

**REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD**  
**HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at 2.00pm**  
**Committee Room, Reaseheath Hall**

Present: Meredydd David (Principal) (*items 1 - 4.3 only*)  
 Dr Ian Graham (independent, Chair)  
 Francesca Francis (independent, co-opted)  
 Richard Ratcliffe (independent)  
 Emily Thrane (independent)  
 Dr Karen Willis (independent, co-opted)

In attendance: Rachel Ellis-Jones, Assistant Principal and Dean of HE  
 Dave Kynaston, Vice Principal (*from item 4.5 onwards*)  
 Shaun Williams (HE Quality Enhancement Manager)  
 Dr Jane Richardson (Curriculum Area Manager, HE)  
 Jackie Schillinger, Clerk.  
 Shane Wild, HE Student Data and Records Officer

tem	Content	Action
1.	<p><b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Anne McKay and Hannah Holwell. Meredydd David gave his apologies for needing to leave the meeting early due to an external appointment and confirmed that the Vice Principal would join the meeting late, also due to an external appointment.</p>	
2.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>The following interests were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Richard Ratcliffe, director of DART limited</li> <li>• Emily Thrane, director of DART limited and member of the University Council, University of Chester</li> <li>• Karen Willis, employee of University of Chester.</li> </ul> <p>No specific agenda items were identified as giving rise to a conflict of interest.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The following matters arose:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) outcome has been delayed due to purdah, and is covered in more detail later on the agenda;</li> <li>• Francesca Francis reiterated her offer of support in looking over the HE Complaints Policy once an updated draft is available, which was kindly received and would be followed up over the summer.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p>	<p><b>HE DEVELOPMENTS</b></p> <p>The Assistant Principal and Dean of HE (the Dean) presented a policy update provided by the Guild of HE. Discussion followed on the impact of Brexit on international students, the TEF developments and the significance of the government amendments to the HE Bill confirming institutional autonomy and ensuring that the sector retains responsibility for assessing academic standards through an independent quality body.</p> <p>The HE Quality Enhancement Manager provided members with an update on the College’s TEF application, noting the official outcome is expected within a few weeks. He confirmed that the College expects a Bronze rating and that it has prepared a press statement, which will be available should there be press interest.</p> <p>The Dean presented the draft HE strategy, based on the strategic development days involving governors and managers in the early Spring term. She took members through the six objectives for 2017-18, the external drivers affecting HE strategy, the potential merger with North Shropshire College, the capital investment in 2017-18 and the potential short-term disruption that will need to be managed carefully, especially for final year students who will not see the benefit in the same way as others. She confirmed that recruitment for 2017-18 is looking strong and above budgeted targets. Questions and comments were invited. The key issues arising in the discussion that followed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach to part-time students recruitment and mode of delivery, with the need for an innovative approach highlighted;</li> <li>• The need to ensure that programmes have a part time route available, on validation;</li> <li>• The mission could perhaps be expressed more succinctly and also to consider encompassing quality and the growth of the individual in terms of learning and personal development;</li> <li>• Consider, alongside the maths and English objectives, a wider and positive embedding of ICT and higher level skills within the curriculum;</li> <li>• Consider how to apply the objective on research and knowledge transfer to ensure outcomes are effective and time allowances are used to add value to the College and staff members;</li> <li>• A number of comments on the structure, format working and timeframe for the strategy were made and taken on board by the Dean for consideration in finalising the draft.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Meredydd David left the meeting</i></p>

<p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p>	<p>The HE Quality Enhancement Manager presented the OFFA Access Agreement, explaining the historic context to the targets and the re-alignment that the College was carrying out, with the support of OFFA. The draft agreement has been submitted to OFFA and the College is awaiting its response. Members agreed that the proportions seems about right. They suggested that it would be helpful for the draft to be available earlier next year in order to align with the Spring HE Committee meeting and that the College may wish to consider a bursary to support part-time access. A small number of comments on the detailed wording/corrections were highlighted and the Dean agreed to amend these following the meeting.</p> <p>The Curriculum Area Manager, HE, presented her Research, Scholarship and Knowledge Transfer report, with details of the Ethics Policy review and comment by the Committee. She updated members on a knowledge transfer event to be held next week, on the plans to better use the scholarly activity fund and the planned skills mapping exercise within the Faculty. Members discussed how project results would be disseminated more widely and considered the annual teaching and learning HE Conference a good way to share results. The Committee queried the RAG-rating on the report as too negative taking into account the activities now taking place. The Curriculum Area Manager, HE explained that the Faculty was not as advanced as wished at this stage, but that there is now a level of progress established that should show a much more positive RAG-rating next academic year. The Committee would pass on any comments on the draft Research Ethics Policy and it would go forward for Board approval in due course.</p>	<p><i>Dave Kynaston joined the meeting</i></p>
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p>	<p><b>HE PERFORMANCE TARGETS MONITORING</b></p> <p>The HE Student Data Manager presented the in year retention, attendance, achievement and applications report. He also provided an update of the latest data on screen in the meeting. Members welcomed the improved picture on retention this year and the very strong overall picture on applications for 2017-18. Variations and pockets of concern were discussed in more detail. Members queried the approach to minimum programme numbers and, conversely, whether the over target recruiting programmes will be sufficiently resourced next year. The Dean explained the plans in place to support larger numbers and the approach to low numbers in some areas. It was confirmed that the part time programmes will be promoted at the forthcoming innovation showcase event.</p> <p>The HE Student Data Manager updated the Committee in changes to the way in which data is reported and the challenges for and the impact of these changes on the College. Members welcomed the update and were assured that the College is addressing the issue now to be in a good position to comply and effectively manage the new data reporting requirements. Members discussed the new HE website and the new information requirements to ensure students are fully informed about their course. Members suggested using profiles of past students as examples of the kind of careers that students move into following study at Reaseheath.</p>	

<p><b>6.</b></p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p><b>QUALITY MONITORING REPORTS</b></p> <p>The following quality monitoring reports were shared for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEFCE Annual Provider review outcome as ‘meets expectations;’</li> <li>• Student Pulse Survey data, showing a much improved picture in areas of weakness last year, including part-time student satisfaction;</li> <li>• A summary of the Quality Health Check report and the actions that the Faculty is taking forward to improve its teaching, learning and assessment;</li> <li>• Higher Education Support Team Audit;</li> <li>• Complaints and Appeals monitoring report;</li> <li>• HE Academic Board meeting minutes.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee requested that the Complaints monitoring report include a column in future to confirm whether a complaint was upheld and what action was taken.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>The Committee reviewed its responsibilities under its Terms of Reference and considered that it had met these in its first year of operation as a new Committee. It further approved its terms for the 2017-18 academic year and recommended these for approval to the Board.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>MATTERS TO REPORT TO THE BOARD</b></p> <p>The committee agreed to recommend the following to the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of its Terms of Reference for 2017-18</li> </ul>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>The Clerk informed members that the Faculty had recently undergone an internal audit on HE Funding and achieved substantial assurance. This report would go through to Audit Committee and would in due course be emailed to the Committee members for information.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 31 October 2017 at 2pm.</p>	

*The meeting closed at 4.10pm.*

Signed:

Dated: