

Kirklees College Corporation

QUALITY PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held from 15.00 to 17.10 on 5 May 2022 via Microsoft Teams

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| Present: | Dr A Williams | Independent Member (Chair) |
| | Ms C Catmull | Staff Member |
| | Ms C George | Independent Member |
| | Mr G Hetherington | Independent Member |
| | Mr P Singh | Executive Member |
| Attendance: | 5/5 = 100% | KPI 80% Quorum: 3 |
| In Attendance: | Ms J Arechiga | Vice Principal - Curriculum and Innovation |
| | Ms R Blackburn | Observer |
| | Miss L Buckley | Assistant Principal – Apprenticeships |
| | Ms J Green | Clerk to the Corporation |
| | Mr S Harrison | Head of Faculty - Quality, TLA, HE, & Teacher Education |
| | Ms P Harrow | Assistant Principal – Student Experience |
| | Ms P Hughes | Assistant Principal - Quality and Curriculum |
| | Ms K Sykes | Higher Education and Skills Manager |

| Item | Action/ Report Item |
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| PRELIMINARY ITEMS | |
| 1 | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS |
| i | Due notice of the meeting had been given, the requirement for all persons participating to be able to communicate with one another was met and the meeting was quorate. |
| ii | The Chair welcomed everyone, including Ms R Blackburn (“RB”), who was observing the meeting, having an interest in joining the Committee. Introductions were made. |
| 2 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS |
| i | No one declared any interest in the business to be transacted at the meeting which they were required by the Instrument of Government or otherwise to disclose. |
| 3 | MINUTES OF THE 7 MARCH 2022 MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING |
| i | <u>RESOLVED:</u> (i) Subject to the amendment of the attendance data (which should say 5/6), to approve the 7 March 2022 minutes as an accurate record. |
| ii | <u>Update on Agreed Actions</u> |
| iii | <u>English and Maths to be on the Agenda for this meeting:</u> To be brought to the next meeting. |
| iv | Action (rolled over): To present a report on English and Maths. |
| v | <u>Involvement of Governors in the July TLA conference:</u> This was in the planning stage, with big ambitions for the event. Governors would be very welcome and would be sent details in due course. |
| | M Rich |

QUALITY, PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS**4 STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT**
5 QUALITY OF EDUCATION

i The Head of Quality, Mr S Harrison (“SH”) gave the management view on what the existing data (exam performance, predicted achievement, retention and attendance) indicated about the end of year position relative to target. He reminded Members that, by identifying learners at risk of not making expected progress at an early stage, the College could more effectively allocate its limited resources to control for the risk of failing to hit retention and achievement targets. In response to a question, SH said while there was a high level of confidence in the new process for predicting achievement, he was factoring in a margin of error for each curriculum area to reflect the accuracy of their previous predictions. There was discussion about how the new process worked.

Exam Performance

ii Analysis of recent exam results had identified a high risk around some new City & Guilds technical certificates the College was delivering. The technical certificates had replaced Pearson Qualifications (such as Level 3 Animal Care) and a dip in performance relative to previous years reflected the experience of other colleges that had also made the switch. SH said, those learners who had sat exams would have a second opportunity to pass them; curriculum teams were already preparing them for this, as well as looking at how concessions and other risk mitigations might come into play.

iii The Vice Principal Curriculum Ms J Arechiga (“JA”) reminded Members that the reintroduction of exams had significantly impacted a number of the performance measures; in particular, many learners had never sat exams before and required additional support.

iv A Member asked what the implications were for the learners if they failed to pass the exams this year. Distinguishing between those on Pearson programmes and those taking technical certificates, SH said those on Pearson programmes were expected to achieve in year, albeit possibly following resits and with the application of concessions. For those on the technical certificates, the situation was less certain; there was a risk that some learners may need to continue into a second year. In response to a question, SH agreed that the impact of this on career and life plans could be quite significant and said the College was doing everything it could to prevent this, including to address a risk around staff unfamiliarity with the new specifications.

v The Committee’s concerns about learners potentially having to continue into a second year were echoed by Assistant Principal Ms P Hughes (“PHu”), who said the College had raised through the Association of Colleges the unfairness of vocational learners being at increased risk of failing their exams, when for GCSE students, that risk had been somewhat mitigated through national measures such as adjusting grade boundaries. She said there were no equivalent mitigations for vocational programmes.

Predicted End of Year Achievement

vi The meeting discussed predicted achievement across the different types of provision. On the whole, the College was expecting to see either an improvement on, or results in line with the previous year – but Key Performance Indicator targets might not be hit, as some areas were predicting a drop, such as 16-18 English and maths. The reintroduction of exams and lost learning during the pandemic would have an impact; areas with a large proportion of exam-based qualifications were predicting either a small decline, or achievement in line with 2020/21. Apprenticeships achievements continued to be impacted by delays in end-point assessments.

