

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 APRIL 2016

PRESENT

N Bowen Governor (Chair)
C Webb Governor (Principal)
E Holmes Governor (Student)

IN ATTENDANCE

D Harding (VP Curriculum)
A J Oaks (Clerk to the Board)
Y Koursis (Deputy Principal)
S Perryman (Chair of Board)
P Briscoe (AP Quality)
J Miccoli (VP Teaching, Learning & Student Svcs)
L Leek (Principal, SFC)
L Copley (Dean of UCB)

APOLOGIES

16.26 Apologies had been received from B Mansford, R Eccleston and R Kent.

MINUTES

16.27 The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

16.28 The Chair referred to the list of actions arising and requested a verbal update with regard to Minute 16.12. The Dean of UCB reported that following an investigation into the matters raised, the booking system was found to be working effectively. Given no technical issues were revealed it was concluded that there had been a miscommunication regarding the booking system.

TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE 2015/16

16.29 The Committee received a report from the VP T&L updating it on the recent Coaching and Development review that had taken place in March. Much good practice had been identified to improve teaching, learning and assessment across the college in 2015/16 and 2016/17. The report also provided an update on the quality monitoring activities and graded lesson observations.

16.30 The Chair commented that the report was clear and succinct, and that he found the action plan particularly useful as it provided evidence of the improvements being made and the upward trend. The VPT&L commented that inconsistencies in teaching and learning were largely around new staff and/or staff who had changed roles, therefore the improvement actions were longer term. The college was supporting new staff through the NQT to develop a more confident approach to assessment for learning, ensure they were effectively engaging all learners and in challenging low level disruptive behaviours.

16.31 The Committee asked questions around the NQT package which the Principal of SFC and VP Quality responded to. Asking for the student perspective, E Holmes commented that she had seen a significant improvement in her two years at the college with students much happier with their tutors, results and methods of teaching and assessment. The Chair alluded to Governor and learner engagement and suggested that Governors be encouraged to visit areas where NQTs are part of the process. The Clerk undertook to note this for future OWLS and other link visits. Further to a comment from S Perryman regarding new teaching staff, the VPT&L remarked that confidence varied and that they were 'on a journey'

particularly in respect to English and maths and that the drive to have outstanding practice meant it was continually challenging. The Chair was pleased to see the actions for improvement and believed that compulsory training was appropriate. Further to a lengthy discussion, the report was noted and received.

ENGLISH AND MATHS

- 16.32 The Committee received a report highlighting predicated grades for GCSE English and maths by department and functional skills performance. The Chair commented that it was helpful to see the data and hoped that data becoming available from the schools would assist in ensuring learners were enrolled on the right levels of study. The VP Quality summarised the data on Functional Skills performance over the last two years which was outstanding and significantly above national averages. The Committee were informed that the Essential Skills department had implemented a standardised assessment schedule which had been followed by all departments and led to the college being able to generate predicted grades which had been provided in the report. Following questions from the Committee, the VP explained that revision classes were taking place to ensure as many learners as possible achieved high grades and the central English and maths subject leaders were co-ordinating delivery of extra classes.
- 16.33 The VP believed there was still much work to be done to improve quality and consistency and that in terms of recruitment, this remained a huge challenge. The College was therefore exploring alternative ideas and non-traditional methods of recruiting staff which would remain the focus over the next few years. The Principal spoke of the uncertainty around future Conditions of Funding which would determine numbers enrolled for GCSE maths and English. Should there be significant changes it would impact on recruitment so it was necessary to be innovative about recruiting methods.
- 16.34 The VP Curriculum commented further, stating that Functional Skills remained a challenge and subject to Conditions of Funding there was a possibility that all students may have to complete and achieve GCSE English and maths. The Deputy Principal agreed, commenting that management were mindful of the potential changes and the impact on entry requirements. To provide assurance to the Committee with regard to the College's approach to entry requirements, raising aspirations and generating further growth in numbers, he reported on work currently being undertaken using Progress 8 performance measures, which the Chair was familiar with. The Chair commented that he welcomed this development as it highlighted learner progress, was a fair measure and would benefit both College and the schools.
- 16.35 The Chair referred to the predicted grades, and in response to his questions, the VP Quality confirmed that there were still some areas of concern and that management were looking more closely at attendance in English and maths as there was a correlation between attendance and lower grades, some of which were due to changes in staff. It was hoped that the additional revision classes would help to bring grades up to expectations. The Principal emphasised the positive points highlighted within the report and areas of outstanding practice which were being embedded to help others and share good practice. The Chair thanked the VP Quality for the report, which was noted and received.

