

Kirklees College Corporation

QUALITY, PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held at 15.00 on 10 May 2023 in the Conference Suite, Waterfront Quarter and by Teams videoconference

Present:	Dr A Williams	Independent Member (Chair)
	Mrs C George	Independent Member
	Mrs R Blackburn	Co-opted Member
	Mr D Harding	Independent Member
	Mr G Hetherington	Independent Member
	Mr P Singh	Executive Member
Attendance:	6/8 = 75%	KPI 80% Quorum: 3
In Attendance:	Ms J Arechiga	Vice Principal - Curriculum and Innovation
	Ms L Buckley	Assistant Principal Apprenticeships
	Ms J Green	Director of Governance & Compliance
	Ms P Hughes	Assistant Principal - Quality and Curriculum
	Ms A Quantrill	Teaching, Learning & Digital Innovation Manager (Item 10)
	Ms H Rose	Director of External Relations
	Ms K Sykes	Higher Education and Skills Manager (Item 13)
	Mr J Wilson	Head of Quality

Item		Action/ Report Item
PRELIMINARY ITEMS		
1	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	
i	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There was discussion about the order of business and it was agreed that Item 13 would be taken earlier than scheduled.	
2	NOTICE AND QUORUM	
i	The meeting clerk, Director of Governance & Compliance Ms J Green ("JG") confirmed that due notice of the meeting had been given and the meeting was quorate.	
3	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
i	Apologies were received from Committee Member Dr W Bailey.	
ii	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.	
4	MINUTES OF THE 13 MARCH 2023 MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING	
i	An amended version of the minutes had been circulated and, with the Chair's permission, this was received.	
ii	<u>RESOLVED:</u> (i) To approve the 13 March 2023 minutes as an accurate record. <u>Matters arising not on the Agenda</u>	
iii	Nothing was raised that was not on the Agenda.	

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<p>iv</p> <p>v</p> <p>vi</p> <p>vii</p> <p>viii</p> <p>ix</p> <p>x</p> <p>xi</p>	<p><u>Update on Agreed Actions</u></p> <p><u>Schedule a detailed session to look at the Navigate software:</u> This had provided a good insight into the power of the software and Members had found it useful.</p> <p><u>Bring an updated skills matrix to the next Committee meeting:</u> This was on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>Provide an update on progress on the HE Strategy:</u> This was on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>Prepare draft calendar/schedules for new sub-committee:</u> This was on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>Add 'Sub-Committee Report' to the Committee's agendas:</u> This would not be necessary as the sub-committee was to standalone following its initial meetings.</p> <p><u>Report on the failure to retain over 200 16-18 students in 2022-23 and whether similar numbers were lost in previous years:</u> This was on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>Explore in more detail the underperformance in Apprenticeship income and retention in 2021-22:</u> This was on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>Discuss the risk of staff skills shortages:</u> This was on the Agenda.</p>
QUALITY, PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS	
<p>5</p> <p>i</p> <p>ii</p>	<p>OFSTED REPORT: DETAILED FINDINGS</p> <p>There was nothing to add to what had already been reported to the Corporation. The Ofsted report described the College accurately, capturing its educational character well. The areas for improvement it identified were the same as those flagged in the self-assessment report, so there were no surprises.</p> <p>The external response to the announcement of the outcome had been positive, with congratulatory social media messages and enquiries about restorative practice, as well as an invitation to share inspection learning with the Education Skills Partnership. The College had thanked its partners that were part of the skills conversation with dinner at its Landings Restaurant.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>i</p> <p>ii</p>	<p>QUALIFICATION ACHIEVEMENT RATES/NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT RATES</p> <p>Corporation report: The Committee received a report comparing 2021-22 performance with the first national data set published since 2018-19. While emphasising that it is risky to draw conclusions from such data, it reports as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Despite a 3% decline in the national rate for 16-18 since 2018-19, the College has more or less maintained its position. ➤ The College ranked sixth out of the seven West Yorkshire colleges for 16-18 but there is little between them. ➤ The College outperformed the national rate for Adults, which has fallen significantly since 2018-19. It currently ranks second in West Yorkshire for Adults. ➤ The College significantly outperformed the national rate for Apprenticeships and bucked a trend which saw some colleges' performance slip by up to 30%. <p>There was discussion about the need to look at progression and destinations alongside achievement and to monitor what happened to those who didn't achieve.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>i</p>	<p>RETENTION OF NEW STARTS FOR 16-18 AND APPRENTICESHIPS</p> <p>The Director of External Relations Ms H Rose ("HR") presented a report on the risk of failure to retain students on programme and the effectiveness of controls to reduce the likelihood and impact of this. Her report was a response to actions agreed at the 4</p>

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ii	<p>November Corporation meeting (it had been delayed due to Ofsted).</p> <p>Corporation report: In response to a concern raised at Corporation about the relatively high number of students leaving without completing a qualification, the Committee received a report on 16-18 retention. The data for the last two years shows similar numbers of withdrawals each year, suggesting that the risk controls for retention may require some further strengthening (although some of the withdrawals will be for positive destinations, i.e. moving into work). Management has already identified a need for better capture and analysis of 'reason-for-leaving data' and will implement improved monitoring and strategising at Leadership Team meetings. The curriculum plan for 2023-24 (which will underpin the budget) will reflect the College's assessment of its capacity to tackle the risk in the short term.</p>	Report Item 2
iii	<p>The second part of the report focused on Apprentices. A Member commented on the College's success in increasing retention rates and securing strong achievement rates relative to national average, given the challenges of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis. The Member said it was not at all easy to get across to those not operationally involved in Apprenticeships how impressive this was.</p>	
iv	<p>Corporation report: Given all the challenges of the past three years, the College has done well to both improve apprentice retention and secure achievement rates 10% above national average. The Committee has no concerns to report.</p>	Report Item 3
8	<p>QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	
i	<p>Corporation report: While all the Quality Improvement Plan areas for improvement are still RAG rated 'Amber', the underpinning actions are now 54% complete. Key risks include the achievement of aspirational targets for attendance and retention and the accuracy of predicted achievement. Improving attendance and punctuality and improving the consistency of the quality of programmes not yet rated 'Good' and English and maths will continue to be key priorities going forwards. The Ofsted inspection and report has provided assurance that the College Quality Improvement Plan is focused on appropriate objectives.</p>	Report Item 4
9	<p>QUALITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</p>	
i	<p>As the RO8¹ data had been issued since the report was circulated, Head of Faculty Quality Mr J Wilson ("JW") updated the meeting on the current figures.</p>	
ii	<p>Corporation report: The Committee received a report on the status of the Quality Performance Indicators, i.e. retention, predicted achievement and attendance for Study Programmes, Apprentices and Adult Programmes. Management is cautiously predicting improved achievement rates for both Study Programmes and Apprenticeships (Adults to hold its position), with the caveat that some of the performance indicators have clearly gone the other way, e.g. retention and attendance are slightly down against the same point last year. Even if some of the predictions prove inaccurate, the Committee still considers the process wholly worthwhile, as the discussions that are had as a result of it contribute substantially to risk mitigation. An update will be brought to the next Committee meeting.</p>	Report Item 5
HIGHER EDUCATION & SKILLS		
<p>16.15 A comfort break was taken. When the meeting resumed at 16.25, all re-joined with the exception of PS and HR. Teaching, Learning & Digital Innovation Manager Ms A Quantrill joined, along with Higher Education & Skills Quality Manager Ms K Sykes.</p>		
13	<p>HIGHER EDUCATION & SKILLS UPDATE</p>	
i	<p>Higher Education & Skills Quality Manager Ms K Sykes reported as follows:</p>	

¹ RO8 is the eighth (of 14) Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) individualised learner record (ILR) data collection periods for colleges during the financial year.

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<p>➤ As previously reported, the University of Huddersfield had pulled out of its validation partnership citing incompatibility with its strategic aims. This was a setback not only for the College but also for prospective students;</p> <p>➤ The College had been granted ‘<i>Skills Injection Fund</i>’ funding for HE investment;</p> <p>➤ Work on a new Access and Participation Plan would begin in the summer, the submission date being Spring 2024;</p> <p>➤ The Office for Students had recently published an ‘Equality of Risk Register’² highlighting the inequality of experience of different student groups across the higher education lifecycle; the College would need to consider this.</p> <p>➤ The College was rolling out new Higher Technical qualifications in Construction and the Built Environment.</p> <p>ii Corporation report: The Committee received a report on progress on the College’s HE Strategy and discussed the balance of risk in terms of the need to develop new foundation degree courses and the level of financial and reputational exposure we are prepared to tolerate where validating partners are not willing to commit contractually. A recent decision by the University of Huddersfield to withdraw from validating a new Foundation Degree in Health & Social Care has left the College out of pocket, with a depleted offer for prospective students and limited ability to mitigate our losses.</p>	Report Item 6
16.45 Ms K Sykes left the meeting.	
TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT	
10	QUALITY OF EDUCATION POSITION
i	At the March Committee meeting, the Teaching, Learning & Digital Innovation Manager Ms A Quantrill (“AQ”) had flagged a concern about delays in initiating difficult conversations and implementing individual support plans. She said the Quality Team was working to improve the position, supporting leaders and managers to make more timely use of appropriate processes and interventions.
ii	AQ’s last Quality of Education report had stated that 33% of the 66 staff members deemed to pose a high risk to the quality of education due to training and development needs (22 individuals) had no support in place. AQ had explained that, if new staff members were removed from the data, the percentage of staff posing a ‘high risk’ reduced to 15% and intervention work since the paper was written had brought that figure down to 9%.
iii	AQ said 26% of staff members (not including new starters) were now considered ‘high risk’ (74 staff members in total, of whom 40 had some form of intervention in place to drive improvement. She said manager delays in updating the staff skills matrix were clouding the picture somewhat and changes to the corporate approach to risk measurement made comparison with March less meaningful.
iv	Work continued to support the maths and English departments, which in the previous report were identified as carrying particularly high levels of risk. Maths had improved - with high-risk staff members reducing from 10 to 6 (but currently there were no interventions in place) and English was not currently considered a high-risk area.
v	A Member remarked that there continued to be a mismatch between identified risk levels and numbers of interventions in some areas and AQ agreed that there were areas which were proving to be slower adopters. She said the Quality Team had an ongoing presence in those areas to coach managers to put interventions in place.

² <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/about-the-equality-of-opportunity-risk-register/>

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vi	It was noted that 16-18 English and maths and Motor Vehicle, Electrical, and Joinery & Plastering (previously judged 'Requires Improvement') were not expected to move to 'Good' by the end of the year, although there were some signs of improvement.
vii	Corporation report: At the Committee's March meeting, management flagged a concern about delays in initiating difficult conversations and implementing individual support plans. The Quality Team updated us on their work to improve the position, supporting leaders and managers to make more timely use of appropriate processes and interventions. We will continue to monitor this.
17.00 Ms A Quantrill left the meeting.	
STUDENT EXPERIENCE	
11	COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS: ANNUAL REPORT
i	The Head of Faculty, Quality & TLA Mr J Wilson ("JW") presented the annual Complaints and Appeals report and the Committee noted that the volume of complaints was the same as previous year and there were no concerning trends.
ii	Corporation report: The Corporation must ensure student complaints are effectively investigated and addressed and monitors complaints to identify any trends. A summary report on the outcomes of student complaints and appeals was considered and there are no concerns to report.
12	STAFF SKILLS SHORTAGES
i	Corporation report: The Committee was asked by the Corporation to discuss with management the College strategy to overcome the threat to quality improvement posed by staff skill shortages and recruitment/retention issues. The management advice is that this is not currently a high risk. Despite a recent FE Week article reporting high levels of vacancies nationally, the College only has four vacancies. Management will bring an update report at the beginning of the next academic year.
GOVERNANCE, MATTERS TO NOTE AND ADMINISTRATION	
14	GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT
	<p>The Committee noted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Independent Governors Mr D Harding and Dr A Conn had undertaken Governor visits to the College. ➤ Governor recruitment was underway supported by recruitment firm Peridot. ➤ The Committee Chair Dr A Williams had attended the Association of Colleges Quality Chairs Network meeting.
15	SUB-COMMITTEE PROPOSED DATES AND DRAFT SCHEDULE
i	JG presented a report describing progress to date in establishing a calendar of meetings and a business schedule for the new sub-committee.
16	PUBLICATION OF AGENDA PAPERS
i	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>(i) Except as marked on the meeting Agenda, the meeting papers are not deemed confidential.</p>
17	DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS
i	There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 18.00. It was noted that the date of the next meeting was Monday 19 June 2023.

