



Northern College

CURRICULUM, QUALITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee held on **4 December 2023**.

Present: Colin Forrest (Chair), Tim Thornton, Emma Beal (Principal), Sue Horner and Maria Bowie (up to and including min Q23/89).

In attendance: The Director of Curriculum and Quality (Lee Kirton), the Assistant Principal – Student Experience (Diane Lawson) and the Clerk to the Governors (Sarah Johnson).

Apologies: Bob Craig

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Q23/68 Each governor present declared any potential interests/conflicts of loyalty related to items to be considered at the meeting.

With respect to his roles as Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Huddersfield and HE advisory member of the West Yorkshire Employment and Skills Committee Prof Tim Thornton declared a potential conflict of loyalty in items relating to the College's higher education provision. It was agreed that no decisions to be taken at the meeting would be affected and it was not considered necessary for the member to withdraw.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Q23/69 The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

Q23/70 The committee reviewed the actions tracker, noting that all were complete or on-going.

ENVIRONMENT/SECTOR UPDATE

Q23/ 71 To ensure that the committee was able to take the implications of developments in the sector and operating context into account when reviewing performance and considering strategy it considered an update on developments since the last meeting which could have an impact on quality, curriculum and student experience, including:

- progress with the development of a Future funding model for residential;
- programme weighting changes in AEB funding;
- community learning developments and challenges;
- the use of artificial intelligence in education;
- the implementation and likely impact of the lifelong learning entitlement;
- T levels and the new advanced British standard qualification.

Q23/72 The committee explored the potential opportunities in relation to artificial intelligence, the lifelong learning entitlement, and supported internships.

- Resolved: i That the update be noted and factored into the work of the committee.**
- ii That an update regarding the structure and planning of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 curriculum be provided at the next meeting.**

PERFORMANCE REPORT (Document 3i)

Q23/73 The committee considered a range of performance data which enabled them to review the performance of the College in relation to curriculum, quality and student experience, and to use that evaluation to inform risk appraisal, governance oversight and strategic thinking.

Q23/74 The committee particularly considered:

- attendance data which was below target, and the challenging areas and work being done to address any areas of underperformance;
- conversion data which had increased substantially to 77%, and the work planned to refine the data further;
- performance against recruitment targets;
- class sizes - which were improving but required further growth;
- work being undertaken to improve the percentage of students completing their progression goals;
- levels of additional learning support being provided in 2023/24 to date;
- enrichment activities, particularly those in partnership with the National Trust and student led activities;
- student voice feedback;
- quality assurance programme of work and outcomes.

Q23/75 The committee particularly:

- explored the developing approach to conversion and the further work being done to convert the relatively large number of potential students who apply for a course at the College but do not become an active enrolment;
- considered progression goals data, agreeing that this needed to be a key focus for the College, particularly how it was effectively and meaningfully measured and how the curriculum was built to meet progression needs;
- noted the planned further CPD work regarding supporting learners with dyslexia;
- considered which factors could have the biggest impact on student recruitment;
- agreed that whilst the extremely positive student feedback was welcomed, the College should continue to explore other methods to seek to elicit more constructive feedback;
- agreed that the work to develop destinations data and analysis was urgently required;
- explored how progression data could be used for marketing purposes.

Q23/76 The committee agreed that the data presented demonstrated reasonable progress, with several areas for further development identified.

Resolved: i That performance in relation to curriculum, quality and student experience remained reasonable, and key areas of challenge were identified, and appropriate actions were in place to address them.

DRAFT SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR 2022/23 (Document 3ii)

- Q23/77 The committee considered the draft self-assessment report for 2022/23, noting:
- that the previously separate skills statement had now being embedded;
 - the process for the development of the assessment and the evidence base used;
 - the use of Ofsted feedback in the narrative.
- Q23/78 The committee particularly:
- agreed that the context required a broader West and South Yorkshire feel, and the mainly Barnsley based data required expanding;
 - agreed that the wording regarding the FEC intervention required clarifying to reflect that it was as a result of fiscal challenges and was not a quality issue;
 - noted the work required to improve attendance and time keeping;
 - noted the drop in achievement rates reported for the year and reflected in the report;
 - noted the strong performance of students with a declared disability;
 - considered and supported the grades awarded;
 - agreed that the document required a thorough proof-reading;
 - explored and supported the areas for improvement identified and noted that these would be developed into a quality improvement plan (QIP) to be considered by the committee at the next meeting.
- Q23/79 The committee agreed that the assessment represented a realistic and appropriately self-critical evaluation, that the grades awarded were appropriate and there was a clear correlation between the areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment and the development activity being reported elsewhere on the agenda.

