



Minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held on Wednesday 11th March 2020 at 18.00 in Committee Room B, Skills Park, NESCOL.

Present:	In Attendance:
Mr Chris Muller (Chair) Mrs Lynn Reddick Ms Maureen Kilminster Mrs Frances Rutter Mr Jamie Roberts (Teaching Staff Governor) Mr Ben Alway (HE Student Governor) Attendance 86%	Mr Cliff Shaw – Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) via telephone link. Mrs Nicki Adams – Director of HE Mrs Josephine Carr – Clerk to the Corporation

13.19	Apologies for absence
Apologies were received from Daksin Chandrasekera and Dario Stevens	
14.19	Declarations of Interest
Declarations of interest were received from: <u>Mrs Lynn Reddick</u> declared her interest as the Director of Learning at the Orpheus Centre, a specialist provider in Surrey. <u>Ms Maureen Kilminster</u> declared her former position as the Principal of a College in Surrey. <u>Mrs Rutter</u> : unremunerated Director of NESCOL Enterprises Ltd, North East Surrey College of Technology Trust, NESCOL Holdings Ltd and Epsom Downs Business Centre Ltd.	
15.19	Minutes and Matters Arising
The minutes of the meeting held on 13 th November 2019 were approved as a correct record and duly signed. The Committee self-assessment for 2018-19 has been completed. The Principal advised the meeting that the College was preparing for online curriculum delivery and remote working for staff should these activities be required due to Coronavirus. Whilst vocational studies are not necessarily best suited to digital learning, the College is considering options for each curriculum area on a programme by programme basis. The Director of IT is evaluating virtual meeting applications including Teams and Zoom. In response to a member question, the Principal confirmed that the Italian Osteopathy students arrived in UK the before the Italian lock down. This cohort is scheduled to stay in the UK for 13-14 weeks. Tutors are also scheduled to go to Italy to work with other cohorts of students over the coming months. The College is exploring options of online delivery of both the curriculum and tutorials should the tutors not be allowed to travel to Italy. The College is also considering how best to manage examinations should they be held in isolation. In summary, the College is quietly preparing for potential situations and continuation of students' study without causing concern amongst the College community. Some staff have expressed concerns and anxiety regarding infection from coronavirus. SMT are advising that ordinarily healthy staff should not self-isolate if they are worried about infection; they should self-isolate if they have symptoms of the virus. However, for staff who are immune-compromised the College will try to enable them to work from home and support any government guidelines. The Principal added on a positive note, the coronavirus threat provides the College with an opportunity to explore and test options for increased blended learning.	
16.19	Sub-contracting and Partnerships: An overview of delivery
In the absence of the Director of Strategic Partnerships and the Deputy Principal (who is part of an OFSTED inspection and will be joining the meeting) the Principal provided an overview of current provision via sub-contracting and partnerships: 1. <u>ASTM Partnership</u> is a high reward, high risk partnership which requires careful management.	

- The student pipeline appears to be drying up in Oldham and is also subject to local competition including Oldham College.
 - ASTM have expanded into Rochdale but are currently concentrating on Hounslow and Aldgate East Centres which have a different demographic including many eastern Europeans compared to the principally Asian demographic of the Oldham Centre.
 - The awarding body, Pearson, has imposed a cap of 120 students at each ASTM Centre and have indicated that they are reluctant to lift the cap until the March AMR visits and External Examiner visit.
 - The Head of Quality, Carole Spicer is providing additional quality support for ASTM.
 - ASTM has not met its income or contribution targets for 2019-20 as evidenced in the January Management Accounts but income generation is anticipated to improve during the remainder of the financial year. The full year income and contribution targets will not be met.
2. New Direct Delivery Partnerships: The College is looking to diversify and is in negotiation with a couple of providers. Business Plans will be presented to the March Corporation meeting. The Deputy Principal (Curriculum and Quality) and the Principal are exploring the option of working with a third provider.
 3. Sub-Contracting: the government continues its drive to reduce sub-contracting activity.
 4. Camberley: Waverley Borough Council have offered Nescot a management suite within the Town's Shopping Centre or a disused nightclub to establish a community education provision in Camberley. The Council owns the freehold of the shopping centre and the College may be able to apply for a capital grant from Surrey CC as part of the Council's support for deprived communities.

