

Minutes of the Curriculum and Quality committee held on Tuesday 15th September 2020

Present: Emma Jarman (Chair)
Pradeep Bhardwaj (minutes 9 – 14 only), Monica Lawson, David Panes,

With: Charlotte Mannion
Adam Fahey, Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality
Lynne Plested, Vice Principal Higher Education and Curriculum
Tracy Scaife, Head of Governance

1. Welcome and apologies for absence – the Chair welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the curriculum and quality committee of the newly merged college.

Apologies were received from Simon Cove and Carole Kitching.

The committee were reminded of the protocols outlined by the Chair of Governors at the Corporation meeting held in August and noted that this is a very challenging time for everyone both emotionally and professionally.

2. Disclosures of interest – none received.

3. Risk management update – verbal updates received from Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality and Vice Principal Higher Education and Curriculum.

The risks allocated to the committee are pre-Covid and need to be updated. One concern raised was students logging in to online classes but not engaging with the lesson. This is being monitored and students are regularly being reminded that their progression will suffer if they do not attend classes.

Risks for the North Star campus relate to the seven areas for improvement identified in the post-inspection action plan (PIAP). Some progress has been made against these and is ongoing. The PIAP will be combined with the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) this year.

The Deputy Principal Finance and Resources is reviewing risks and revising the Risk Register for the merged college. It will include risks relating to the merger, the Institute of Technology (IoT), Brexit and Covid-19.

4. Quality cycle – presentation and associated papers from Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality received and noted.

The quality process was previously different at the two campuses and needs integrating. Curriculum Managers at the North Star campus are not freed from teaching as much as those at Queens Drive and will need support from the Quality Team. The two campuses also have different self-assessment cycles and templates.

5. Results – reports from Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality and Vice Principal Higher Education and Curriculum received and noted.

The results presented are not complete as some results are still pending. Results for North Star are in line with predicted results presented to the Swindon College Corporation meeting in December 2019 and relate mainly to 16-18 provision. Queens Drive campus also has some results pending.

It was noted that it is unlikely that data from 2019/20 will be used by Ofsted etc. due to exams not being sat due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Progression data will be presented to the next meet of the committee.

6. Level 3 Centre Assessment Grades (CAG) – report by Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality received and noted.

As noted above, the CAG results are generally in-line with those predicted, indicating the integrity of staff.

7. Enrolment – verbal update and tabled report from Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality received and noted.

The current Covid-19 pandemic is thought to have had an impact on enrolment and also possibly uncertainty of the merger of the two colleges. For obvious reasons travel and tourism courses have not recruited. It is important now to work on the curriculum offer to ensure that when confidence returns courses are available as needed.

8. Curriculum strategies/efficiencies - verbal update and tabled report from Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality received and noted.

Group sizes are being looked at during weekly meetings. The conflicting priorities of the Government are challenging. Contacting students as soon as is possible is important to gain advantage in the market.

9. Curriculum development – verbal update from Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality received and noted.

A blended learning model has been implemented at both campuses with livestreaming of classes. Unfortunately the livestreaming aspect has not been fully implemented at the North Star campus. A commitment has been made to students and parents that students will receive a full teaching package. It is recognised that there are some instances where livestreaming is not appropriate. Inevitably there have been some technical issues which while not ideal is to be expected.

10. Higher Education (HE) update – verbal report by Vice-Principal Higher Education and Curriculum received and noted.

Enrolment for HE at the two campuses is slightly out of sync with North Star taking place last week and this week and Queens Drive taking place next week. Currently North Star has 289 HE students (40 of who are studying higher/degree apprenticeships), Queens Drive has 80 new students and 45 returning students. Additionally there are 841 students through a partnership with David Game and 108 through a partnership with CECOS. Overall final numbers are likely to be down but this will not be known until enrolment is complete.

More work is needed promoting HE courses internally to current level 3 students. There is also a lot of new provision through the Institute of Technology that needs validating.

Satisfaction rates for both campuses were noted.

The Access and Participation Plan for the merged college needs to be submitted.

A report on the quality of provision with partners will be presented to the next meeting of the committee for HE and 16-18 courses.

11. Cycle of business 2020-21 – agreed.

12. Curriculum and Quality committee Terms of Reference – received and noted.

RESOLUTION: that the Terms of Reference for the Curriculum and Quality committee be recommended to the Corporation for approval.

ACTION: *TS to present ToRs to Corporation October 2020.*

13. Any other business – none.

14. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 1st December 2020 at 4.00pm.