

**STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00pm on 30 November 2017**

<b>Present:</b>	S Daley (Chair) N Savvas, Principal	A Maltpress (Vice Chair)	K Points
<b>In Attendance:</b>	K Golding (Chair) R Kirk, AP HE C Harvey, ED R Sadler, HR Director	L Moody, VP EE C Shaw, VP S&LS A Adamson, ED J Mann, Student	L Johnson, VP C&Q G Jefferson, ED J Bridges (Clerk)

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

**1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from J Gazzard.

**2 Minutes of the meetings held on 2 November 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.

It was agreed that the Committee is to receive the IQR and Learning Walk of the recent visit of Engineering at the next meeting to be held on 1 February 2018.

**Action**

JBridges

Agenda items 8 and 9 preceded items 4 through to 7

***Overall Effectiveness***

**4 College Self-Assessment Report 2016/17**

***Overall Effectiveness***

An Ofsted OI visited the College a few weeks ago to externally validate the College SAR. Her validation confirmed that the lower than anticipated grades for GCSE Maths and English should only affect one of our grades, not the overall grade so this has been adjusted in Outcomes for Learners and has been graded a 2, good, as a consequence.

The OI confirmed that she felt our Progression was exceptional, as is Student Welfare. Leadership and Management shows the success in our strategies to improve outcomes for learners and ambition was thought to be very compelling with great examples of both success and of where things have been tried even if they have not worked out as planned. Our observation scheme and quality of teaching and learning was tested and was considered to be very strong. Overall, the OI validated our assessment as a grade 1 overall, outstanding.

Comparison data with the Outcomes for Learners data of the four latest outstanding Colleges have now been included throughout the SAR (pages 67 onwards) for comparison with West Suffolk College data tables. It was noted that our outcomes for learners are more than comparable. On page 68 for example we can see that the achievement of 16-18 Level 3 Diploma at 96% is the highest performance against the four outstanding Colleges. Likewise, on page 79 we can see that our apprenticeship achievement rates are significantly better in most cases compared to the four outstanding Colleges although we have graded the apprenticeships chapter as a grade 2, good,

because of the decline in 16-18 achievements rates from the previous year. The point here though is that we know what we need to improve and we have rigorous plans in place to make this happen.

On page 85 of the SAR is a data table of the Basic Skills Maths and English Achievement rates of West Suffolk College and the four grade 1 Colleges in the country. Last year we were harsh on ourselves with ESOL outcomes and this year we can see that we've almost doubled our activity in this area. The College had the largest cohort of Level 1 19+ students (795) compared to the four outstanding Colleges with an achievement rate of 91.3%, the best in the country.

For GCSE Maths and English (page 86) both 16-18 and 19+ achievement are above national rate whereas Gateshead and Grimsby Colleges, two of the four outstanding Colleges, are significantly below.

When we look at the Value Added table 7.3 (page 89) this shows the number of compulsory GCSE Maths and English resits and in all cases our results are above national rates for progress and the balance and mix of our provision. The data shows nationally that students don't improve yet our data shows that over a third of students who study here, do improve.

Additionally, the OI said that she was bowled over by our Safeguarding practice and a new chapter (chapter 10) has been included to support the findings for the Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Chapter in the SAR. Other strengths have been included in our Apprenticeship chapter, as mentioned by the OI and a few areas for improvement have been incorporated into the Quality Improvement Plan.

The committee **approved** to grade Outcomes for Learners as a grade 2, good, but overall the SAR is to be graded 1, outstanding. The Committee will propose that the Corporation approves the SAR as Grade 1, outstanding, at the meeting to be held on 14 December 2017.

SDaley

**QIP for 2017/18**

The 2017/18 plan derived from the SAR is to be agreed by the Committee at its next meeting, further to the approval of the SAR by the Corporation at the meeting to be held on 14 December 2017.

JBridges

**Outcomes for Learners**  
**HE 2016/17 Performance Report**

5

Attrition, not retained and non-progression figures have all improved in the 2016/17 academic year with retention at the end of the year being 95%, an increase of nearly 2% on the previous year.

There has also been an increase in overall student achievement for honours degrees with 89% of students achieving an award as opposed to 83% in the previous year (2015/16). A higher percentage of students achieved a first or 2:1 classification at honours degree, or distinction at foundation degree than in previous years.

The number of students going into work only on completion of their studies has steadily increased over the last four years and is now 4% up on 2015/16. The number of students both working and studying has also increased by 4% to 24.3% in 2016/17. Therefore 86.2% of our students progress to either employment or are in employment while studying. This is comparable with the

national figure for graduates and post-graduates going into employment which is 88%.

In order to continue this improved position, we are reviewing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure the students' experiences are positive. This is to include the use of ILPs for tutorial and dissertation support and monitoring assessment progress. The Committee commented that clearly student achievement is not aligned to their apparent dissatisfaction shown through the NSS/ISS surveys and we need to consider why this is the case. The Assistant Principal for HE commented that there is a lot of work being undertaken with individual courses to look at how the survey(s) is/are released and how students interpret the questions and respond. We have identified that the area we need to improve is understanding and it has been discovered that if a student chooses a 'satisfactory' response to a question in the NSS survey, not selected 'good' or 'outstanding' then this result automatically counts as 'unsatisfactory'/'unsatisfied' so these responses are pulling the percentage scores down and we need to understand why a student is selecting 'satisfactory'.

#### **6 2016/17 ISS Action Plan Update**

The outcome of the NSS report has provided the College with some action points, some of these are for the whole HE provision and others for individual course areas where the student satisfaction levels were particularly poor. These are HN and FdSc Mechanical Engineering, FdSc Construction Management and FdA Hospitality and Event Management. All of these areas are now showing good progress against their action plans.

The Executive Directors responsible for these areas; G Jefferson (Engineering) and C Harvey (Construction and Hospitality areas) have been talking regularly with students. Engineering students are reporting dramatic improvements in the year compared to last and it has been important to manage the expectations of students as staff, particularly in Engineering, had made promises to students that just could not be delivered. The Chair of Governors, K Golding, who is an Engineering employer commented that he has heard his employees (apprentices) comment about a marked improvement this year on their courses/programmes.

#### ***Leadership and Management***

#### **7 Complaints and Compliments 2016/17 Report**

The report is shared with the Committee for information. It shows that all complaints have been analysed and where appropriate our systems and processes have been adapted to help mitigate the possibility of recurrence. It appears that most of the complaints we receive, when investigated, come down to miscommunication. The Committee asked for the detail of the report to be categorised in some way as it is not entirely clear in its current format what the complaints have been about without looking at the full detail linked in summary. Furthermore, the Committee asked if the complaints data could be triangulated in some way with student survey results to see if there is an increase in the number of complaints from a particular area and if complaints are about the same issues. The Vice Principal for Students and Learning Support, C Shaw, will take this back to the Director of Quality, K Heathcote and provide more detail in the next report to the Committee.

CShaw

Agenda items 4 through to 7 were taken after agenda items 8 and 9.

8 **Workforce Update**  
*Confidential item under paragraph 18(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government*

9 **Framework for Pay**  
*Confidential item under paragraph 18(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government*

R Sadler left the meeting at 4.30pm

10 **Any other business**  
Governors were invited to stay at the College this evening for the Open Event.

The Executive Director, A Adamson, responsible for Maths and English commented that he has been developing a number of KPIs for Maths and English to get to the bottom of what the significant issues appear to be. The team have then set themselves a one-week resolution timeframe and this approach is having a big impact on clearing historical issues with students such as retention.

Members were reminded about the Art Exhibition on Friday this week at Moyse's Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Governors and staff are also invited to attend the University of Suffolk at WSC Annual Ethics Conference on Friday 15 December 2017 covering the topic of the ethics of substance misuse.

**Date of next meeting**

Thursday 1 February 2018 at 4.00pm. Room TG1.16

The meeting closed at 5.10pm