

STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00pm on 13 June 2017

Present:	S Daley (Chair) J Gazzard	A Maltpress (Vice Chair) N Savvas, Principal	J Winter
In Attendance:	L Moody, VP EE R Kirk, AP HE	L Johnson, VP C&Q C Shaw, VP S&LS	A Boswell, HR Manager J Bridges, Clerk

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest to declare in relation to the items of this agenda.

Action

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from K Points. Apologies for attendance at the meeting were also received from R Sadler, Director of HR. A Boswell, Head of HR was invited to attend in her absence.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2017

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3 Matters Arising

The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report and all actions reported had either been resolved or, where appropriate an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.

KPI Report Matters Arising

Attendance was noted to be low in some areas. On the whole attendance is good but governors noted that it will be interesting to see how this correlates with retention. Timetables are being collapsed to flex availability for students to attend to complete their units, assessments and targets. Retention and student completion is the primary focus at this time. Retention is high with a notable reduction in the number of withdrawals in the year confirming that students are being retained and on course to complete. Early leaver reports have been signalling this in year so this outcome can be triangulated giving the Committee the assurance that students are on track to achieve.

Health and Social Care and Childcare are the 2 areas where best case WPL outcomes are lower than the other areas. This is apparent in Social Care but not Health necessarily; numbers are low but are still anticipated to come in better than National Rate. Overall best case is high.

Engineering continues to be the focus area particularly with regard to our 16-18 provision as this needs to be our flagship area. New staff are being recruited to ensure that they are in place for the start of the 2017/18 academic year and the Committee agreed that this topic has and continues to be a key theme throughout the reports to this and other Committees.

J Gazzard joined the meeting at 4.20pm.

Agenda item 13, Workforce Update, preceded items 4 to 12 of the meeting.

Overall Effectiveness

4 2016/17 Quality Improvement Plan Update

There are no red RAG rated QIP criteria as all have moved into either Amber or Green status indicating that progress has been made or the criterion met and achieved.

Some actions will continue to move forward. Attendance at Maths and English GCSEs has been 94% demonstrating the improvement in Maths GCSE Achievement and English and Maths Targets has been met. Target Setting has also progressed well and tracking of adults has significantly helped students to stay the course and this should be evident in the results of our adult learners. The same is anticipated for apprentices.

Outcomes for Learners

5 Maths and English Update

The Committee will be happy with less detailed reports in the future. The Director of Maths and English has excelled in keeping Governors informed but in recognition that the focus now will be more on consolidation than development, routine KPI updates with anything else particularly noteworthy will be sufficient for monitoring purposes.

The Committee recognised the pioneering approach of the team and is anticipating even better results for students this year.

The ESOL and Functional Skills offer for adults has been incredible this year; developed essentially from a standing still stance.

6 Engineering Update

The organisational chart of the area was shared with the Committee. Blue shaded details indicate the staff who were in post last year, grey and green shaded details indicate new appointments to the team (green = new lecturers, grey = new to the College).

An interim Director of Engineering has been appointed to cover the outgoing postholder who has taken an overseas opportunity. The interim Director has started in post with the highest levels of attainment possible, whilst also building and stabilising the Engineering team.

The extensive recruitment campaign in the year has been relentless and finally the effort has yielded promising appointments. A total of 468 applications were received and sifted which is a truly phenomenal effort of all involved.

The report included an update concerning the issues, complaints and grievances of students raised in the department in the year. The Committee received a verbal update concerning the detail of the grievance which remains unresolved but significant efforts have been made to conclude the case satisfactorily for all concerned.

The Committee questioned if there were any residual concerns of employers arising from the complaints received in the year. The Vice Principal Employer Engagement confirmed that there were no lasting criticisms of employers about the performance of the College. We continue to engage with them all and the issues have been resolved effectively and to their satisfaction.

The Committee asked to see a KPI specific report for Engineering at the next meeting to be held in October 2017. The Committee also asked for a Learning Walk and Internal Quality Review to be undertaken in the new term and for the outcomes arising from these to be reported back to the Committee.

Engineering will be a major focus of monitoring for the Committee in the new academic year.

LJohnson

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7 **Destinations**

There were no issues arising from the report. It is apparent that most are progressing into FE or HE opportunities. It was interesting to learn that high numbers of learners are progressing from Crafts, Creative Arts and Design and the Committee questioned if opportunities in these areas were available in the local community. It appears that most are progressing out of county to other providers, perhaps London based, but certainly out of our immediate area.

8 **Complaints and Compliments**

The Committee were content with the detailed report received and the underlying detail in the hyperlinked full report. There were no issues arising.

There are appear to be no trends in the compliments received of adult learners. Most are exceedingly complimentary about the courses and tutors delivering the programmes.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

9 **Lesson Observations and Internal Quality Reviews**

The Director of Quality and PD has standardised the reviews of all areas of provision; introducing these across work based learning too.

The report is RAG rated and the Committee commended the Director of Quality and PD for her comprehensive and detailed feedback and review reports. Governors asked to see/hear/share the feedback of the learning walks that they have participated in to complete the circle of the process for them.

Governors asked the Assistant Principal for HE as a recipient of an Internal Quality Review for her take on the process. The experience for the Access to HE team has been positive and the full report gives the Subject Leader for that area the tool to develop the action plan to redress the improvements identified so it has been a very positive and productive experience.

10 **Institutional Student Survey (ISS) Progress Report**

The response rate to the ISS was 31% across 48 eligible courses. The level of overall satisfaction has moved from 80% to 75% and it is evident that this figure has been significantly affected by the feedback from students on Engineering (reported above) where there were known difficulties and if removed from the statistics satisfaction would be at 84%; 4% above the overall satisfaction last year.

The areas with increased levels of satisfaction were Assessment and Feedback (up by 12% on last year) and Student Support (up by 5% on last year). Satisfaction with Organisation and Management remains consistent with last year (only down by 1%) but the level of satisfaction for course management is up by 2% to 64% although timetabling went down by 5% to 71%. Low scores from Combined Routes and Engineering (HN) pulled the level down and this is to be investigated further.

Areas of decline in student satisfaction were Teaching on my Course (3% decline) and Learning Resources (2% decline) although satisfaction for course specific resources were up by 9% on last year however levels for IT resources and the Library were down.

The three new categories in the survey; Learning Opportunities, Learning Community and Student Voice, all received good responses. There was 80%

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satisfaction with Learning Opportunities, 70% for the Learning Community and 78% for the Student Voice.

It was noted that 12 courses did not participate in the survey and the reasons why are to be investigated as governors felt that a higher contribution rate would improve a more reflective satisfaction rate of the whole of our provision. Although the overall response rate to the survey here at West Suffolk College was higher than the other Colleges in the Learning Network, showing that it has been positively received and responded to, we do need to understand why those 12 courses did not participate.

RKirk

An action plan is to be developed arising from the survey results and progress against this plan will be reported back to the Committee at the appropriate intervals.

RKirk

11 Awarding Organisation Activity Report

The Committee recognised the high number of awarding bodies that the College is engaged with and commended the efforts to keep on track and up to date with reaching the compliance required of them all.

The Committee was pleased to learn that the College has experienced no loss of Direct Claim Status, first/second blocking or certification, nor have any sanctions been imposed/occurred.

12 Leadership and Management Staff Development Update Report

The Committee received an extensive list of all of the training and professional development activities undertaken in the year on a limited (£70K) budget.

A Boswell was invited to report against agenda item 13 ahead of agenda items 4 to 12.

13 Workforce Update

The new HR system, Cintra, went live yesterday. Teething problems are being ironed out and staff are being constructive and taking part in helping to identify where amendments and updates are needed. Enhanced reporting on Equality and Diversity will now be possible and work to implement and develop these reports are in progress over the coming weeks.

We have had success through our recent international campaign and have appointed two European candidates who will join ready for the new academic year. We may also make an offer to a third candidate but we are looking into the feasibility of an appointment due to their current visa restrictions. Support will be offered to the European candidates for relocation to the UK under the relocation policy and both are likely to undertake the PGCE qualification and will start on lecturing salary scales and progress up as they gain experience and their qualification. The same recruitment approach to fill Electrical Electronic vacancies that have historically been hard to fill will be taken over the coming weeks to recruit for the new academic year.

A new HR Adviser who brings excellent operational experience from both the private and public sector has joined the HR team. She is also joined by a dedicated Recruitment Specialist who brings a comprehensive background in recruitment techniques who will seek to implement innovative ways of attracting new candidates and refining the recruitment process.

A thorough review of all aspects of Safeguarding has been undertaken to ensure that our practice and processes conform to the Keeping Children Safe

in Education Guidance and the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework. A number of actions have been taken to build upon our compliance to ensure that our Safeguarding arrangements are entirely robust.

A Boswell left the meeting at 4.40pm

12 Any other business

The efforts of the Student Support team were commended. Their efforts to retain students, give them the support they need and encouragement to attend their courses and exams has been relentless.

Governors were reminded of the invitation to attend the forthcoming SSA SAR meetings.

Governors

The Committee asked to receive any relevant internal audit reports.

JBridges

The College intends to promote and communicate the Lock Down procedure in response to the Prevent agenda among staff and students; Run, Hide and Tell.

CShaw

The QAA visit for HE took place last week. The team were well prepared with the self-evaluation document in place and evidence file submitted prior to the visit. Inspectors asked a further 19 questions of the team that could be answered. The relationship with Pearson's was questioned together with further analysis of our work placement arrangements and how we prepare for those with regard to risk assessments and the support available for students on placements. It is thought likely that the QAA will suggest that this is an area for development and the draft report is expected on 16 June 2017 for our comment before the final report will be submitted to HEFCE on 4 July 2017. The team are anticipating a 'with confidence' grade. Desk based reviews are then undertaken annually with a visit every four years thereafter.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 12 October 2017 at 4.00pm. Room TG1.16

The meeting closed at 6.10pm