APPRENTICESHIPS

- 16.36 The Deputy Principal presented the report which had been produced by the AP Employer Engagement. The report provided an update on progress of apprenticeship programmes, results from the recent external review and recommendations regarding improvements. In terms of the data provided, the report indicated good overall performance. The Deputy Principal advised members that he was currently reviewing the methods of delivery for both recruitment and employer engagement and intended to bring a more detailed report to the Committee setting out proposed changes to the structure of delivery.
- 16.37 The Chair referred to the table showing the number of apprentices by department at period 8 compared to the same period the previous year and sought further information regarding the decline in numbers in some departments. The Deputy Principal and the VP Curriculum

provided further information for members. The areas for development were noted, the Chair commenting that the action plan was very clear and helpful to the Committee. The Report was noted and received.

A LEVEL PREDICTIONS

- 16.38 The Committee received a report summarising predicted grades at AS and A2 in light of recent monitoring processes. The Chair referred to the predicted summer results, commenting that should the College achieve 3 for both AS and A2 it would place the College amongst the top 25% of all Sixth Form Colleges in the country, which was a significant improvement over the last year. Following a question from the Chair, the Principal of the SFC was confident that the predicted grades would be achieved, commenting that in respect of AS, there had been an increased level of staff training, and more stringent application of exam marking, and for A2 more rigorous assessment and focus on exam technique which had strengthened confidence amongst staff. For Governors unfamiliar with ALPS scores, the Principal SFC agreed to include a key in future papers.

The Report was noted and received.

HIGHER EDUCATION SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT

- 16.39 The Committee received the HE SED 2014/15 for information. The Dean of UCB presented the report, explaining that it was a QAA requirement which formed a key part of the evidence base for the Higher Education Review (HER). The purpose of the SED was threefold: firstly to provide an overview of the organisation, including record of managing quality and standards, and details of relationships with degree awarding bodies; secondly it described the approach used by the organisation to confirm academic standards and quality of provision, and thirdly the document highlighted the effectiveness of the organisations approach in meeting the Expectations of the Quality Code (and other external reference points), and how it could be further improved.
- 16.40 The SED had been reviewed by a selected panel of HE staff, agreed by the HE Teaching and Learning Quality Committee on 24/2/16, and presented to the senior management team on 4 April 2016. It was necessary for the Q&S Committee to recommend the SED be approved by the Board.
- 16.41 The Dean of UCB provided a brief summary of the process, referring to the specific areas within the report for Governors' information. The VP Curriculum commented that the report was exceptional in that it demonstrated the exemplary standards employed at the institution, a comment reiterated by members.

RESOLVED 16.42 to recommend the Board approve the Higher Education Self Evaluation Document for 2014/15

ATTENDANCE

- 16.43 The Committee received a report on attendance highlighting data for FE and HE, and in English and maths. The VP Curriculum presented the report, commenting that as a result of the recent external review where attendance was found to be varied, it was the intention going forward to report the data in a different format with a view to identifying trends and enabling timely improvement actions. Discussion took place with regard to authorised and unauthorised absence and how this was currently applied. The Deputy Principal suggested ways in which the data could be improved by introducing a more flexible delivery programme. Student Governor E Holmes commented that absence towards the end of the academic year was often higher, this being due mainly to an increase in mental health issues, including stress, often directly related to the summer examinations. The attendance for HE was also noted. The Report was noted and received.

RETENTION

16.44 The Committee received the report on retention, acknowledging the link between retention and attendance. The data compared the current position with that of the previous year at the same point. Adult retention was above national average and college targets at L1, with retention below both NA and college target at L2. This was attributed to withdrawals from GCSE English and Maths. At L3 retention was significantly above the NA but below the college target. Discussion took place with regard to the issues around English and maths, particularly for returning adults, which Governors noted. The VP assured the Committee that close monitoring would take place at Level 2 Adults to address withdrawals; he also spoke of the intention to provide improved advice and guidance to learners after their first 6-10 weeks to address any identified issues.

Data on retention for HE had been provided, which currently was reported at 96.21%. Whilst the Committee noted that HE retention was not linked to attendance and success rates as in FE, the data was positive in terms of enhancing the reputation of the College's HE provision.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

16.45 The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 23 June 2016 at 4.00 pm.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____