

**MINUTES OF QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7TH
MARCH 2017**

Present:	Ethan Bartlett	Student
	Jayne Caslin	Staff
	Sue Hopper	External (Chair)
	Tony McDermott	External
	Tom McInerney	External (minutes 99 to 152)
In attendance:	Thalia Bell	Deputy Principal
	Alan Brown	Assistant Principal (Quality)
	Donna Elston	Entry to Occupational Studies Co-ordinator (minutes 93 to 99)
	Paula Mitchell	Programme Manager (Kingsway) (minutes 93 to 99)
	Lesley Venables	Clerk to the Governors

PART ONE

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

93 Apologies for absence were received from Alan Bennett (External Governor).

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

94 No declarations of interest were received.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 29TH NOVEMBER 2016

95 **Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th November 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

96 The Committee received a list of actions resulting from the previous meeting and noted that all items were either in progress or had been completed.

ENTRY TO OCCUPATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAMME – PRESENTATION

97 The Programme Manager for Kingsway and the Co-ordinator gave a presentation on this part of the College's provision, outlining current levels of performance, future plans and new developments.

98 A variety of case studies of individual learners was shared with the Committee and it was noted that this area had received an outstanding external verifier report in 2015/2016.

Tom McInerney joined the meeting.

99 The level of retention was still strong in most curriculum areas and a significant proportion of learners had progressed to mainstream College courses.

SPECIAL MEASURES REPORT

100 The Assistant Principal presented a report on the courses that were currently part of the College's Special Measures process, including RAG-ratings to determine the level of progress made. These gradings would be reviewed during the next cycle of monitoring meetings. The headings used in the report aligned to the criteria that would be considered by Ofsted inspectors and reflected the College's own priorities in terms of improvement. Of these, ensuring that the right staff were assigned to curriculum areas had the most significant impact on performance levels.

101 It was noted that the number of programmes in Special Measures had decreased compared to the previous academic year.

CURRICULUM REPORT

102 The Deputy Principal presented a report on performance against key curriculum indicators, including retention and attendance for 2016/2017 and curriculum planning for 2017/2018.

103 Governors were advised of the Government proposals to 'stream' entry routes to HE and employment, either through academic or technical qualifications. There would be 15 curriculum areas and 15 qualifications with one awarding body to provide maximum flexibility for providers. Management was currently analysing the likely impact on the College's provision and resourcing. A further report would be provided to the Committee's June meeting.

104 As part of the reforms there was a commitment for the Government funding one transition year for learners, rather than multiple years, which would adversely impact those students on Entry Level programmes who progressed into mainstream College courses.

105 There would also be a requirement for all students following the technical route to have a 3 month work placement as part of their course, without any additional funding. Management felt that some learners would not be ready for this step and local employers may well be resistant to taking on work placements of that duration despite good links.

106 In addition, in 2017/2018 there would be wide-ranging reforms to education, such as the Apprenticeship Levy, the transfer of Adult Education Budgets to Local Enterprise Partnerships, new qualifications and a focus on digital skills and continued emphasis on English and maths. There had been a recent announcement of an additional £500m nationally for the development of the skills agenda, but details of this initiative were yet to be published.

107 The Deputy Principal advised that the number of High Needs learners had increased significantly in 2016/2017 for both Level 2 and Level 3 vocational and A Level students. Information was provided by campus and it was noted that this put additional demands on staffing and other resources during the examination period now that BTEC qualifications were having examinations as well as A Levels.

108 Information was received on the overall achievement levels to date for apprenticeships and timely achievement rates. These figures would improve by the end of the year and would continue to be monitored closely at the Committee's next meeting.

109 Following the introduction of a new quality assurance regime, the Higher Education Funding Council has now assessed the College's submission and governors were advised that no concerns had been identified at the preliminary stage.

110 The Committee received a summary of the outcomes of the recent A Level Mock exams, which were as follows:

111 There had been a significant increase in the number of learners enrolled for 2017/2018.

112 Governors were reminded that fewer qualifications were now funded by the Government, which meant that students were encouraged to take out loans to support their education and this had had a negative impact on enrolments.

113 The Deputy Principal reported that a cross-College group had been established to review current information-sharing systems and possible changes to the existing Virtual Learning Environment.

QAR AND LEAGUE TABLES

114 The Assistant Principal (Quality) presented a paper that compared the College's internally-generated data from that derived from the QAR published in January 2017. The Committee was reminded that this information would be used by Ofsted during any future visits.

115 It was noted that there was minimal difference between the two sets of data. Due to the achievement of a small number of learners since the submission of the QAR data, this difference amounted to 0.2%. The trend evidenced in the QAR was considered to be more important than the actual yearly numbers and it was vital that the College continued to improve its performance.

116 Compared to 2015/2016, the level of achievement for apprenticeships had reduced, due to changes in the methodology used to calculate the data.

117 Information was provided to the Committee on the College's place in the national league tables.

GREAT TEACHING INITIATIVE

118 Detailed information was presented on the elements of the Great Teaching initiative, which had been designed to enable the College to improve its teaching and learning and, hopefully, achieve an Ofsted grading of 'outstanding' at the next inspection.

119 Lesson observations were supportive and not graded, with feedback provided to teachers by the reviewers and by students against the Education & Training Foundation standards. The choice of the classes to be observed was made by lecturers, with some deliberately targeting more challenging groups of teaching sessions.

120 All teaching staff were given 1:1 coaching sessions, by someone other than their line managers. Each set 3 targets that they wanted to achieve within the academic year.

121 The next stage of the process would be to undertake peer observations. The impact of the initiative on the achievement of individual targets would be assessed in 2017/2018.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AND SAFEGUARDING

122 Governors received the termly monitoring report on how the College was narrowing any gaps in achievement between different groups of learners.

123 There continued to be a high number of safeguarding cases, with a total of 79 reported from September 2016 to February 2017 (compared to 76 to January 2017).

124 The College continued to work closely with the Local Safeguarding & Children's Board to ensure that relevant information was shared between relevant authorities.

POLICIES

125 **Resolved -** That the Board **be RECOMMENDED** to approve a policy on Complaints

ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE BOARD

126 The Committee identified a series of points that the Chair would report back to the December Board meeting:

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

27th June 2017 5.00 p.m.