Nescot

Agreed Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 15th June 2022 at 6.00pm in Skills Park and via MS Teams

Present: Chris Muller (Chair), Angela Cross-Durrant, Lynn Reddick, Vince Romagnuolo, Felicity Fletcher, Nadine Guy (Part).

In Attendance: Phil Briscoe (Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality), Nicki Adams (Director of HE) Dario Stevens (Deputy Principal Planning & Information), Sandra Dessent (Governance Professional) Rob Greening (Director of Personal Development) (Part)

24.21	**1.0 Apologies for Absence**
	Apologies for absence were received from Nick Vaughan-Barratt, Frances Rutter and Mohan Chana
25.21	**2.0 Declarations of Interest**
	No declarations of interests were made in relation to items on this agenda
26.21	**3.0 Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising**
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2022 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair
	Matters Arising:
	Director of Personal Development to consider rewording the first question in the Student Voice questionnaire
	Action complete
	Governance Professional to circulate linked documents in the Careers Strategy update presentation
	Action complete
	Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) to consider the comments regarding the Equality & Diversity Annual Report when designing the final draft
	Action complete – see minute no. 32.21
27.21	**4.0 Curriculum & Quality Monitoring Items**
	4.1 Minutes of the HE Sub-Committee 6th June, including HNC/D Satellite Centre update
	The Director of HE summarised the main points covered in the HE Sub-Committee meeting and in relation to reviewing Access & Participation

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targets advised the Committee that any proposed changes would be fed back prior to the Corporation meeting in July.

It was also agreed to accept the suggested amendments to the HE Sub-Committee minutes provided by the Director of HE to clarify the discussion on the Access & Participation targets.

The Committee discussed the progress being made with the Satellite provision (ASTML), and it was acknowledged that there were outstanding issues with the external examiners that were delaying the final outcomes. Governors acknowledged the update and were keen to identify and record the matters that contributed to the quality issues and decline in student achievement, and it suggested that this could be scrutinised through the Audit Committee.

4.2 English & Maths

The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality presented the achievement status for Levels 1 and 2 and it was noted that all functional skills students had the opportunity to sit an exam.

It was reported that achievement rates for Maths L1 continued to be low and this was recognised as being the result of a change of specification for the exam, requiring students to have a broader knowledge of the curriculum and complete a two-hour paper (compared to 1.5 hours for GCSE).

The actions to improve achievement rates for 22/23 were set out including the plans to increase functional skills hours to 3 per week from 1.5 hours, and additional resources had been agreed to facilitate the change.

It was noted that the operational arrangements for the GCCE exams had been successful with over 50 college rooms used to accommodate the students, and the Staff Academic Governor reported on the feedback from students who had sat the exam.

4.3 Apprenticeships

The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality presented an improving picture for Apprenticeships and a predicted achievement rate of 69% for 21/22, a 4% increase from the previous year and close to the national average.

4.4 Online Learning Update

The Committee was presented with an update the main points were:

- 103 members of staff were taking part in the Google for education Fundamentals training

- Google classroom statistics outlining the expected usage patterns demonstrated that staff were managing their classrooms correctly

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- CPD week in July 2022 included a two day workshop extended to all curriculum staff where they could receive help and advice on specific ed-tech tools/platforms.

The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality reported that a self-assessment was being prepared to assess the impact of online learning which would be reported to Corporation in due course.

4.5 Safeguarding and PREVENT

The Committee received the annual report and discussed the implications. The following points were raised:

- De-escalation training for staff was being considered to help staff to deal with physical conflicts in the College which has escalated post pandemic

- The threshold for students being included in the category of receiving support for 'wellbeing' was discussed and it suggested that the main reason for the increased number could be attributed to the increased level of support available for students

- The Governors requested further information to compare pre-pandemic levels of interventions.

Having reviewed the content the Committee approved the Safeguarding Annual Report.

4.6 Curriculum & Quality KPIs (Term 3)

The Deputy Principal Planning Information reported the main outcomes as follows:

- FE 85.4% attendance (compared with 85.2% in May 21)

- HE 86.2% attendance (compared with 88.3% in May 21)

It was noted that the low attendance rate for the satellite sites had adversely impacted the attendance rates for HE and the onsite HE attendance rates were between 91 and 97%.

- Attendance rate for Equality & Diversity measures (EDIMs) for different groups remained aligned with the exception of students who had free school meals which was 82.9% indicating that these students came from a financially disadvantaged background and there were likely additional reasons for lower attendance

- Student retention was 94.5% marginally lower than the target of 95% (compared to 96.1% in May 2021)

- Retention in HE had declined significantly at 82% (compared to 89% in May 2021). The decline in the main was attributed to the satellite provision.