Retention and Attendance

vii Although slightly below the same point in 2020-21, retention was high compared with the

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| | <p>same point in 2018-19 (the last pre-pandemic year). Adult retention relative to 2018-19 was significantly higher. During the pandemic, the sector had seen an increase in retention, which was not typical. Attendance had declined overall, as compared with the same point in 2020-21</p> <p><u>Equality and Diversity Impact</u></p> | |
| viii | <p>SH said the predictions indicated that there would be achievement gaps for 16-18 learners with white students underperforming compared to other ethnicity groups. On Education and Training courses, females were expected to outperform male peers for all ages.</p> <p><u>Quality Improvement Plan Update</u></p> | |
| ix | <p>SH drew attention to the following impact measures:</p> <p><i>All curriculum areas are 'good or better' or direction of travel is positive in-year</i></p> | |
| x | <p>Based on the Q2 management review judgements, the vast majority of curriculum areas had improved over the year and in some cases, this had resulted in an improved grade. 67% of areas had self-assessed as 'Good' or better and within the 'Requires Improvement' grade boundary, Sport & Public Services and Engineering (at classroom level) were showing strong potential to achieve 'Good' by the end of the year. Unfortunately, the direction of travel was not positive across the board, as two curriculum areas (maths & English and Alternative Provision) were showing a decline, so the measure was 'Amber'.</p> <p><i>Predicted achievement on or above target for each curriculum area</i></p> | |
| xi | <p>Despite majority good progress, some curriculum areas were not on target (four areas in 16-18). A Member sought assurance that the relevant managers knew this and understood what was needed to improve; also, what the level of confidence was in terms of them getting back to or close to target. SH said this had been discussed in performance management review sessions and he had a high level of confidence that they would start moving towards target, some being only slightly below particular KPIs.</p> | |
| xii | <p>Action: To circulate to the Committee the details of the curriculum areas behind on target.</p> | SH |
| xiii | <p>A Member asked what key factors were undermining the College's ability to hit all targets set against the KPIs. The Member said, for Governors to provide good levels of support and challenge, it would be helpful to have a bit more detail, not to stray into operational matters, but simply to provide context. SH gave an example of staffing challenges, which had been a major factor for some curriculum areas. PHu said Members might find it helpful to see the target file, which would illustrate how operational targets were aggregated up to the overall KPIs and which curriculum areas were pulling overall performance down and in what respects. It was agreed that this would be useful.</p> | |
| xiv | <p>Action: To share a high-level extract from the target file with Committee Members.</p> | PHu |
| xv | <p>Corporation report: The Committee was concerned to hear that the results from recent exams showed a high risk of learners on some of our vocational programmes not achieving in year and potentially having to stay on for a second year to gain their qualification, in many cases despite having expected to complete in one year. There was discussion about why this was happening and the extent to which vocational learners are disadvantaged as compared to GCSE students, who have benefited from national mitigations. The Committee noted that the Kirklees experience was replicated across the sector, particularly where learners were taking exams for new technical certificates.</p> | Report Item 1 |
| xvi | <p>Corporation report: The meeting discussed predicted achievement across the different types of provision. On the whole, the College is expecting to see either an improvement on, or results in line with the previous year – but Key Performance Indicator targets may not be hit, as some areas are predicting a drop, such as 16-18 English and maths.</p> | Report Item 2 |

| Item | Action/ Report Item | |
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| 6 | CURRICULUM REFORMS | |
| i | Corporation report: The Committee discussed the risks and benefits of some curriculum reforms expected from 2022/23. They include some welcome changes, for example an expected shift towards level 4 and 5 higher technical qualifications is a positive move from the College’s perspective, as we are well positioned to respond, having already developed our HNC/D offer at levels 4 and 5 and with our strong employer links. The shift will also provide progression routes from Level 1-3 (including T Levels), creating a 16-21 ethos. | Report Item 5 |
| ii | Corporation report: The Committee was pleased to hear that the College had received approval to roll out its seven planned-for T Level areas from September: Engineering, Construction, Science, Health & Social Care, Early Years, Business, and Digital. A lot of work has clearly gone into the readiness project and the College is in a good position to drive this forward in September. Recruitment targets for 2022/23 have been set at 133 for the level 3 T level and 72 for the transition programmes (level 2) and there has been a good level of interest so far. | Report Item 6 |
| iii | Corporation report: The Committee also discussed proposed reforms to level 2 and below that would see a substantial reduction in the number of level 2 qualifications on offer, as well as a rethink of the maths and English element of T levels. The scale of the proposed reduction in level 2 qualifications has caused some concern within the sector, particularly around social mobility, and the College added its voice to that conversation via a national consultation which closed at the end of April. The Department for Education’s proposed delivery timetable for the reforms was also shared. | Report Item 7 |
| iv | Corporation report: As indicated in the Skills for Jobs white paper, the Department for Education has introduced a new, more timely approach to accountability for apprenticeship training providers, based on a wider range of quality indicators, including achievement rates, outcomes from Ofsted reports, student and employer ratings, and retention/withdrawals. | Report Item 8 |
| <i>17.00 Ms K Sykes left the meeting.</i> | | |
| 7 | HE UPDATE | |
| i | This item had been added to the Agenda in error. | |
| STUDENT EXPERIENCE | | |
| 8 | LEARNER SUPPORT | |
| <u>Cost of Living Crisis</u> | | |
| i | Assistant Principal Student Experience Ms P Harrow (“PHa”) reported on work the College was doing to address the cost of living crisis and ensure that available financial support for learners was well utilised, so as to minimise the harm to learners’ welfare and support them to continue their programmes and achieve their qualifications. She provided some contextual information about the proportion of learners living in poverty or deprivation and some data on the uptake for various bursaries and loans. In particular, the number of learners experiencing homelessness had risen sharply since the previous year. | |
| ii | PHa detailed some of the work her team was doing as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Looking at applicant data and eligibility thresholds for the vulnerable young person bursary following policy changes that seemed to have made it more difficult to apply for. ➤ Monitoring the impact of College policies around the use of the free school meals allocations and travel bursaries, to maximise take up, attendance and value for money. ➤ Further promoting the ‘free breakfasts’ initiative, under the umbrella of community and welcome, as take up was currently low, at around the 200 learner mark. | |
| <i>17.05 Ms C Catmull left the meeting.</i> | | |

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| iii | A Member asked whether money received from Kirklees Council to provide supermarket vouchers to students living in poverty would be available again the following year. PHa said this was not yet certain, as it would depend on their funding and the level of demand. She said using the College had proved to be an effective way for the Council to reach the families they were hoping to benefit, so if there was more money available there was a good chance they would send it via the College again. | |
| iv | Action: To invite Governors to bring contributions for the College foodbank to the next Corporation meeting. | JG |
| v | There was discussion about the College's ability to continue to provide the free school meal allocation over the holiday period. Members reflected on the financial pressures the College itself was under, particularly in light of soaring utility costs. | |
| vi | Corporation report: The Committee received a report on the College response to the cost of living crisis. This is seriously affecting a large number of our learners and will potentially impact on retention, attendance and achievement if the risks cannot be mitigated. The Student Experience team have been reviewing policies and promoting bursaries, free breakfasts and free school meal allocations, to try to maximise the benefit from them. | Report Item 9 |
| <i>17.15 Ms C Catmull rejoined the meeting.</i> | | |
| <u>Mental Health Support</u> | | |
| vii | PH emphasised the high priority afforded to learners' mental health. She outlined some of the work the College was doing and the resource it had allocated to develop confidence and resilience and to help learners better manage their own mental health. She said additional training had been provided to delivery staff and recent whole staff conferences had focused on trauma informed practice and mental health. | |
| viii | Members were pleased to hear that, since face to face learning had recommenced, learners were reporting lower levels of anxiety than before. PHa said although this was not necessarily causative, it seemed likely that getting back to normal ways of working was having a positive benefit. | |
| ix | A Member commented on the fact that colleges were having to intervene where student were falling through the cracks in external mental health services. The Member said nonetheless, the work the College team did was invaluable and the Corporation owed them a debt of gratitude. This was agreed and Members emphasised the need for the College to raise its voice and lobby for national improvements. PHa agreed that it was possible for the College to influence the agenda; she gave the example of the Commission on Young Lives 'Out of Harm's Way' report, to which an additional section on the work of colleges had been added following her intervention. | |
| x | Corporation report: The Committee received a report on the College's work to support student mental health. As always, there were concerning statistics but we are reassured by the account we heard of the mitigations the College has in place. While there is always more that could be done, the Committee is satisfied that the College is taking reasonable steps with the resources it has available. In particular, there is a strong tone from the top, with reporting to this Committee as well as the Safeguarding Committee, the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Group, and to Corporation. | Report Item 10 |
| <i>17.30 Ms P Harrow left the meeting.</i> | | |
| GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION | | |
| 9 | DRAFT CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE FOR 2022-23 | |
| i | Corporation report: The proposed meeting dates for 2022-23 were discussed and it was agreed that the number and timing of meetings should be the same as in 2021/22. The | Report Item 11 |