Resolved: i That the context section of the self-assessment report for 2022/23 be expanded to include a broader West and South Yorkshire feel and data.

ii That with the inclusion of the amendments agreed the self-assessment report for 2022/23 be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.

iii That a quality improvement plan be presented for consideration at the next meeting of the committee.

HE REPORT (Document 3iii)

- Q23/80 The committee considered an update report which provided them with data and analysis to enable them to review the performance of the College's higher education provision. The committee:
- noted the significant recruitment issues in 2022/23 as previously reported;
 - explored the leadership and management challenges in the HE area and how these were being addressed;

- considered the areas for improvement identified in relation to progression pathways, marketing and programme management;
- welcomed the planned presentation of a new HE strategy at the next meeting;
- agreed that the planned approach to the significant current challenges sounded encouraging.

Resolved: i That the new HE strategy be presented for consideration by the committee at its next meeting.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW 2023/24 (Document 4i)

- Q23/81 The committee considered an overview of the 2023/24 curriculum offer, noting:
- the focus on high quality, inclusive education and expanding the offer to continue to meet local and regional priorities;
 - the key developments reported;
 - the further opportunities available.

Resolved: i That the committee support the direction of travel outlined for the curriculum for 2023/24.

HIGH NEEDS DEVELOPMENT

- Q23/82 The committee noted the developments in relation to the College's potential high needs offer as reported to the Board of Governors in November 2023.

MARKETING AND PR UPDATE (Document 4iii)

- Q23/83 The committee considered a marketing update, including:
- positioning;
 - advertising;
 - website development;
 - communications;
 - events;
 - next steps.

- Q23/84 The committee particularly explored:
- effective content development;
 - using student stories effectively in the College's marketing strategy;
 - the requirement to further develop tracking and analysis.

Resolved: i That the committee note and welcome the encouraging marketing activity.

RISK OVERSEEN BY THE COMMITTEE (Document 4iv)

- Q23/85 The committee considered the risks allocated to it for oversight which could have an impact on curriculum, quality and student experience.
- Q23/86 The committee agreed that:
- the risks related to the leadership of HE should be updated to reflect the leadership capacity now available;
 - otherwise, the risks were suitably reflected in the register and the controls and mitigation were appropriate.

Q23/87 The committee considered whether any new risks had been identified during the meeting and concluded that no new risks should be proposed for addition to the register.

- Resolved:**
- i That the risk register be updated to better reflect the leadership capacity in relation to HE.**
 - ii That with the inclusion of the amendment agreed the risk register appropriately reflected the key strategic risks related to curriculum, quality and student experience and the controls and mitigation were appropriate.**

SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT (Document 5i)

Q23/88 The committee considered the Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report for 2022/23, noting:

- that there had been an increase in referrals during the year, but this was largely as a result of further developed partnership working;
- the positive assessment by Ofsted in relation to Safeguarding and Prevent.

Q23/89 The committee:

- agreed that the section on Prevent and British Values needed to be more proactive in tone and in relation to planned actions;
- explored whether the revised Prevent guidance had been appropriately reflected;
- agreed that the College should explore the mandatory use of College emails for governors.

- Resolved:**
- i That the arrangements for Safeguarding and Prevent in 2022/23 were appropriate and satisfactory.**
 - ii That the Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report for 2022/23 be updated to better reflect the proactive work being undertaken in relation to Prevent and British Values and the relevant updated guidance.**
 - iii That the College explore the mandatory use of College emails for governors.**

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 (Document 5ii)

Q23/90 The committee considered the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report for 2022/23, and agreed that data regarding governor diversity should be included in 2023/24.

- Resolved:**
- i That data regarding governor diversity be included in future reports.**
 - ii That the College adequately met its obligations and responsibilities with regard to EDI in 2022/23.**

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Q23/91 The committee considered verbal feedback from the Association of Colleges curriculum and quality chairs network which included risks, issues and developments in the relevant areas.

Q23/92 The committee considered feedback from the recent student celebration event attended by members of the committee.

DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS

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|--------|--------|----|----------|------|--------|
| Q23/93 | Monday | 19 | February | 2024 | 1.30pm |
| | Monday | 10 | June | 2024 | 1.30pm |