

**HERTFORD REGIONAL COLLEGE CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
QUALITY, STANDARDS & CURRICULUM PLANNING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2019**



714 PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

714.1 Attendance, Apologies for Absence & Welcom

Membership: Nathan Daech Green
Trish Hawkins
Tony Medhurst
Jan Wing (Chair)

In Attendance: Mike Carver
Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Ryan Cowell (Item 2 only)
Katrina Dougherty
Susan Feltham (Item 2 only)
Angela McLean
Kam Nandra

Apologies: Charlotte Simmonds

Absent: Luke Taylor

714.2 Declarations of Interest & Confidential Items

There were no Declarations of Interest.

714.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 May 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

714.4 Matters Arising

With all matters covered on the agenda, there were no matters arising on which to report.

715 COMMITTEE BRIEFING

An interactive session was provided by the Directors of Curriculum updating members on the curriculum intent and priorities for each curriculum area, which included:

- Consideration and examples of the ways in which learners were prepared with the skills required by employers and the world of work, in particular entrepreneurial elements applicable across professions
- Knowledge of the learner journey and their overall aims and ambitions

Discussion included:

- Questioning the planning and preparation of the curriculum intent plans welcoming confirmation of the liaison with employers and other key stakeholders to ensure the appropriate alignment with the respective current needs and requirements.

- The ways in which such information was shared with learners with observations shared from Governor Learning Walks where learners had articulated their aims and ambitions.

After observing that the information would be invaluable to all members, it was requested for the presentation to be included on the agenda at the forthcoming meeting of the Corporation.

The Curriculum Directors were thanked for an interesting presentation.

716 PERFORMANCE MONITORING: REPORTS FOR REVIEW OR APPROVAL

716.1 College Performance 2018/19

In the form of Year-end and Annual Reports, confirmation was provided of year-end activity and progress in the implementation of quality improvement objectives for 2018/19, comprising:

716.1a Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TLA) Report

Providing an overview of the year-end position, consideration included:

- The 100% completion of observation of those teachers (in scope) of classroom-based learning with 89% of observations judged to be overall effective, welcoming confirmation of a 4% increase on 2018/19 and observing the correlation with the improved final 16-18 achievement rate of 88%.
- Of apprenticeship assessors, two ended the year as 'not yet effective'. Of these, one assessor had since left the college and one was being supported by the ASTLP team.

There was further review of the observation data reflecting on the assessment of TLA standards by directorate and curriculum area. The overall year-end position of 92% effective was welcomed, noting the majority of curriculum areas to be performing at or above an average of 90% effective/highly effective across the standards. The strengths identified were considered especially noting the strong links to employers and work experience and members' feedback received of positive experience in this regard. There then was focus on those areas of concern. Responding to questioning:

- Of the management of performance in the event of decline outside of the observation window, welcoming reassurance of the processes in place to ensure that it was maintained or improved.
- Confirmation was provided of the particular support prioritised for the curriculum areas of Engineering and Business
- Members were advised of the areas to prioritise for improvement including, attendance and punctuality, target setting and the checking of learning.

Following discussion, the report was noted.

716.1b Complaints Annual Report

It was reported that the number of formal complaints received during 2018/19 had declined in comparison to the number received over the previous three academic years with:

- The number of complaints remaining highest at the Broxbourne Campus.

- The number received by term was relatively evenly spread, although Term 1 remained the term for the most number of complaints. Interest was expressed in seeing the term 1 data for the current year to ascertain the extent of any improvement compared with the previous year.
- The majority of complaints concerning the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment with an increase in the number received around cancellation of classes/timetabling, and discrimination/bullying with the latter to be monitored observing it to be an area of heightened awareness.
- A high proportion of complaints continuing to be received from in ENGI/MVEH/Science, areas where it was observed, issues had been identified
- Three complaints appealed all of which were managed in-line with the Complaints Procedure.

There was response to points of clarification, following which the report was noted.

716.1c Strategic Objectives: Learner Outcomes

An update was presented on learner outcomes for the 2018/19 academic year.

The overall trajectory of improvement was recognised with:

- Improved retention and attendance rates; and,
- At 85.6%, Achievement rates showing performance overall in-line with 2017/18 and the most recent sector benchmark data.

Members commended the improved performance in the thirteen out of twenty-eight curriculum areas, noting a further six areas remaining high with achievement over 90% and twenty areas above the national rate. Questioning the performance of the under-performing areas, Construction, Public Services and Access, confirmation was welcomed of improvement by 9.8%, 11.1% and 28.5% respectively with all now to be above the weighted national average.

Attention then focused on:

- Querying the 2% decline in overall vocational achievement, noted to be attributed to a predicted 4% decline in 19+ vocational achievement and behind the weighted national average. Responding to questioning, members were advised of those sub-contracting partners not delivering to prediction, confirming that it would be the subject of particular focus going forward; and underperformance in the College based areas of Plumbing, ACAM and Engineering. There was particular questioning of performance in Engineering noting the impact of in-year staffing issues, now resolved with attention now on improving quality and curriculum intent, noting from members observations of improvement emerging.
- The combined achievement for Maths and English GCSE high grade. After recognising the 1.4% improvement, the 1.9% decline in GCSE English High Grades was observed. Whilst 3.3% above the national rate, there was question of the decline. After reporting it to be largely attributed to the College strategy for Grade 2 learners, it was noted that data suggested that this approach supported good value added and progress for English with the matter to be the subject of further report at the next meeting.

- Noting that Apprenticeship achievement and timeliness rates highlighted a three-year declining trend. Acknowledging performance to be disappointing and unacceptable, Management confirmed that it was the subject of focussed attention to turn performance around with the matter to be the subject of further report at future meetings.
- The report on the Higher Education achievement rates. Presented for the first time, members were advised of a three-year spiky profile and an overall 68% rate for 2018/19. Confirmation was welcomed of planned improvements and a proposed 80% target, noting the meeting scheduled with the University of Hertfordshire to discuss the way forward

It was agreed that it would be helpful for future reports to provide data with explanatory narrative of issues and action being taken for all College provision to ensure monitoring and review in the appropriate context.

After discussion, the report was noted.

716.1d Quality Improvement Plan: Update

The College QIP was presented showing progress in achievement of objectives for the year-end.

After observing discussion elsewhere on the agenda (Minute 716 refers), the year-end position was reviewed, noting good overall with actions still providing evidence of impact and of those areas assigned an Amber rating, members were advised that in respect of :

- Improving 16-18 English and maths rates, rates for GCSE maths and English were at 24.2% and 27.3% respectively
- Apprenticeship overall achievement was at 66.7% with the timeliness rate still being calculated.
- Subcontracted achievement rates had declined slightly compared with 2017/18
- Final attendance was just below 88%, compared to 90% target
- Work experience was 87%, a 12% improvement on 2017/18

There was response to points of clarification, following which the report was noted

716.2 Academic Year 2019/20

Reports providing updates on year to date activity were received comprising:

716.2a Student Enrolment: Update

Reviewing the current position for 16-18 and HE enrolment along with an oral update on further developments, members were advised:

- That the position of 1,854 16-18 enrolments compared with the 1950 target for the year. It was noted that whilst the position was subject to withdrawal, it was in -line with the funding allocation for the year and under the lagged funding model, it did not represent a risk to the budget outturn. It was further noted that additional in-year enrolment was envisaged.
- Members were advised that HE enrolments were 63 behind the student recruitment target of 289, representing an estimated shortfall in income of £418 - £450K against planned income.

There was particular discussion of:

- The reports throughout 2018/19 predicting increased applications for 2019/20, seeking clarification regarding why the conversion rate had not been as anticipated. Members were advised of recent ESFA feedback suggesting that the upturn in the demographic decline now was not expected to materialise until next academic year with Management now investigating further in advance of a further report at the next meeting.
- HE enrolment questioning why it was behind target. It was noted that a similar impact had been experienced in numbers as a result of the demographic decline in 16-18 learners, acknowledging that the situation was not unique to the College.

Following discussion, the report was noted.

716.2b Compliance: Safeguarding & Prevent

Reports were received outlining arrangements regarding and confirming the College's compliance with statutory requirements, comprising:

i. Safeguarding Update

With the Safeguarding update scheduled for after the meeting, members were advised that on this occasion, any matters for attention would be reported directly to the Corporation at its forthcoming meeting.

ii. Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults and Prevent Policy & Procedure

Presented following review and updating as part of the annual review cycle, in-line with the latest guidelines.

The key changes were reviewed, noted to:

- Reflect the updated 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidelines, new local safeguarding partner arrangements with partners organisations along with the new offence of upskirting, young people involved in serious violence and placing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage falling within so called 'honour based' violence
- Changes to the College arrangements for Designated Senior Persons (DSPs) and the responsibilities of staff

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **RECOMMEND** for the Corporation to **APPROVE** the updated Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults and Prevent Policy & Procedure

717 ANY OTHER BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING

717.1 Any other business

No other business was raised.

717.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 4 December 2019

Signed:



Date: 4 December 2019

Jan Wing (Chair)