Items of Report for Corporation		
#	Details	Min
1.	<p>The Committee received a report comparing 2021-22 performance with the first national data set published since 2018-19. While emphasising that it is risky to draw conclusions from such data, it reports as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Despite a 3% decline in the national rate for 16-18 since 2018-19, the College has more or less maintained its position. ➤ The College ranked sixth out of the seven West Yorkshire colleges for 16-18 but there is little between them. ➤ The College outperformed the national rate for Adults, which has fallen significantly since 2018-19. It currently ranks second in West Yorkshire for Adults. ➤ The College significantly outperformed the national rate for Apprenticeships and bucked a trend which saw some colleges' performance slip by up to 30%. 	6i
2.	<p>In response to a concern raised at Corporation about the relatively high number of students leaving without completing a qualification, the Committee received a report on 16-18 retention. The data for the last two years shows similar numbers of withdrawals each year, suggesting that the risk controls for retention may require some further strengthening (although some of the withdrawals will be for positive destinations, i.e. moving into work). Management has already identified a need for better capture and analysis of 'reason-for-leaving data' and will implement improved monitoring and strategising at Leadership Team meetings. The curriculum plan for 2023-24 (which will underpin the budget) will reflect the College's assessment of its capacity to tackle the risk in the short term.</p>	7ii
3.	<p>Given all the challenges of the past three years, the College has done well to both improve apprentice retention and secure achievement rates 10% above national average. The Committee has no concerns to report.</p>	7iv
4.	<p>While all the Quality Improvement Plan areas for improvement are still RAG rated 'Amber', the underpinning actions are now 54% complete. Key risks include the achievement of aspirational targets for attendance and retention and the accuracy of predicted achievement. Improving attendance and punctuality and improving the consistency of the quality of programmes not yet rated 'Good' and English and maths will continue to be key priorities going forwards. The Ofsted inspection and report has provided assurance that the College Quality Improvement Plan is focused on appropriate objectives.</p>	8i
5.	<p>The Committee received a report on the status of the Quality Performance Indicators, i.e. retention, predicted achievement and attendance for Study Programmes, Apprentices and Adult Programmes. Management is cautiously predicting improved achievement rates for both Study Programmes and Apprenticeships (Adults to hold its position), with the caveat that some of the performance indicators have clearly gone the other way, e.g. retention and attendance are slightly down against the same point last year. Even if some of the predictions prove inaccurate, the Committee still considers the process wholly worthwhile, as the discussions that are had as a result of it contribute substantially to risk mitigation. An update will be brought to the next Committee meeting.</p>	9ii
6.	<p>The Committee received a report on progress on the College's HE Strategy and discussed the balance of risk in terms of the need to develop new foundation degree courses and the level of financial and reputational exposure we are prepared to tolerate where validating partners are not willing to commit contractually. A recent decision by the University of Huddersfield to withdraw from validating a new Foundation Degree in Health & Social Care has left the College out of pocket, with a depleted offer for prospective students and limited ability to mitigate our losses.</p>	13ii
7.	<p>At the Committee's March meeting, management flagged a concern about delays in initiating difficult conversations and implementing individual support plans. The Quality Team updated us on their work to improve the position, supporting leaders and managers to make more timely use of appropriate processes and interventions. We will continue to monitor this.</p>	10vii

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8.	The Corporation must ensure student complaints are effectively investigated and addressed and monitors complaints to identify any trends. A summary report on the outcomes of student complaints and appeals was considered and there are no concerns to report.	11ii
9.	The Committee was asked by the Corporation to discuss with management the College strategy to overcome the threat to quality improvement posed by staff skill shortages and recruitment/retention issues. The management advice is that this is not currently a high risk. Despite a recent FE Week article reporting high levels of vacancies nationally, the College only has four vacancies. Management will bring an update report at the beginning of the next academic year.	12i