

Minutes of the Tyne Metropolitan College Quality & Students Committee Meeting held at 1 pm on Tuesday 25 November 2014 in the Conference Room at the Coast Road Campus

- PRESENT:** Prof Mary Dunning (Chair)
Dr Graeme Cruickshank
Prof Gary Holmes
Mr Deen Hussain (*until 3.50 pm*)
Mrs Helen Jones (*until 3.35 pm*)
Ms Vivien Shipley
Mr Jon Vincent (*until 3.50 pm*)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs Rosamund Moore, Clerk to the Corporation
Mrs Ann-Marie Crozier, Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development (*until 3.50 pm*)
Mrs Audrey Kingham, Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development (*until 3.50 pm*)
Ms Kirsty Tate, Head of Quality Improvement (*until 3.50 pm*)
Ms Pam Robertson, Head of Student Support (*until 3.50 pm*)
- Presentation** Ms Andrea Cochrane, Head of Preparation for Life and Work (*until 1.45 pm*)
Mr Leon Stewart, Job Centre Co-ordinator (*until 1.45 pm*)

[The meeting started at 1.00 pm]

ACTION

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Ms Robertson was congratulated on her appointment to the new role of Director of Learning Development, a post she would take up on 1 December.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received in respect of Mr Carr and Mr Pearson.

2. Declaration of interest

Mrs Jones in respect of Beacon Hill School and North Tyneside Academy Foundation, and the Principal and Deputy Principals in respect of item 10, restricted section of Committee's Annual Report.

3. Presentation on Preparation for Life and Work Department, including Talent Match

The Head of Preparation for Life and Work, Ms Cochrane, provided an overview of the restructuring within the department and the broadening of the portfolio of work. A key partnership development was with JobCentre Plus (JCP) in North Tyneside and Mr Stewart, the Job Centre Co-ordinator, was spending half a day per week in each of the four branches.

The curriculum was being adapted in order to diversify income, not only via JCP but also through Talent Match, the LA7 Raising Aspirations project and Community Work Placements. (*Note: LA7 now called or North East Combined Authority or NECA*)

Details were provided about Talent Match, a Big Lottery funded project for unemployed people aged 18-24 years who were not engaged in any form of support. Since May 2014, 44 people had joined the programme, with 19 people progressing, for example, into further study or employment, onto an apprenticeship or a work placement. In response to Governors, it was explained that the College's success in delivering Talent Match could only be quantified at the end of the project in December 2016 as the method of measurement was different to that of a typical course and was based on the number of people who stayed on the programme and progressed into employment. Nevertheless, the Committee requested a 12-month update (i.e. for the period May 2014 – May 2015) as well as report after the end of the project in December 2016. Ms Cochrane indicated that the College was subject

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to strict, monthly reporting requirements and regularly contacted the young people by phone to check if they were in work. Governors were pleased to receive the information about Talent Match and felt that the Department should be congratulated on what had been achieved so far.

The LA7 Raising Aspirations project, funded by the European Social Fund, was designed for young people aged 16-18 years who were not in employment, education, or training (NEETs). The College had met the target of 40 young people completing the project by October 2014, with all achieving a qualification and or progressing onto other FE or training programmes, or into work or onto an apprenticeship.

Community Work Placements was a Department for Work and Pensions project for the long-term unemployed. Again this project was subject to stringent reporting requirements by the College. Non-compliance by the people accessing the project could result in their benefits being cut. Of the 37 people who had attended the College, 35 had accessed a work placement and two had progressed into work at the College which was very positive.

Mr Stewart provided further information on JobCentre Plus (JCP) courses and responded to Governors' questions about the outcomes for this group of learners. The Pre-Apprenticeship Course was 10 days in duration over two weeks and the Post Work Course was delivered in 9 days over a three-week period. In this time the College was expected to achieve an 'outcome' for the learners. It was recognised, however, that these individuals, particularly on the Post Work Course, had a range of complex issues and had previously participated in other, long-term programmes with no 'outcome'. Responding to Governors, Mr Stewart indicated that JCP considered the College's 'outcomes' to be very good although there was no official benchmark data.

As part of the Talent Match project, it was explained that the College had delivered a programme for 18 to 24 year olds in partnership with the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Kier, Ingeus and North Tyneside Business Forum. This six-week programme had resulted in 50% progression (into work, onto a Pre-Apprenticeship course or Apprenticeship programmes, or to university).

A video of this specific programme was shown to the Committee at this point. It was noted that this was the first in a series of national programmes to be delivered. Once this programme had been rolled out across the country, the College would be able to use its contents in its own publicity material.

In conclusion, the Committee Chair commented that this was a very energising presentation. It was very pleasing to see the department moving into new areas and Governors acknowledged that this was a challenging cohort of learners.

On behalf of the Committee, the Committee Chair thanked Ms Cochrane and Mr Stewart for attending the meeting and for their very informative presentation about the Department for Preparation for Life and Work, including the Talent Match project.

Ms Cochrane and Mr Stewart left the meeting at 1.45 pm.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2014

Governors approved the minutes, of the Quality & Students Committee meeting held on 10 June 2014 and they were duly signed as a true record.

Under *Matters Arising*, item 5, it was noted that Governors would be able to have an input into the Learner Involvement Strategy which came under the remit of the new Director of Learning Development.

AK / PR

It was also noted that, due to ongoing development, it would be more appropriate to receive a presentation on English and maths at the March meeting as part of the in-year review of the curriculum model.

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The evaluation of the change in the management of NESAs (now under the Department of Care, Sport & Leisure) was scheduled to be presented in March as requested.

**AK
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All other actions had been, or were being, taken forward as agreed.

5. Draft 2013/14 College Self-Assessment Report and 2014/15 Quality Improvement Plan

The Committee Chair asked Governors to provide feedback on the format of the Self-Assessment Report and then the proposed grades. She indicated that if there was any feedback regarding grammar or syntax, this should be given to the Head of Quality Improvement outside of the meeting via the Clerk to the Corporation.

Governors

A variety of views were expressed regarding the readability of the SAR and Governors requested further clarity within the text about how the Senior Leadership Team had determined the proposed and moderated grades. Governors considered that the report covered all aspects of the Common Inspection Framework, but it did not fully draw together the reasons for any declines in provision. Governors needed to see clearly that College managers understood the underlying cause of any decline (e.g. decline in five SSA grades), so that there was a direct line of sight between the SAR and the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The Principal acknowledged that this was the first year in five that there had been a decline and highlighted some of the specific issues that were a challenge for the College, e.g. Functional Skills and Apprenticeships. It was noted that the Skills Funding Agency had given verbal reassurance that it recognised the improvements in Apprenticeship performance.

**KT /
AMC**

In response to questions, the Principal explained that the College was required to present the full Self-Assessment Report to the Governors and that it was a key document both from a management and an Ofsted perspective. In addition, College departments placed reliance on the SAR to develop their Quality Improvement Plans.

Governors also questioned the judgement about equality and diversity, given Ofsted's view about the promotion of equality and diversity in the classroom during the inspection week as well as the red and amber traffic light ratings for objectives within the Equality & Diversity Report (agenda item 8). The Principal observed that the Ofsted inspection and the SAR process had found no discernible gaps between different groups of learners and the Senior Leadership Team had felt that this area was 'good', albeit borderline 'good'. Governors felt that it would be helpful to explain this point in the SAR.

With respect to Governors' questions about how the Senior Leadership Team had determined the grade 2 for Outcomes for Learners, the Principal commented that the SLT had spent the majority of time discussing the grade. Ultimately, the SLT had concluded that the grade 2 was valid, albeit a marginal call. Governors requested a paragraph in the summary section and perhaps in a cover report (both in terms of the improvements and declines) to contextualise the decision by SLT and that a graphical depiction of the rationale for the grade would be helpful.

**KT /
AMC**

The Committee agreed to recommend the 2013/14 Self-Assessment Report to the Corporation Board, subject to the requested amendments being made.

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Quality Improvement Plan 2014/15: The Committee considered the College Quality Improvement Plan for 2014/15 and sought assurance about how the issues would be tackled differently this year to the previous year to ensure that any declines were reversed, especially as some areas for improvement appeared to be carried forward from the previous year.

In response, the Head of Quality Improvement highlighted the specific improvements in SSA 7 related to Hair & Beauty as a result of last year's QIP, while the SSA 7 issues in the 2014/15 QIP related to the Tier 2 level Hospitality & Catering Diploma. This demonstrated the importance of a sustained focus on all

aspects of the Department's offer.

Governors acknowledged that the College was aware of areas for improvement and a discussion followed about the individual constituent parts of a qualification and the broad nature of the offer. Assurance was given about the rigour of the curriculum planning process, mapped to available resources. It was explained that the College QIP was the high level document approved by Governors, but that each department had its own QIP which was reviewed through the Quality Review process. The Principal gave assurance that a thorough review took place to ensure that issues were tackled and did not recur year on year. Governors felt that, where possible, it would be helpful to see trends over a two or three year period. A request was also made for a summary sheet of the current year's QIP for the Corporation Board meeting on 17 December.

AMC

The Committee agreed to recommend the College Quality Improvement Plan for 2014/15, with a summary sheet produced for the Corporation Board meeting of 17 December.

AMC

6. Curriculum Report

The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development presented the confidential Curriculum Report and a separate minute was taken of this item.

Governors considered the Curriculum Report and asked for the data to be also presented through such things as pie charts in future reports.

AK

7. Quality Report

The Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development presented the Quality Report which summarised outcomes from quality improvement and monitoring processes for the first quarter and included a final update of the Quality Improvement Plan for 2013/14.

Given the validation of Good Teaching, Learning & Assessment by Ofsted, the Senior Leadership Team had agreed a differential approach to observations for one year only. This meant that for 2014/15, for Sector Subject Areas with validated SAR grades of 3 or 4 for teaching, learning and assessment would be subject to a formal TLAR using a mix of external and internal observers as usual. Those SSAs with a validated grade of 1 or 2 would not be subject to a formal TLAR for this year, but instead would use the resource for CPD activity to further develop and share innovative practice. It was confirmed, in response to Governors, that TMC would receive more intensive support.

The above approach was intended to support Ofsted's recommendation to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by encouraging staff to take risks and try new approaches. In 2015/16, TLARs would focus on measuring the impact of this activity.

The report also covered the outcomes of satisfaction surveys and the National Student Survey (NSS) conducted by Ipsos MORI to gather opinions of final year HE students on the quality of their courses. The excellent outcomes of the NSS survey showing overall satisfaction of 100% ranked TyneMet at the top of providers of Higher Education, as had been reported both in the press and to the Corporation Board.

The new starters' survey for FE students, administered independently by QDP, demonstrated high levels of satisfaction with an overall differential of +6 against benchmark. Areas for improvement centred on the enrolment experience and individual learner action planning. The Director of Funding & Planning had recently taken on management responsibility for the Gateway function and would be reviewing the enrolment process. Similarly, the newly appointed Director of Learning Development would undertake an audit of the use of ProMonitor as a tool for recording targets and action plans.

Attention was drawn to the final update of the 2013/14 Quality Improvement Plan. Overall progress had been disappointing with actions failing to have the desired

impact on outcomes for learners in particular. Nevertheless, significant progress had been made with regard to improving Apprenticeship provision. The College had received verbal assurance from the Skills Funding Agency that the Notice of Concern monitoring linked to Apprenticeship provision would be lifted.

Governors

- **endorsed changes to the approach to TLARs for 2014/15;**
- **welcomed the positive outcome of Higher Education Student Survey and that the action plan would be confirmed;**
- **welcomed the positive outcome of the New Starters' Survey and noted that an action plan would be confirmed; and**
- **endorsed the final outcome of the 2013/14 Quality Improvement Plan (full and summary QIP).**

8. Equality and Diversity Report

The Committee considered the Equality and Diversity Report. In terms of the outcomes of the 2013/14 equality and diversity objectives, two had been fully achieved, three partially achieved and one not achieved.

The Principal confirmed that the College examined the data from a variety of angles and that there were no discernible gaps in the achievement of different groups of learners, as confirmed by Ofsted in the May 2014 inspection. The Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development also reported that there had been a very positive discussion at the College's Equality and Diversity Committee meeting about ways of promoting equality and diversity.

The Principal responded to Governors' questions about how the equality and diversity objectives might be expanded, confirming that they did not necessarily have to be quantifiable. One Governor suggested that the objectives might be broadened and the Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development indicated that this would be taken on board and an amendment made.

AMC

The Committee agreed to recommend the Equality and Diversity Report for 2013/14, including the outcome of equality and diversity objectives for 2013/14 and proposed objectives for 2014/15 to the Corporation Board.

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Single Equality Policy, issue 4: The Head of Quality Improvement drew attention to the changes to the revised Single Equality Policy, issue 4, shown in red text.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Single Equality Policy, issue 4 to the Corporation Board in December.

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9. Transition from Learner Services to Learning Development Directorate

Item 9.b was taken out of order:

b) Student Disciplinary Procedure, issue 5

Governors requested the addition of a reference to the discretion that might be applied in respect of a learner with learning difficulties, or a learner with a mental health issue. The Deputy Principal: Finance & Corporate Development indicated that the College's existing '*Framework for managing challenging Behaviour*' could be referenced in this regard. Following questions regarding para 2.4, the Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development indicated she would check if there needed to be any reference to the University of Sunderland's procedure in respect of HE students.

AK

Subject to the above amendments, the Committee agreed to recommend the Student Disciplinary Procedure, issue 5 to the Corporation Board.

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Mrs Jones left the meeting at 3.35 pm.

a) Marketing & PR Strategy 2014/15

The Committee noted the information provided in the Executive Summary of the Marketing & PR Strategy 2014/15.

The Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Business Development presented the report outlining the transition from Learner Services to the Learning Development Directorate, the focus of the new role, and the interim arrangements which were in place until Mrs Robertson took up her post on 1 December.

The Committee considered and noted the report on the Transition from Learner Services to Learning Directorate.

10. Committee 2013/14 Annual Self-Assessment and Draft Annual Report

The Clerk to the Corporation Board had drafted the Committee's Annual Report and Self-Assessment for 2013/14. This report, together with the restricted section on senior post holder performance would be presented to the Corporation Board in December and used by the Governance, Performance & Search Committee in February for the purposes of assessing the performance of the Principal and Deputy Principals.

The Committee agreed to present its Annual Self-Assessment and Annual Report for 2013/14 to the Corporation Board on 17 December.

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At 3.50 pm the Student Governor, Principal, Deputy Principals, Head of Quality Improvement and Head of Student Support left the meeting.

11. Any Other Business

None

12. Assessment of Impact of Committee's Decisions and Actions

To aid the production of the annual report of the Quality & Students Committee through an analysis of the outcomes and of the impact of the Committee's work on the Corporation Board and the College, it was noted that the Committee had:

- Agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board for approval the 2013/14 Self-Assessment Report, subject to amendment
- Agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board for approval the 2014/15 Quality Improvement Plan and requested a summary sheet of the QIP for the December Board meeting
- Endorsed the changes to the approach to TLARs for 204/15
- Endorsed the final outcome of the 2013/14 Quality Improvement Plan
- Agreed to recommend the Equality and Diversity Report to the Corporation Board, including the equality and diversity objectives for 2014/15
- Agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board for approval the Single Equality Policy, issue 4
- Agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board for approval the Student Disciplinary Procedure, issue 5, subject to amendment
- Agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board the Committee's Annual Self-Assessment and Annual Report for 2013/14

13. Any confidential items to be declared non-confidential or non-exempt following this meeting or conversely any items to be declared confidential or exempt.

- No changes were made in respect of confidentiality

The meeting closed at 3.50 pm.

Next meeting: Tuesday 10 March 2015, at 1pm – 3.30 pm, in the Conference Room, Coast Road Campus (*to be confirmed pending outcome of Governance Review*)