

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 June 2017 at 2.00pm
Committee Room, Reaseheath Hall

Present: Dr Ian Graham (independent)
 Rob Icke (staff)
 Anne McKay (staff)
 David Pearson (independent)
 Richard Ratcliffe (independent)
 Emily Thrane (Chair)
 Kerri-Anne Williams (student)

In attendance: Matt Gower, Assistant Principal Quality and Learner Services
 Jo Maher, Assistant Principal
 Dave Kynaston, Vice Principal
 Paul Spearritt, Quality Manager
 Ben Craig (*items 1 – 4 only*)
 Jackie Schillinger, Clerk.

Item	Content	Action
1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Charlie Woodcock, Meredydd David and Alastair Taylor.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>The following interests were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Ratcliffe, director of DART limited • Emily Thrane, director of DART limited and member of the University Council, University of Chester <p>No specific agenda items were identified as giving rise to a conflict of interest.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes and matters arising</p> <p>3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2017 were approved as a correct record, (subject to the correct spelling of Rob Icke’s name) and signed by the Chair.</p>	

3.2	<p>The following matters arose:</p> <p>Minute 5: The Vice Principal confirmed that the query on engineering performance data would be picked at agenda item 8.</p> <p>Minute 5: A member queried whether the college had any destination data for those students that had to leave for disciplinary reasons. It was confirmed that leavers in the first six weeks are followed up by letter and phone call but that it is often difficult to engage these learners. In addition, if the leavers are NEETS they are picked up in local authority data.</p>	
4.	<p>Quality improvement strategy</p> <p>Ben Craig, the college's e-learning coach, presented an update on the college's e-learning strategy, including examples on screen of the resources used to support learning. The presentation and discussion that followed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on the Techhub and lecture capture; • The work of the e-learning coaches; • The Farm Live collaborative project; • Virtual 360° facilities viewing and potential to support new starters and anxious students at college; • Online training packages for staff; • Moodle availability has been very good, with no downtime/technical issues <p>The student governor provided her input on use of technology at the college, highlighting in particular the value of the interactive classroom resources such as Nearpod and Kahoot. The committee thanked Ben Craig for his presentation and welcomed the progress made. The committee requested an annual update on the progress of the e-learning strategy.</p>	<p>JS agenda June 2018</p>
5. 5.1	<p>Quality Improvement Strategy</p> <p>The Assistant Principal, Quality and Learner Services presented the Quality Improvement Plan update. The committee welcomed the clear, RAG-rated report, on the 2016/17 quality improvement plan. A member asked whether the increased number of missed registers showing in the data was significant in relation to attendance data. The Vice Principal explained the context and the college's view that the data is not significant as it does not relate to core register for core subjects. The committee questioned the value of including this data measurement if it is not significant and recommended that the college review the need for it, acknowledging that the college will want to take all factors into account before deciding what is best. Following discussion, the committee took assurance that the college is moving forwards solidly, whilst recognising that it is not yet outstanding as is its target, with further work needed to increase the pace of improvement in the coming year.</p>	<p>VP to review need for current missed register data with curriculum group.</p>

5.2	<p>The Lead Teaching and Learning Coach (also a staff governor) presented her teaching and learning update report for term 2. The Assistant Principal, Quality and Learner Services provided an additional presentation on the impact and progress of the new approach to quality improvement. His presentation covered the successes and challenges of 2016/17 and progress for 2017/18. Plans for next year were shared, including an increased number of learning walks with shorter more focused feedback for staff, a move away from summative observation grading, fewer observation grade indicators, new templates and minimum expectations for lesson plans, new content for the teaching pathways and the data dashboard that governors will see next year. Questions and discussion followed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff appetite for the new system is good, and as an evolving system over the next few years it is being received well; • Steps could be taken to obtain the students’ views on the teaching and quality observation approach, as it may be that students value aspects differently to us as practitioners. College managers will consider how this could be done, perhaps via quick temperature checks, Moodle surveys or to pilot an approach to encompass this on the Lean project in Agriculture; • Steps the College is taking to retain good staff, including close monitoring of staff turnover data, exit interviews and workload analysis, especially in Higher Education where some detailed benchmark analysis work has informed budget planning for 2017-18 to ensure that the departments are sufficiently resourced; • Harder to recruit areas, such as engineering, although fully staffed all year, remain a continuing focus for recruiting and retaining good staff; • Thanks from the Committee for the very useful update and a request for the dashboard data to be a standing item on the Committee’s agenda, with a formal report on the teaching and learning quality strategy on an annual basis; • A request for the data to inform managers and governors on outstanding staff and what the College is doing to keep these staff. 	<p>JS dashboard on agenda autumn term, rather than full Teaching and Learning Report.</p>
6.1	<p>6. English and maths</p> <p>The Committee had received the English and maths Quality Improvement Plan and focused on English and maths improvement actions, reported by the Assistant Principal, Curriculum. She reported that the mock examinations held earlier in the year proved very useful in planning for the GCSE exams, currently taking place. A huge effort by the exams team and by all staff at College has enabled the College to meet the logistical challenge of so many exams and</p>	<p>English and maths report at next meeting.</p>