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| | Committee would also continue with the same Schedule of Business, albeit with a focus on strategic and topical items at the May meeting. | |
| 10 | GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT | |
| i | Governors had observed the Student Parliament meeting. | |
| ii | Dr A Conn (Link Governor for Health & Safety) had been sitting in on some curriculum area Health & Safety visits. | |
| 11 | PUBLICATION OF PAPERS | |
| i | <u>RESOLVED:</u> (i) Items marked with an asterisk on the meeting agenda shall not be published. | |
| 12 | DATE OF NEXT MEETING | |
| i | Tuesday 28 June 2022 at 3pm. | |
| 13 | THANKS AND CLOSE | |
| i | The Chair thanked everyone for attending, in particular Ms R Blackburn. There being no further business, he declared the meeting closed. | |

Items of Report for Corporation

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| 1. | The Committee was concerned to hear that the results from recent exams showed a high risk of learners on some of our vocational programmes not achieving in year and potentially having to stay on for a second year to gain their qualification, in many cases despite having expected to complete in one year. There was discussion about why this was happening and the extent to which vocational learners are disadvantaged as compared to GCSE students, who have benefited from national mitigations. The Committee noted that the Kirklees experience was replicated across the sector, particularly where learners were taking exams for new technical certificates. | 4,5xv |
| 2. | The meeting discussed predicted achievement across the different types of provision. On the whole, the College is expecting to see either an improvement on, or results in line with the previous year – but Key Performance Indicator targets may not be hit, as some areas are predicting a drop, such as 16-18 English and maths. | 4,5xvi |
| 3. | The Committee received a report on staff learning and development, which helped Members get a sense of how the new approach to staff professional development was bedding in and if it was being positively received and having a positive impact. We were pleased to hear that there were already some positive signs of culture change, with a majority of staff indicating through their behaviours that they were on board. | 4,5xi |
| 4. | The Committee received and discussed the external quality review summary report, which had already been discussed at the previous meeting. There were no concerns; the report reflected the account of it that was provided by the management team. | 4,5xvi |
| 5. | The Committee discussed the risks and benefits of some curriculum reforms expected from 2022/23. They include some welcome changes, for example an expected shift towards level 4 and 5 higher technical qualifications is a positive move from the College's perspective, as we are well positioned to respond, having already developed our HNC/D offer at levels 4 and 5 and with our strong employer links. The shift will also provide progression routes from Level 1-3 (including T Levels), creating a 16-21 ethos. | 6i |
| 6. | The Committee was pleased to hear that the College had received approval to roll out its seven planned-for T Level areas from September: Engineering, Construction, Science, | 6ii |

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| | Health & Social Care, Early Years, Business, and Digital. A lot of work has clearly gone into the readiness project and the College is in a good position to drive this forward in September. Recruitment targets for 2022/23 have been set at 133 for the level 3 T level and 72 for the transition programmes (level 2) and there has been a good level of interest so far. | |
| 7. | The Committee also discussed proposed reforms to level 2 and below that would see a substantial reduction in the number of level 2 qualifications on offer, as well as a rethink of the maths and English element of T levels. The scale of the proposed reduction in level 2 qualifications has caused some concern within the sector, particularly around social mobility, and the College added its voice to that conversation via a national consultation which closed at the end of April. The Department for Education's proposed delivery timetable for the reforms was also shared. | 6iii |
| 8. | As indicated in the Skills for Jobs white paper, the Department for Education has introduced a new, more timely approach to accountability for apprenticeship training providers, based on a wider range of quality indicators, including achievement rates, outcomes from Ofsted reports, student and employer ratings, and retention/ withdrawals. | 6iv |
| 9. | The Committee received a report on the College response to the cost of living crisis. This is seriously affecting a large number of our learners and will potentially impact on retention, attendance and achievement if the risks cannot be mitigated. The Student Experience team have been reviewing policies and promoting bursaries, free breakfasts and free school meal allocations, to try to maximise the benefit from them. | 8vi |
| 10. | The Committee received a report on the College's work to support student mental health. As always, there were concerning statistics but we are reassured by the account we heard of the mitigations the College has in place. While there is always more that could be done, the Committee is satisfied that the College is taking reasonable steps with the resources it has available. In particular, there is a strong tone from the top, with reporting to this Committee as well as the Safeguarding Committee, the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Group, and to Corporation. | 8x |
| 11. | The proposed meeting dates for 2022-23 were discussed and it was agreed that the number and timing of meetings should be the same as in 2021/22. The Committee would also continue with the same Schedule of Business, albeit with a focus on strategic and topical items at the May meeting. | 9i |