on student destinations following a survey carried out by J2Research who had collected data on the destinations of FE, HE and Apprenticeship students. The responses were summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time FE Students: 1,238 completers, 85% of destinations were obtained. • Part Time FE Students: 207 completers, 72% of destinations were obtained • HE Students: 500 completers 72% destinations were obtained • Apprentices: 106 completers, 61% destinations were obtained. <p>It was noted that the data had been presented to the Senior Management team and Department Heads with the aim of encouraging teaching staff to help students review their progress in moving towards their chosen career by highlighting relevant transferable skills that they had developed.</p> <p>The data was also shared with the Careers, Information, Advice & Guidance (CEIAG) Working Group.</p>
17.20	5.0 HE Reports
	<u>5.1 Update Reports</u>

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	<p>The Director of HE presented a report updating the Committee on the quality of the HE courses provision and the progress made to address matters highlighted in the HE Quality Improvement Action Plan (QIAP).</p> <p>The responses from the Induction Survey were discussed and the increasingly positive results (the overall satisfaction rate was 91%). It was questioned that the high scores seemed to be unrealistic considering the tough circumstances for students during the pandemic. The Committee was assured that the data was collected and analysed by an independent agency and the students were not coached by College staff. They had one request to complete the survey and one reminder.</p> <p>The Principal updated the Committee on the situation regarding the intention for the College to gradually move away from University to Open University validation. To that end the Principal confirmed that it had been agreed with Kingston University that their contract to validate for NESCOLT would be terminated. However, in the interests of students it was agreed that existing learners and those already signed up to start in September would still be examined by Kingston, with the exception of Care and Early Years courses. It was emphasised that Open University were satisfied with the new agreement and looking forward to working with the College.</p> <p><u>5.2 Overview of Partnership Performance</u></p> <p>The Director of Partnerships gave a verbal update on the HE partnership performance and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 out of a target of 60 learners had been recruited for the weekend BA course. • ASTML Oldham: HE achievement targets were expected to be in line with 2019/20 and the AMR/external verifiers visits was imminent. • All the new satellites were performing according to targets and the BA Top up Honours route was being promoted. • Direct delivery partners ABA had approximately 200 level 5 students and to date there had not been any withdrawals. All students were on track to complete and it was expected that a large number of students would progress to degree level. • The Director of Partnerships had been carrying out Vivas, randomly selected from level 4/5 students in the current cohort. The questions were based around their research skills and the learnings from the companies they had researched. Due to the pandemic restrictions, they were carried out remotely by two members of staff but would return to face-to-face when circumstances allowed.
18.20	6.0 English & Maths

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	<p>The Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) shared the updated action plan (<i>which had been omitted with the agenda papers and was circulated after the meeting</i>) and the following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main achievement risk and improvement work continued to be around 16-18 functional skills, and staff were awaiting confirmation on whether students would be tested or if calculated grades would be used for final outcomes. If testing was required it would present a significant risk due to the limited amount of on-site time that would be available post-lockdown. • Attendance for English and Maths sessions continued to be on the low side however there were signs of recovery and identifiable risks were being addressed. • Positive results were recorded for the November GCSE resits with Maths 4% above national average and English 10% above national average. • The continuing work with Century Tech was going well aimed at improving the digital skills and competencies of both staff and students. It was agreed to arrange for Governors to take part and experience a Century Tech session. • A mock testing programme had been set up to be carried out before Easter. <p>The Chair congratulated the Deputy Principal and his team for a report that evidenced good progress had been made in difficult circumstances.</p>
<p>19.20</p>	<p>7.0 CEIAG Strategy - Progress Update</p>
	<p>The Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy had been launched in December 2018 and the Vice Principal presented a review of the strategy with the main aim being to 'Develop a life-long careers curiosity' for students. It was reported that the pandemic had limited the ability to make progress in 2020 especially in the areas of maximising encounters with employers and creating opportunities for students to experience the workplace.</p> <p>It was emphasised that for the strategy to be a success it would require a whole college commitment so that all staff in the College recognised their part in facilitating the careers development of students. Progress was tracked and reported through the Committee and monthly CIAEG working group meeting.</p> <p>Having reviewed the strategy document it was commented that it had a thorough and well thought out approach, however it was suggested that it could be condensed to encourage more engagement and facilitate its impact with the diverse number of people who would be inspired to commit to the strategy. It was agreed that a one-page summary would be</p>

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	<p>produced that highlighted the key points and the detailed strategy document would serve as an accompanying action plan.</p> <p>It was agreed that interview practice was an important part of the guidance process and to that end the Chair who had extensive interview experience offered to take part in mock interviews with students, which was gratefully accepted.</p>
20.20	8.0 Quality Improvement Plan
	<p>The Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) shared the updated QIP and highlighted the following issues that had been RAG rated amber:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Apprenticeships</u>: The situation was improving, and it was reported that the achievement level to date for 2020/21 is already at the same level as was achieved overall in 2019/20. 168 results were still outstanding, and it was evident that there was a positive upward trend despite the difficult circumstances created by the pandemic. • <u>Project Base Learning</u>: Some training had taken place for this style of teaching, the aim of which was to produce a dynamic, student centred teaching environment, however it was acknowledged that the training needed to be intensified so that it could be further embedded into the teaching ethos. • <u>English & Maths</u>: It was recognised that attendance rates were too low, but there was confidence that attendance would improve when students were back on site. • <u>Equality & Diversity</u>: Achievement rates of females compared to male apprentices and BAME versus white apprentices were highlighted and assurances given that actions were in place to mitigate the differences. <p>It was acknowledged that small group funding was going to assist in providing the support needed to help the identified groups to achieve.</p>
21.20	9.0 Safeguarding update
	<p>The Deputy Principal presented an update and informed the Committee that there were currently 6 red cases which were all mental health related.</p> <p>Literature for students regarding the latest internet safety guidance was shared.</p> <p>The Committee was advised that NESCOT were the Surrey representative on the new PREVENT network.</p> <p>No bullying incidents had been reported since the last meeting (including cyber bullying).</p>
22.20	10.0 Equality & Diversity

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	<p>The Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) reported that following a review by an external consultant, minor amendments had been made to the Equality & Diversity policy which had been approved by the Equality & Diversity Working group. The Committee was advised that the Policy would be circulated for approval at the next Curriculum & Quality meeting in May and subject to agreement would be recommended to the Corporation in July.</p> <p>It was noted that although elements of Equality & Diversity were reported through the QIP a formalised reporting process was being developed for reporting through the Curriculum & Quality Committee to the Corporation.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that performance data had been collected including excellent case studies which would be reported at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was recognised that there were areas that needed focus for example there was evidence that white males were performing less well than their BAME and female counterparts and an action plan would also form part of the reporting going forward.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the components that contribute to achieving reputable Equality and Diversity results in the College and what that looked like. It was agreed that it could be described as providing every individual student with the relevant opportunities needed to reach their full potential and as well as data collection and focusing on actions which promote equality and diversity it was important to identify the barriers that prevented students from being the best they can be.</p>
23.20	11.0 Apprenticeship Update
	<p>The Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) shared a summary report on apprenticeships and the latest achievement data.</p> <p>It was noted that the achievement target was 70% which if attained would represent 3% above the national average.</p> <p>The report also included a detailed action plan which was already in place and positively impacting the achievement rates.</p>
24.20	12.0 Any Other Business
	<p><u>12.1 Committee Evaluation</u></p> <p>The Clerk reported that the evaluation process would be reported at the next committee meeting.</p> <p><u>12.2 HE Sub-Committee</u></p> <p>The Clerk advised that arrangements were in the process of being finalised and further details would follow.</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 19.56.</p>
25.20	Date and Time of Next meeting: Wednesday 16th June at 6.00pm

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Agreed Actions:

1. Vice-Principal to produce on page summary of CEIAG strategy
2. Equality & Diversity Policy to be presented at the next meeting for approval
3. Clerk to confirm date for HE sub-committee in the summer term (*Note: arranged for 7th June*)
4. Organise for Governors to take part in Google Classroom presentation (Clerk)