	<p>concessions this year. The College is projecting an increase in the maths GCSE results on last year, but it is too soon to say on English due to the new exam specification. In terms of next year, the Assistant Principal, Curriculum provided assurance that a full English and maths staffing team is in place and the subject learning coaches in each department are ready for September. She reported that detailed work has been undertaken as part of the current procurement exercise for the awarding bodies and this is expected to positively impact next year's performance.</p> <p>6.2 The Committee welcomed the good foundations that have been put in place this year and suggested that the direction of travel has now established itself as positive, which should be recognised in the RAG-rated reporting. The Committee encouraged the College to recognise and celebrate the successes, however small, as it is important to start the new academic year from a positive and motivating position to secure and build on the improvements seen this year.</p> <p>6.3 On behalf of the Committee, the Committee Chair thanked the Vice Principal, Curriculum for her contribution to the English and maths provision and to the College in general and wished her all the best for the future, as she takes up a Principal role elsewhere.</p>	
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>Quality Monitoring Reports</p> <p>The meeting received the following reports for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulse 2 student survey report • Destinations data report • complaints monitoring FE and apprenticeships • FE Academic Board Minutes <p>The key points made in discussion on the above items were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall the Pulse 2 survey results are in line with previous FE Choices results, with this year's FE Choices results not yet available; • It is important to ensure the loop is closed back to the teaching and learning team in relation to relevant survey results; • A correction to the wording in the survey was noted; • Question and discussion on two curriculum areas with weaker results on 'likely to recommend' provided assurance that the College had drilled down into the detail and the results related to the loss of a staff member; • The Destinations data report showed strong data on destinations with 97% positive destinations; • The staff governor, also the College Careers Adviser, provided detail on how the College follows up students to ensure that the data is robust; • The nationally published external data does not recognise 'self-employed' as a positive destination, which hits the College data due to the high number of self-employed destinations within the land-based industries. However, an exception to this is the Engineering data where the College 	

	<p>has many block release programme where students are in employment;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on the complaints paper was provided in the meeting, with two of the reported complaints now resolved at stage 3. 	
8.	<p>Performance Data, FE and Apprenticeships</p> <p>The Vice Principal provided a summary of performance data for 2016-17 and an update on applications for 2017-18. He provided further detail on the Engineering data that had been queried in the previous meeting. He confirmed that the table on page 5 showed accurate information that indicated a potential success rate of around 81% at year end. Overall, he reported a strong data picture, with apprenticeships success in particular tracking on target for 81%, up from 79% last year and significantly above the sector average. In response to a question on equality and diversity achievement gaps, the Vice Principal reported that there are no significant gaps in achievement, but that a slight difference for students that qualify for free school meals has been identified and will be considered by managers in more detail. The Vice Principal provided assurance that the College is confident that it will meet its budgeted recruitment targets for 2017-18 and may well exceed targets. In response to a query, he confirmed that recruitment efforts are proving effective this year and no additional action on recruitment is necessary. However, he updated members on the decision taken this year to extend the free transport offer, in line with market competition.</p>	
9.	<p>Safeguarding update report</p> <p>9.1 The Vice Principal presented the termly safeguarding update report. The designated governor for safeguarding and the Committee welcomed the report. The Committee noted that the increased number of key staff qualified to level 3, including the designated safeguarding governor. The Assistant Principal, Quality and Learner Services updated members on forthcoming all staff development training on PREVENT from the Greater Manchester and North Wales Counter terrorism teams and a planned critical incident lockdown drill at the July staff development day.</p> <p>9.2 The Vice Principal highlighted the continuing increase in anxiety and mental health issues amongst students and the resulting challenge for the College in ensuring a safe environment for these students. He referenced the current national debate on mental health issues in the sector with the AoC North West Regional Director working closely with Reaseheath and others to highlight the need for funding for the college sector. A detailed discussion followed. The main points coming out of the discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A huge increase in the number of examinations is considered to be having an impact on student levels of stress and anxiety; • Latest social media trends were discussed and the College has experience in how these can harm young people's mental health, with growing concern in particular around self-harm and suicide; 	