The Principal hoped that the above gave members a flavour of current activities. The Director of Strategic Partnerships will present a paper at the May meeting.

17.19 Higher Education Reports

The Deputy Principal joined the meeting via a telephone link.

The Director of HE presented her report:

Office for Students (OfS). 2019/20 is the first full year of registration as opposed to the earlier transition period. Therefore, HE registered institutions must adhere to the prescribed timeline of ongoing conditions of registration with the OfS. Nescot has approved status and the timeline of maintaining registration is available in Appendix 1.

Nescot has met the timelines to date as summarised in p4-6 of the report:

- C1 Compliance with Consumer Protection Law, competitions and marketing authority. The College must deliver what it promises to deliver in its publicity. All validating bodies/HE Institutions approve all Nescot marketing material of their courses.
- C2 Student Complaints and Office for the Independent Adjudicator: The College is required to register and pay annual membership. Complaints are made to the College and may then be cascaded to the validating HE Institution or awarding body and with the Office for the Independent Adjudicator as the final arbitrator. The College Academic Registrar is the single point of contact with OIA and provides cascading training for College teaching staff and provides a source of advice. One Nescot complaint was cascaded to the OIA who ruled principally in favour of the student and the College was required to pay the student £500. The OIA did not impose any sanctions upon the College. Students have no further recourse once the OIA has published its decision.
- F1 Transparency data: The College admissions and applications data together with EDIMS data is due to be submitted April 2020.
- F2 Transfer Statement: This statement together with the Prior Learning Policy is available on the College website and is designed to help students change courses if needed.
- G3 Payment of OfS fees: £47K pa.
- B1 – B6 Graduate Outcomes: The opposite spectrum to widening access and participation. The

OfS undertakes four samples of graduates throughout the academic year and so it is essential that the student details are both accurate and current. The College is endeavouring to keep HE graduates warm in anticipation of them being contacted by the OfS audit. The OfS sampling takes place some 15 months after the completion of the graduate's programme.

The Access and Participation Monitoring Return was submitted to the OfS last year and included a 5-year plan and a set of targets. The College is not reporting on this return yet.

Student engagement: Nescot offers HE students a multitude of opportunities to engage with the College ranging from dialogue both formal and informal, provision of the HE Common Room, Student Representative Committee and Staff Student Committee. In response to student feedback regarding the excessive number of student survey requests, the College has withdrawn the mid-year survey this year and will ensure that the end of year survey captures the required data together with that previous sought via the mid-year engagement.

The College is encouraging HE students to participate in the National Student Survey. The 2018-19 survey generated a 76% Nescot participation rate which mirrored the national average. To date, the Nescot response for 2019-20 is 82%. Some providers use the NSS results to justify their fee increases.

ASTM report high levels of student satisfaction.

Progress Update:

The HE programmes in Intensive care are all showing positive results:

- Diploma Psychodynamic Counselling
- HND Business (partner provision with ASTM)
- FD Sports Therapy
 - BSC Sports Therapy Top

In response to a member question, the Director of HE advised that the ASTM HND Business programme is in intensive care with regard to examination preparation, assessment practice and the recording of results.

Continuation rates

The dip in full-time continuation rates is due to a cohort of HND students whose completion of programme fell outside the timeline of the 2018-19 ILR.

Currently part-time HE continuation is 91% (national average 71%).

Full-time continuation is 71% (national average 83%).

HE Curriculum Developments

1. Negotiations with the OU regarding the validation of the ASTM BA Business Top-up degree are ongoing.
2. The College has given notice to Greenwich University regarding the Counselling Diploma which will be replaced by Foundation degree with the Open University.
3. The Mammography provision has been discontinued and any students yet to complete their studies will transfer elsewhere and so their achievement data will not be included within Nescot's results data.

QAA visit autumn 2019

The College has made representations to the OfS and QAA regarding the outstanding report. The College is not the only College awaiting reports from the QAA visits and the AoC held a meeting for these Colleges. However, the QAA did not send a representative to the meeting.

The College is continuing its HE provision and is advocating that the QAA re-visit the College and disregard the 2019 September visit.

Greenwich University, which validates the College's Teacher Training programme, is part of a pilot

study for an OFSTED training initiative. The Nescot Teacher Training Team will be visited next Tuesday by the OFSTED training team as part of this study.

18.19 Curriculum and Quality KPIs (February 2020)

The Deputy Principal tabled the Committee KPI scorecard, the 2019 student destination PowerPoint presentation and a retention paper.

Curriculum KPIs

In response to a member question the Deputy Principal advised that the forecast achievement rate for female apprentices of 9% compared to a target of 78% is low because of the shortage of assessors in hairdressing and early childhood studies earlier in the academic year. A new assessor is now in place and there is a 100% retention for these students.

1.11 Achievement of male apprentices is 57% to date compared to a target of 83%. The Deputy Principal agreed to ask the Vice Principal for more detailed specific data regarding this KPI.

The Deputy Principal advised the meeting that when plastering and hairdressing apprentices are excluded from the achievement KPI the rate increases to 69% and will meet the national average without these two provisions. Within the College's direct apprenticeship provision there are healthy apprenticeship programmes which will be discussed in the Deputy Principal's Apprenticeship Report.

Student Destinations 2019

The College commissioned J2Research in October 2019 to contact the 1,139 students who finished their College programmes in summer 2019. J2Research successfully contacted 65% of these students having made up to 20 contact attempts per student. The telephone number of 19% of the non-contactable students was reported as unobtainable (no longer in use).

The Chair congratulated the College on the overall 94% of positive destinations and welcomed the evaluation of the data at different levels, including sub-contracting and ASTM (Partnership).

Student Retention

Full programme retention is 97% (compared with 97.7% in February 2019). The February 2020 retention rate of 97% is higher than the GFE national average of 92.8%.

FE retention rates have improved for 24 out of 27 curriculum areas. The three curriculum areas of concern are Business (85%), Computing (86%) and Media & Games Design (90%).

The overall HE retention rate is 97% (compared with 92% in February 2019). HE retention rates for HND courses in Computing, Media, Games Design and Performing Arts are being monitored. The Deputy Principal advised the meeting that class sizes for these courses tend to be smaller and therefore the number of withdrawn students have more impact on these programme retention rates.

The Deputy Principal also advised the meeting that whilst students enrol on a two-year HND year programme a number elect to exit the programme after completing Year1 of the programme with an HNC qualification and do not undertake the second year which impacts upon retention data. The College is considering changing the format and offering two separate programmes, HNC for one year with students then able to progress to HND.

SMT are monitoring the retention rates of High Needs students on Level 3 programmes. Fourteen High Needs students enrolled on various Level 3 programmes in September 2019 and to date 4 have withdrawn (28.5%). Two of these students have moved to supported internships. There are a variety of factors impacting upon these withdrawals including the length of the programme and the difference in levels of College supports (LSA's) between Level 2 and Level 3 programmes.

The Committee noted the five action points in place to ensure retention rates continued to increase and remain above national averaged.

19.19 CEIAG Strategy Progress Update

The Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance (CEIAG) strategy was agreed in December 2018. This strategy looks to ensure that the College meets the 8 Gatsby benchmarks for good CEIAG practice which all schools and Colleges are expected to achieve by the end of 2020.

The report demonstrates that the College has met 7 of the 8 benchmarks and 77% of benchmark 1: Provide a Stable Careers Programme. The CEIAG Working Group is working on improving our website content and ways to better measure the impact of the College's careers programme. The March CPD sessions will be covering 1-2-1 interviews and group discussion sessions ensuring coverage of the Gatsby benchmark requirements.

The Committee reviewed the detailed progress table and discussed the access to Higher Education benchmark. The table on p7 produced by the Careers Enterprise Company shows that Nescot is better prepared to meet the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks than many other FE Colleges.

The Director of HE left the meeting at 20.00.

20.19 Deputy Principal's Curriculum Report

The Deputy Principal tabled his Curriculum reports:

Curriculum performance updates including E & M

Performance against QIP performance (tracker)

The meeting noted the positive response to the College's enhanced Enrichment programme 2019/20 which confirms the Enrichment Officers presentation to the Corporation Board of 7th February.

Students are finding new specification for Functional Skills Maths very difficult; the questions have become harder for the students to interpret in order to answer the questions. This appears to be mirroring the GCSE maths questions where some students do not have the English skills to interpret the maths questions correctly.

The meeting noted the year on year improvements in data trends of the tracker report.

Apprenticeship performance update

The Apprenticeship Report provides both summary and programme achievement rates for Sub-Contracted and Nescot direct delivery apprenticeships. These remain a risk for the College, however, some improvements as a result of the additional work, in particular with assessors is becoming evident.

One hairdresser sub-contractor ceased trading and the College supported the students in looking for an alternative employer. Nescot is ceasing its direct provision of L2 and L3 hairdressing apprenticeships. It is not accepting any new students but will continue provision for existing students.

Electro-technical is a LEP priority and 80% achievement.

Carpentry Level 2 achievement rates are improving, assisted by a new assessor who is working smartly.

Level 2 and Advanced Plumbing achievements are both above national averages.

Motor vehicle Level 3 and Advanced are forecast for 100% achievement in 2019/20.

Computing is forecast for 100% achievement with lower students than in 2018/19.

The significant improvement in Level 2 Business is a success story with all students passing bar one.

College managers may access apprenticeship tracking sheets on ProAchieve.

In response to a member question the Deputy Principal confirmed that the College was ceasing the apprenticeship provision for hairdressing, plastering and mammography. The College will honour the starts and they are very likely to achieve. The cost of provision does not work for the College, principally because it is too niche a provision.

The Deputy Principal hoped that this report provided an overview of the apprenticeship offer and corresponding achievement. The Deputy Principal assured the meeting that the achievement of direct Apprenticeships is showing definite improvement. The meeting agreed that the report and discussion had been most useful and justified the apprenticeship grading within the College SAR.

Continuous Professional Development update

The CPD programme with Dr Anna James on alternate Wednesday afternoons has been well received by staff.

Safeguarding and Prevent update

In response to a member question the Deputy Principal advised that the new student referrals were relatively evenly distributed across the Curriculum areas save for a higher of High Needs students. This is not unexpected given the complexity of needs of some of the High Needs students.

The July CPD programme will include training sessions for teaching staff to feel able to respond to low-level safeguarding issues raised by students. This training will consolidate the sessions provided by Dr Anna James during the year-long programme.

The Deputy Principal is chairing the first appeal "Fitness to Study" meeting during his tenure as Deputy Principal at Nescot. The appeal includes a 49-page submission.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal and his Curriculum staff for the level of detail available to the Committee.

21.19 Any other business

There being no other business the meeting closed at 20.21

22.19 Dates of future meetings

Wednesday 6th May at 18.00.

Decisions made:

Action agreed:

1. The Director of Strategic Partnerships will present a Sub-Contracting and Partnership paper at the May meeting.
2. The Deputy Principal agreed to ask the Vice Principal for more detailed specific data regarding KPI 1.11 Achievement of Male Apprentices.

Signed

Chris Muller, Chair of Curriculum and Quality Committee.

Date: