Governing Body

STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
<u>Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00pm on 13 March 2018</u>

Present:	Sue Daley (Chair)	Alan Maltpress (Vice Chair)	Jake Mann
	Rudy Berongoy	Nikos Savvas, Principal	
In Attendance:	Rachel Kirk, AP HE	Colin Shaw, VP S&LS	Gary Jefferson, ED
	Ruth Sadler, HR Director	Andrew Adamson, ED	Penny Fawcus, ED
	Laraine Moody (VP EE)	Cathy Durrant (H of PS)	Jules Bridges, Clerk

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

		Action
1	**<u>Apologies for absence</u>** Apologies for absence were received from Jim Gazzard and Karen Points. Debbie Coomes and Christine Harvey, Executive Directors also passed on their apologies for the meeting.	
2	**<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2018</u>** The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a correct record. The Clerk was asked to include the first names of all people in the minutes for these meetings.	Jules Bridges
3	**<u>Matters Arising</u>** 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.	
	It was noted that details of the retention data of Access to HE students are to be included in future KPI reports.	Rachel Kirk Colin Shaw

Agenda item 9, 11, 12 and 13 preceded items 4 through to 8 and 10

Overall Effectiveness
4   2017/18 Quality Improvement Plan Update

Managers have been consulted on their understanding of the issues and the areas of improvement that were needed under their areas of responsibility. The QIP was then adjusted, identifying what the issue was, the actions that needed to be taken to improve the position and success measures.

The revised QIP is currently out for consultation with managers who have identified responsibility for actions to be taken. They have been asked to consider the content and wording overall for accuracy and agreement and to add progress made to date.

It was noted that the colour coding of the QIP was to reflect the four Common Inspection Framework Criteria of Leadership and Management (L&M), Outcomes for Learners (OfL), Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA) and Personal Development and Welfare (PD&W).

Outcomes for Learners
5   Engineering Update

2017/18 has dramatically improved from the 2016/17 position in terms of student retention and forecast achievement. There has been some staff churn as expected, but disruption to delivery and unsettling of students has been minimised. The new team is working coherently and 90% of students

are on target with their assignment completions, with the other 10% attending focused assignment support sessions to help them remain on track. The position has improved by going back to basics, creating firm assessment plans, improvements to the delivery model and weekly communication meetings. Course Directors are taking ownership of their whole programmes and working closely with the PST, to ensure students are adequately supported to achieve.

Level 2
Historically the Level 2 course has not had milestone assessments recorded on Markbook due to the qualification being largely dependent on an exams and a synoptic test. We have recently designed a way of monitoring 'artificial' milestone assessments; the 17% is not representative of the students' progress and will increase when the new milestone assessment completions are recorded on Markbook, for next month's report.

Level 3 Year 1
We have lost one student due to him withdrawing at Feb half term to start an apprenticeship and we are currently working with him to see if we can sign him up as a WSC apprentice. A second student has been offered a career with the RAF and leaves for RAF Halton in Buckinghamshire on 27th March. We are working with him and his family to try and get an early achievement for him.

Level 3 Year 2
The Head of Engineering has worked with this group in an attempt to improve their assignment completions and has negotiated that they only need to attend the assignment support sessions, if they are behind with their work or would like additional support. This has had some success with assignment completions but has had a negative impact on their attendance. In addition to this, we are working with the students, alongside the Personal Support Tutor to overcome their reluctance to attend non-vocational lessons.

All Courses
All retained students are forecast to pass their qualifications on time and early interventions take place when students show any indication of struggling, such as additional coaching and attending additional assignment support sessions. The most accurate position indicator from the table above is the 'Assessment %' statistics, as the 'Unit %' and the 'Task %' data are skewed due to the course structure i.e. some units are scheduled for the year so cannot be completed until the year end, although some of the assessments that contribute to the assignment completion will be completed in year.

It was noted that feedback on the recent IQR is positive with a marked improvement in this area with all teaching graded Good.

6   **Maths and English Update**
Priorities include ensuring that the College meets the tolerance for Condition of Funding (>95%) and as at 14 February 2018 compliance was at 94.4% and a week later as at 21 February 2018 was then at 95.6% with some students still awaiting action, so we are on target to achieve at least 96% compliance. Improving and monitoring attendance of students is also

a priority for the team, responding to issues and barriers and liaising with students, parents and course teams as appropriate.