- Confirmation that the self-harm data for the under 18 students is robust and detailed should an audit or serious case review occur;
- The safeguarding report could helpfully group more of the data under mental health headings as much of it does relate to mental health in a number of different strands;
- Assurance that the data held by the College is detailed and likely to be more detailed than general further education colleges, but that benchmarking what this college does with other Landex colleges with residential provision would be a useful exercise;
- The critical test is if something went wrong, looking back, could we say that we acted reasonably in terms of escalation of concerns, referral to agencies and action to chase up and close the loop on referrals and actions – the College will revisit its procedures in this regard to check they are as robust as possible;
- Confirmation that parents are always engaged at an early stage, with under 18 students as well over 18 students, who are judged to be vulnerable adults in this situation. The College could perhaps also look at how parents could be helped to cope better and therefore be a better support to their children;
- The growing need for professional support for students, and especially residential students including under 18s, when it comes to mental health and anxiety, and the lack of external support available at the moment;
- The need to continue to take this increasing trend into account when budget planning and resourcing;
- The increased pressure on student services, which has invested resource into its wellbeing team in 2016-17, and the need for the College to continue to seek support from external agencies with responsibility for providing professional support, including the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG);
- The College will proactively follow up with the CCG on how it can help to support the work of the College by ensuring that the local commissioning of health services around the College take these needs into account, for example by assessing the need and considering community psychiatric nurses coming into college, the availability of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and the provision of local support groups, for example a self-harm support group;
- The Vice Principal will proactively follow up with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and seek a formal meeting minute at the next LSCB meeting to promote further action on provision of external professional support to help the College meet the increasing mental health challenge.

9.3

The Committee recognised that the College is coming under increased pressure as a result of increased exam stress and mental health issues in general and that these issues could have serious impact on the individual students, the College and the local authority agencies. As a result, the Committee recommended:

- that the College ensure its own safeguarding systems are as robust as they can be in proportion to the risk;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the College proactively seeks support for additional resource, working with partner colleges and the AoC North West to urgently explore with those agencies with formal responsibility in this area so that the FE sector can access external professional resources and that agencies and colleges can work more closely together; and • engage Ofsted on the issue to explore their approach to the challenge. 	
10.	Self-Assessment of the Committee	
10.1	<p>The Clerk presented the Committee Self-Assessment Report. The Committee considered its performance against the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its Terms of Reference for 2016/17; • The areas of the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges within its remit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The board must have close regard to the voice of its students and the quality of the student experience, which should be central to all board decisions.</i> • <i>The board must provide a safe environment and have a robust and regularly assessed and monitored safeguarding policy.</i> • <i>The board must foster exceptional teaching and learning. The board must, where appropriate, seek to secure coherent provision for students that leads to further learning or apprenticeships and/or employment. The board must ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for effective oversight of the quality and inclusivity of the learning experience.</i> • <i>The board must be aware of the expectations of external bodies and in particular their expectations of good quality.</i> • <i>The board must see the results of student surveys and be able to monitor improvement plans.</i> • The targets set out in the governance development plan within its remit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensure the priority focus is on key areas of improvement for the college identified in its SAR and ensure excellent support and challenge in these priority areas.</i> • <i>College achieving realistic and sustainable English and Maths performance improvement.</i> 	
10.2	<p>In discussion, the Committee considered that it had fulfilled its responsibilities and remained fit for purpose. It reviewed its Terms of Reference and recommended them in their current form to the Board for approval for the 2017-18 academic year.</p>	
11.	Matters to report to the board or other committee	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Learning strategy progress; • Monitoring progress against the 2016/17 Quality Improvement Plan and KPIs; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress on the Maths and English improvement strategy, which will remain a focus at each committee meeting; • Teaching and learning performance and progress of the new quality strategy; • Learner survey data, learner performance data, complaints monitoring data and academic board minutes; • Safeguarding and in particular the increasing challenge of supporting young people with mental health problems and the proactive approach that the college is taking, with sector partners, to access funding. 	
12.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>The Chair of the Board presented thanks on behalf of the Committee to the Committee Chair, Emily Thrane as she steps down as a governor, for her huge contribution to the Quality and Standards Committee, the College, its students and its wider community during her time as a governor and former Chair of the Board. He echoed all those present in saying that she will be sorely missed by the Committee and that the College hoped to welcome her back as an external co-opted member of the Audit Committee next year.</p>	
13.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 9 November 2017 at 2pm.</p>	

The meeting closed at 4.45pm

Signed:

Dated: