

Minutes of the meeting of the Quality Committee held on **3 December 2018**.

Present: Professor Mike Bramhall (Chair), Colin Forrest, Chloe Rendall and Yultan Mellor (Principal).

In attendance: The Academic Director – Access to HE and Higher Level Programmes, the Academic Director – Foundation Programmes and the Clerk to the Governors.

Apologies: Professor Tim Thornton.

Q18/25 The chair welcomed Chloe Rendell and Yultan Mellor to their first meeting and formally thanked Kate Fleming who had stood down from the committee for her valuable contribution.

Q18/26 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

With respect to:

- His consulting role Mike Bramhall declared a non-financial interest in items which related to the University of Huddersfield.

Q18/27 It was agreed that no decisions to be taken would be affected by these interests and it was not considered necessary for anyone to withdraw from the meeting.

Q18/28 **MINUTES**

Q18/11 The resolution should read HE strategy not curriculum strategy.

With the inclusion of the above correction the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2018 were approved as an accurate record (a copy is filed in the minute book).

Q18/29 **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

Q18/30 **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

It was noted that:

- the appointment of Chloe Rendell as an independent member of the committee had been approved by the Board of Governors at its meeting in September 2018;
- Kate Fleming had stood down from the committee.

Q18/31 **SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2017/18 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
(A copy of document 5i is filed in the minute book)

The committee considered the **draft self-assessment report for 2017/18** in detail noting that:

- The report was similar to previous versions but had been developed to include a context and links to Barnsley data and priorities and how the College supports the delivery of them;
- All judgements were supported by key pieces of both qualitative and quantitative data;
- A table was included setting out overall retention, pass and achievement rates for the year in the format that would be used by Ofsted;
- Overall the data was very positive compared with sector benchmarks, with the exception of one area which was below benchmark relating to the Diploma;
- Overall achievement was 97%;
- Participation trends were predominantly positive;
- Areas for development had been included in the quality improvement plan, along with some others brought forward from the previous year.

Q18/32 The committee:

- Explored the process that had been undertaken to develop the assessment and were satisfied that it was robust and thorough, was supported by solid evidence and had included all staff across College;
- Welcomed the scene setting and links to local priorities;
- Considered the data tables in detail and agreed that results were very positive and in-line with performance as reported throughout the year;
- Welcomed the inclusion of the Ofsted format data table at Appendix 1 which it was agreed was useful;
- Considered the participation data in detail, particularly performance against internally set targets and welcomed the results achieved. It was noted that overall performance was in line with targets, and where areas for development had been identified in programme areas these had been included as areas for development as appropriate;
- Considered the overall retention, pass and achievement rates for the year in detail noting that all areas were above national achievement rates with the exception of the diploma achievement rate which at 95.7% was higher than the previous year but slightly below the national rate of 96.7%;
- Considered maths and English data tables in detail, noting the College's high performance in relation to national benchmarks;
- Considered achievement rates of particular groups, noting that there was significant supporting detail in the equality and diversity annual report and relevant actions had been included in the quality improvement plan to address any potential areas of concern.

Q18/33 The committee reviewed the draft grades against each element, particularly considering whether the evidence summary warranted the grade proposed and was in line with performance as reported throughout the year. The awarding of grade one for all elements was supported.

Q18/34 The committee considered the **quality improvement action plan** in detail, particularly exploring whether all areas for development had been identified from the self-assessment process and the appropriateness of the proposed actions. The committee particularly considered:

- Actions related to BAME staff and governors, noting that staff representation had improved in 2017/18 and that the College was undertaking analysis of how this had been achieved, and that a targeted campaign was planned for governor recruitment;
- Actions proposed regarding BAME achievement rates, noting that very small numbers of Black Caribbean and Chinese students achieved less than other BAME groups. The committee agreed that whilst the numbers were statistically very small it was important for the College to ensure that no groups were being disadvantaged and supported the proposed actions;
- Actions relating to student progression and destination data, noting the significance of evidencing outcomes in relation to devolution and supporting the actions proposed;
- Actions relating to the observation of teaching and learning, noting that there was evidence that a minority of teaching was not outstanding and supporting the further development identified, particularly in relation to rigorously and consistently identifying actions and ensuring CPD is in place to support development. The committee welcomed the achievement of a 100% observation rate;
- Actions relating to healthy living which the committee felt were very positive.

Resolved: i **That the self-assessment for 2017/18 and quality improvement plan be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval, including the awarding of grade one for all elements.**

Q18/35 **FE QUALITY REPORT 2017/18**

(A copy of document 6i is filed in the minute book)

The committee received the FE quality report which included:

- A summary of the teaching and learning annual report including continuing professional development, observations of teaching and learning, learning walks and peer observation; and

- A summary of findings from verification activities, including RARPA and external evaluation of accredited programmes.

Q18/36 The committee particularly explored:

- Opportunities for developing external peer relationships, welcoming the work developing with Ruskin and Fircroft;
- How the College managed staff time for engagement with the activities reported, noting that a key aspect of this was that staff were generally keen to participate as they valued the developmental opportunities;
- The significant work undertaken in relation to RARPA in 2017/18 including the setting up of a new risk based process to select courses for moderation and extensive training;
- The context surrounding a negative EV assessment and how this was being addressed in 2018/19;
- Whether there was a relationship between the area identified for development in the self-assessment report regarding the timely return of student work and the negative EV report, but were assured that this was not the case.

Q18/37 The committee welcomed the report, the extensive work undertaken, the positive benefits being realised and supported the further areas for development identified.

Resolved: **i That the report be noted.**

Q18/38 **HE QUALITY REPORT 2017/18**
(A copy of document 7i is filed in the minute book)

The committee considered the higher education report for 2017/18 in detail, including:

- Recruitment, retention, participation and outcome data for the year;
- 3-year trend data;
- Self-assessment grades and areas for development for 2018/19;
- Student satisfaction data and feedback;
- Recruitment for 2018/19.

Q18/39 The committee particularly:

- Welcomed the increased cohort size in 2017/18 and explored how this had been achieved;
- Explored Progression rates to year 2 provision;
- Considered the Cert Ed/PGCE 65% achievement outcome rate against the consortium average of 80% and the reasons for this, noting that with a relatively small cohort size the individual challenges faced by three students had had a particularly significant impact in 2017/18. The committee noted that appropriate support had been provided and the students had returned in 2018/19 and were hoping to complete;
- Explored grade profiles nationally, noting that Huddersfield University had a very rigorous second marking approach in place;
- Reviewed participation data, agreeing that the supported work with Huddersfield needed to be continued;
- Considered data collection systems;
- Supported the self-assessment grades awarded, noting that grade 3 had been awarded for outcomes for learners as a result of the Cert Ed/PGCE outcome and welcomed the actions proposed to address this in 2018/19;
- Noted BAME participation levels and the action planned to increase the number of BAME students through targeted marketing and promotional activities;
- Noted the challenges arising from the introduction of the university's VLE and the number of platforms the students were required to engage with and the digital support needs this raised;
- Welcomed the work planned to sign post to external support and address needs in order to avoid retention issues;
- Welcomed the development strategy seeking to increase the College's HE provision;
- Welcomed the recruitment data for 2018/19 and explored how this could be further built on.

The committee explored how the College could better capture the distance travelled by its students, the use of effective narrative in reports and the development and use of powerful case studies.

Q18/40 The committee explored the College's readiness for a return QAA visit and were satisfied appropriate preparation was in place, including the way HE had been embedded in the College's overall quality and monitoring structures.

Resolved: i **That the report be noted.**

Q18/41 **STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORTS**
(A copy of document 8i is filed in the minute book)

The committee considered progress updates for the curriculum, digital and higher education strategies, noting that:

- The leadership team was reviewing how the strategies linked together and how performance indicators and monitoring could be undertaken at an appropriate level;
- Significant progress had been made in a range of areas;
- No significant concerns or issues had been identified to date.

Q18/42 The committee explored the positioning of the College's curriculum in relation to the Ofsted framework and fitness for purpose, opportunities in relation to teacher training and apprenticeships, opportunities in relation to the National Trust and HE growth.

Resolved: i **That the report be noted.**

Q18/43 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**
(A copy of document 9i is filed in the minute book)

The committee considered the Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2017/18, examining the data in detail and considering it in relation to the self-assessment report and quality improvement plan. In particular, the committee considered:

- Achievement against key performance indicators;
- BAME recruitment to date in 2018/19;
- The continuing increase in students at the College with SLDD, which was now at almost 50%, and the demands this created, noting retention and achievement data for this group, and welcoming that there were no issues identified.

Q18/44 The committee considered performance by ethnicity in 2017/18 and noted that:

- National comparisons to 19+ general and tertiary colleges for provision in 2016/17 demonstrated that overall achievement rates across all Northern College provision exceeded the national average for all ethnic groups, apart from White/Black Caribbean and Chinese students;
- Of the nineteen groups used to classify ethnicity, thirteen groups had retention and achievement rates at or above the College PI of 97% and 95% respectively;
- Eleven groups had overall pass rates at or above the College PI of 98%;
- There were no statistically significant retention gaps relating to ethnicity, with retention rates ranging from 100% (e.g. Irish, White/Black African, White Asian, Bangladeshi, Other Black, Other and not provided) to 87.5% for Chinese students and 87.8% for White/Black Caribbean students;
- Pass rates ranged from 100% (e.g. Irish, Other White, White/Black African, White/Asian, Other Mixed, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Caribbean, Other Black, Arab, Other) to 96.9% for African students;
- Overall achievement rates ranged from 100% to 82.9% (White/Black Caribbean) and 87.5% for Chinese students;
- Across all provision White British students (3214 leavers) had an achievement rate of 96.5%;
- The overall trends over three years were improving for particular groups e.g. Bangladeshi, Other Black, and Pakistani; with some small dips in percentages (compared to 2016/17) for Arab, Other Asian and African.

Q18/45 The committee considered data relating to achievement rates for White/Black Caribbean and Chinese students in detail, drilling down to individual student level in order to establish whether there were any trends or significant issues to be identified. The committee was satisfied there were no significant issues and noted that an action had been included in the quality improvement plan to undertake further monitoring and analysis.

Q18/46 The committee considered the outcome of a focus group which had been held to gather feedback from BAME students at the College, noting that this had been very helpful in supporting the development of a range of actions including improving the diversity of staff and governors, celebrating different faiths and celebrations and using the activities programme to support conversations across courses.

Q18/47 The committee encouraged the College to consider how the comprehensive student equality and diversity analysis could be blended with a parallel analysis of staff, including relevant benchmarking.

Resolved: **i That the College consider how the comprehensive student equality and diversity analysis could be blended with a parallel analysis of staff, including relevant benchmarking.**

Q18/48 **RISKS OVERSEEN BY THE COMMITTEE**
(A copy of document 10i is filed in the minute book)

The committee considered the risks allocated to it for oversight and specifically whether they accurately reflected the risks faced by the College in relation to the remit of the Quality Committee, whether there were any developing areas which needed consideration, and whether the controls were appropriate and effective.

Q18/49 The committee noted that all risks were rated green with the exception of A1 - failure to maintain achievement rates which are above sector benchmarks - which it considered in detail. The committee agreed that the risk remained relevant, but was satisfied that there were no significant concerns at this stage in the year.

Q18/50 The committee agreed that the risks identified and the relevant controls were appropriate and accurately reflected those pertinent to the College.

Resolved: **i That the risk register be noted.**

Q18/51 **OFSTED**

The committee received an update regarding the new Ofsted inspection framework, it was reported that:

- Ofsted would introduce a new Education Inspection Framework and associated handbooks ready for September 2019, and full consultation would be initiated in January 2019;
- The promise was that Ofsted would remove measures that did not genuinely directly assess the quality of education and training, having recognised that the current framework encouraged inspectors to regard qualification outcomes as more important than the real substance and impact of education;
- Ofsted had acknowledged that there were more outcomes than purely qualifications, with the ability to progress to work, FE, HE and in life being critical for students;
- The quality of education judgement would review the content and quality of the curriculum and how it prepares students for the future, not purely the qualification outcome, and would combine what was currently judged as teaching, learning & assessment and outcomes for learners;
- There would also be a focus on curriculum research and planning (why), curriculum delivery (how) and curriculum impact (what has been gained), with progression and destination weighing heavily in judgements;
- There would be two judgements looking at the wider skills development of students - behaviour and attitudes (focused on how the College approaches what a student 'brings', for

example attendance) and personal development (the opportunities to learn about how to behave in the workplace and being active, healthy and engaged citizens);

- Leadership and Management would remain a key judgement, but there appeared to be less focus on the processes providers use to oversee quality, and more focus on the workload and wellbeing of staff ensuring their time is spent on where it impacts on students and a continued strong emphasis on governance and oversight and safeguarding;
- Ofsted recognised the ambition good colleges have for their students and how they collaborate with employers on the design and delivery of provision and track destinations which they fed into curriculum design.

Q18/52 The committee agreed that the focus on personal development was positive for the College, as was the focus on staff wellbeing; that links to employers was a more challenging area and that as anticipated the planned work on developing robust outcomes and destinations data would be very important.

Q18/53 The committee noted that whilst the College was likely to be a low priority for inspection it was important to ensure an external perspective was maintained and the College would therefore be commissioning an externally facilitated health check process, which would take place in February 2019.

Resolved: i That the report be noted.

Q18/54 **FEEDBACK FROM AOC GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP**

The committee receive feedback from a recent AoC conference workshop regarding the governance of teaching and learning partially delivered by a member of the committee, Colin Forrest and the former principal, Jill Westerman.

Resolved: i That the report be noted.

Q18/55 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, KPIs AND FUTURE APPROACH**
(A copy of document 13i is filed in the minute book)

The committee considered and approved revised terms of reference and KPIs for recommendation to the Board of Governors for approval.

Q18/56 The committee agreed that future meetings would focus on the actions in the self-assessment quality improvement plan, along with a detailed consideration of progression and outcomes.

Resolved: i That the report be noted.

Q18/57 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Quality Committee will take place on **20 June 2019 at 12.30pm**.

Signed	
Position	Chair of Quality Committee
Date	