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	• Whilst the work experience numbers were significantly higher than the previous year, at 647 was only 47% of the target 1,410. The Curriculum Managers and Work Experience Team were working with the Deputy Principal Planning & Information to maximise the opportunities for work experience and a mobile device friendly software solution was being introduced to streamline the evidence collecting process.
28.21	**5.0 Student Applications**
	The Deputy Principal Planning & Information presented the highlights as follows: • Overall student applications are up 2% from the previous year • Applications from students new to the College had declined by 1% which was below the local demographic growth of 3.1% for 16-year-olds in our core recruitment. However, it was noted that between 2019 and 2021 16-18 cohort grew by 414 students (27%), significantly surpassing demographic growth and increased market share. • Applications for further education students aged 19 and over had declined by 19%. In May 2020 the College achieved 53% growth which was believed to have been the result of applicants considering career changes during the pandemic. Subsequently it was noted that although there has been a decline there was an increase in applications compared to pre pandemic. • Apprenticeship applications had increased (16-18: 17%, 19+: 57%) and growth in the main could be attributed to employers resuming normal operations post pandemic • Higher Education applications had decreased overall by 21%. Areas most significantly impacted included counselling, osteopathy, and teacher education. An HE strategy was being developed to redress the decline. Teacher education applications had declined; however, it was recognised that schools were reluctant to release teaching assistants for training as the majority were in a recovery period after the pandemic. The Committee discussed the figures and requested more information on applications by level in order to identify peaks and troughs.
29.21	**6.0 Curriculum Plan 2022/23**
	The main headlines for the Curriculum Plan 22/23 were reported as follows:

	Planned 22/23	Allocation 22/23	Planned 21/22	Recruited 21/22

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16-18 FE	2,199	1,934	2,300	1,935
19+ FE Direct	2,829		3,754	Still recruiting
HE Direct	432		432	331
HE Subcontracted	400		300	307
Apprenticeships	195		181	191

14% growth for 16-18 year olds was planned, however the latest figures show 1% growth. It was subsequently reported that the focus was converting applications.

The Committee discussed the curriculum changes including new planned courses and those that had been discontinued for 22/23. It was recognised that there were recruitment limitations in some areas (in particular electrical courses), due to the difficulty in securing assessors.

30.21	**7.0 T Levels Update**

The Committee received a paper explaining the content of T-levels and summarising the following:

- Nescot's offer – Digital and Health in 2023

- Entry requirements

- Industry placements

- T-level progression

- Transitional T-levels

- Preparation in terms of liaising with stakeholders and staff training

- Challenges

It was noted that further work needed to be done to promote T-levels as a recent survey had revealed that 20% of companies do not know what a T-level is.

It was agreed that success depended on presenting to schools and universities to promote the message that this is worthwhile qualification.

The Committee requested further information on Colleges that had already started the scheme and were assured that data would be collected and shared when available.

31.21	**8.0 Student Voice**

The Director of Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare presented an update on the Student/Learner Voice in the following areas:

- Existing activities

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- Plans for the next academic year

- Induction survey results

- Improvements made as a result of student feedback

- SWOT analysis of the on-programme survey

- Development areas

The introduction of 'Student Ambassadors' was discussed and the importance of training and clarity on student's role when talking to fellow students about sensitive issues. The Committee asked for clear guidelines around safeguarding issues and were assured that they role would be to signpost students to the relevant staff member and would all receive training prior to taking on the role.

The induction survey was discussed, and it was agreed that the questions should be formatted in a way that provided appropriate and useful data. To that end it was requested that a review of the questions be undertaken to assess their relevance and the possibility of a shorter survey for new and existing students.

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<td>32.21</td>
<td>9.0 Equality & Diversity Annual Report</td>
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The Committee received an updated version of the Equality and Diversity Annual Report having made recommendations for changes at the previous meeting.

The revised content was discussed and approved by the Committee subject to producing an executive summary, to ensure that it is read by the widest possible audience.

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<td>33.21</td>
<td>10.0 Students Compliments/Complaints Report</td>
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The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality shared the mid-year report detailing the number of complaints and their outcomes and timescales.

There had been 209 compliments received, which was comparable to the same point last year.

The Committee agreed that it would be useful to provide data that identified trends and reoccurring themes.

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<td>34.21</td>
<td>11.0 Review of terms of Reference</td>
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<td>This item has been deferred awaiting feedback from ELT on proposed changes.</td>
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<td>35.21</td>
<td>12.0 Review of Annual Cycle of Business</td>
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36.21	**Any Other Business**
	The Committee thanked the Chair of the Committee who was stepping down at the end of the academic year for his service as Chair.
	There being no further business the meeting concluded at 19.55
37.21	**Date and Time of the Next Meeting: Wednesday 2nd November at 6.00pm**

Decisions:

1. Approved the Safeguarding annual report

2. Approved the Equality & Diversity annual report subject to producing an executive summary attached to the report

Actions:

1. Deputy Principal Planning & Information to provide information of student applications by level in order to identify peaks and troughs

2. Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality to provide further information on safeguarding cases pre and post pandemic for comparison

3. Director of Personal Development to review induction survey questions to ensure they provide relevant data for the College, and look at preparing a shorter questionnaire for Year 2 students to assess they are satisfied with the outcomes from the induction survey

4. Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality to summarise complaints data to identify trends and recurring themes

5. Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality to produce an executive summary to be attached to the approved Equality & Diversity Annual Report

6. T-Level briefing evening to be arranged