Teaching staff are trained and coached to ensure high standards of teaching, learning and assessment and relationships with vocational teaching teams and managers continue to be developed and improved.

Additional revision sessions have now begun, funded through the NEACO project to support students towards their GCSE exams. These activities support all students but are aimed at ensuring higher numbers of students on border grade ¾ convert to higher pass rates.

Feedback from Milestone One influenced the teaching of Maths through focussed session on "number" topics. English sessions have focussed on "creative writing" tasks in order to support students and increase exam success and to secure a Grade 4+ pass in the summer exams. Analysis from Milestone Two has been used to influence sessions in the same way. For GCSE, Milestone 3 consisted of an exam paper (one of two for English, one of 3 for Maths).

We are planning to co-ordinate a full 'Mock Exam Week' in April, following the Easter break. This will enable a full rehearsal for both the College and the students and, importantly, we will be able to view the likely achievement and pass outcome as well as informing areas that students still have time to focus on before the real exams in May/June.

Attendance is of concern with some classes showing attendance as low as 50%. This is the focus for this half term and Maths and English staff will be contacting vocational teams on a weekly basis with follow up from the Head of Maths and English after three consecutive absences.

Christine Harvey joined the meeting at 5.25pm

7   HE Retention and Withdrawals
The report shows that we have 17 withdrawals across all HE courses which equates to 3% of students. This is 0.9% (2 students) up on the same point last year.

The HE Management team started chasing non-attendance a month earlier this year than last and it is believed this is the reason why the withdrawal rate currently is higher than last year.

A support programme, based on the programme used for FE, has been introduced with the HE courses and all course teams and the PST now use ProMonitor. We have also recruited a learning support mentor who will be working with students on academic progress and we have introduced PAR (Progress And Review) weeks in order that scaffolded support can be established quickly during the year for individuals demonstrating the need for this level of support.

With these mechanisms and systems in place we anticipate that this withdrawal rate will level out over the rest of the year leaving a final withdrawal rate not dissimilar to last year's. Based on this data, our current retention rate is 97.3% and our target for the year is 96%. Targets for achievement are to be determined for 2018/19.

Reasons for withdrawal include academic failure (1), personal/financial/health (11), wrong institution/choice/career (3) and other (1).

Five courses which had not lost any students at this stage last year have students who have withdrawn; these are Hospitality and Event Management, Psychology, Computer Games Technology, Construction and the Built Environment and Electrical Engineering (HNC). Of these five courses, four of them had students who left due to personal, financial or health reasons. These are issues that are usually resolvable due to the nature of both the students (often mature with responsibilities) and the circumstances.

Six courses had withdrawals last year by this stage but have not this year, these are Business Management (BA), Applied Psychology and Sociology, Professional Studies, Counselling (FDa), Religious Studies and Construction Management. This suggests that IAG and monitoring and support for student has been more effective in these areas. Both were priority areas for development from last year.

8   NSS Actions

The outcome of the NSS Report has provided the College with some action points, some of which are for the whole HE provision and others for individual course areas where the student satisfaction levels were particularly poor. These were HN and FdSc Mechanical Engineering, FdSc Construction Management and FdA Hospitality and Event Management.

In these three areas a 'risk alert' has been put on the courses and they are monitored through monthly meetings with the Head of HE or the AP HE. All courses still have action points being reviewed and feedback from students is mixed. Further activity to address the HE action plan as a whole are in place, including meetings with students, learning walks and changes to the approach to monitoring quality of the provision.

Progress against the 2017 NSS/ISS is being supported by course teams who have had opportunity to share and discuss the questions and process with students. The survey window closes at Easter and at this stage 69% of students eligible have completed the NSS (71% completed the survey last year). The HE Management team is working very closely with all courses to ensure all eligible students have an opportunity to complete the survey.

The Committee was pleased to learn that the College has been awarded Direct Funding meaning that the College can recruit its own student numbers and has the freedom to work collaboratively with any other HEI (Higher Education Institution).

Jake Mann left the meeting at 5.40pm

Agenda item 9 preceded items 4 through to 8, and 10 through to 13

9   Early Leavers Report

The reduction in the number of withdrawals continues to improve compared with last year for both 16-18 students and 19+. To date (as at 16 February 2018) there has been a total of 81 (16-18) students and 19 (19+) students withdrawn from the College compared with 89 and 34 respectively for the same period last year. The main reasons for withdrawal in the 16-18 age

group have been gaining employment (21%), gaining an apprenticeship (17%), illness (12%) and transferring to a different learning aim (10%).

For 19+ students, there appears to be no one significant withdrawal reason, but the reasons include altered family commitments, employment, illness and personal reasons.

When looking at apprenticeships we can also see a year on year reduction in the number of withdrawals. To date (as at 16 February 2018) there has been a total of 19 (16-18) students and 26 (19+) students withdrawn compared to 55 and 63 respectively from the same period last year. Having spoken to the apprenticeship team it appears that the majority of the withdrawals was due to the employee leaving the employment.

Withdrawals in January looks high but this figure includes 8 Computing students, who are still with us but have transferred to a different qualification within Computing. Art lost 16 across the board but many of these were 18 year olds in their third year of FE. Health Care and Early Years have lost 15 students, 10 of these coming from the CPLD Level 3 and Level 2 courses. The main reasons here are traineeships and employment. Motor Vehicle lost 8, mainly from the Progression to and the Level 3 course, to employment and apprenticeships or because of mental health issues.

Withdrawals for employment and apprenticeships continue to be the two main reasons why students leave their courses early. We have an increasing number who withdraw due to illness, and in most cases, this will be mental health issues. There are several students who have moved to another learning aim, but remain within the College. The Committee asked to receive a report to detail the reasons why apprentices withdraw in the next report to the Committee.

Laraine Moody
Cathy Durrant

With the 19+ students we see that the main reasons for leaving are altered family commitments, employment, illness and personal reasons.

Cathy Durrant left the meeting at 4.30pm

Agenda items 11, 12 and 13 preceded items 4 to 8 and 10.

10   Courses at Risk
There are currently 35/138 courses rated RED across eighteen departments; these were highlighted in the report to the Committee. Many of the courses identified as being 'At Risk' have poor attendance and report poor progress; there has been some very positive movement in terms of rectifying MarkBook structure issues, which has served to ensure that the shortfall in reaching expected minimum thresholds at this stage of the academic year, is now far less marked across the majority of courses. Support is ongoing to achieve full compliance, accordingly.

There are often correlations between attendance and those students identified at being 'At Risk' of not achieving. Each of these students will be being supported by their PST and will have a detailed action plan in place. VF1486 – Computing Extended Diploma (Year 2) is being closely monitored and supported (eight of thirty-eight students have been withdrawn – 79% retained) to ensure that the remaining students achieve their aspirational goals.

There are currently no FE Engineering (778) courses at risk. The number of courses previously reported that are no longer 'at risk' is 14. The number of courses newly 'at risk' is 12 (as highlighted bold in the report).

Agenda items 4 through to 10 were taken after agenda items 11, 12 and 13.

Leadership and Management

11   Workforce Key Performance Indicators
Confidential item under paragraph 18(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government

12   Workforce Risk Management
The risk register has been filtered to identify the workforce related risks for the College and there are currently four risks identified in the register.

The level of risk to recruit hard to fill posts has certainly reduced where vacancies have been filled and the HR Recruitment Adviser has been instrumental in securing these appointments. The Committee were comfortable that this risk R098 on the register is at the appropriate level with a score of 14.

There were no workforce risks to add to the register.

Any other business

13	The Committee asked to receive a report on Appraisals (SpotLights) and Performance Management). It was agreed that the HR Director will provide a report to cover staff progress and performance.	Ruth Sadler
	An update on Staff Training and Development will be shared with the Committee before the year end.	Penny Fawcus

Ruth Sadler left the meeting at 4.45pm

From the overall KPI report, the Committee learned that attendance is 1% lower at this point compared to the same point last year. This reduction may be as a consequence of the 3 'snow' days lost but additional lessons are being held to ensure that learning has not been missed. 19+ attendance is at 88% (same as last year). MarkBook progress is being monitored and areas of that are behind include Health Care and Early Years, Automotive, Computing, Engineering, Science, Proactive Education, Electrical Installation, Plumbing and Heating and Access to HE. Retention is at 96% overall.

Pete Wilson has joined the College. He is our Data Management Analyst whose priority is to improve our reporting capabilities.

Date of next meeting
Thursday 19 April 2018 at 4.30pm. Room TG1.16

The meeting closed at 6.00pm