

MINUTES

Quality & Standards Committee No 47

Date: *04/07/2017 (Tuesday)*

Time: *18:00–20:00*

Venue: *Bowland Suite*

Committee *Quality and Standards*

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Notes: *Refreshments will be available from 5.30pm.*

Present: *Allan Foster (Chairman), Ann Turner (Principal) and Julie Hughes (Vice Chairman)*

Attending *Alison Robinson (Vice Principal)*

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Clerks: *Ron Matthews (Clerk) and Susan Whiteside (Deputy Clerk)*

Apologies: *Ian Douglass, Rebecca Fitzsimmons and Richard Hughes*

Public Minutes

Item number:
(and category)

17.17 *Attendance of College Staff*
Decision

Section 8.2 of the current Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Quality & Standards Committee states:

“College management and / or Consultants may attend meetings by invitation in an advisory capacity.”

Quality & Standards Committee welcomed Corporation member Jane Booker to the meeting who was attending as an observer.

Resolved:

That College Management staff attend the meeting.

18.17 *Apologies for Absence*
Record

Apologies for absence had been received from Ian Douglass, Rebecca Fitzsimmons and Richard Hughes

19.17 *Minutes of the Previous Meeting*
Decision

The minutes of meeting number 46 held on Tuesday 28 February 2017 (published on the extranet) were signed and agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

20.17 *Declarations of Interest*
Record

There were no declarations of interests received in respect of items on the public agenda.

21.17 *Strategic Plan Progress Report 2016 / 2017*
Decision

Members gave consideration to the Strategic Plan Progress Report relevant to the Quality and Standards Committee.

The report contained information on progress against the relevant Key Performance indicators. Members noted the report and discussed throughout the meeting as they considered the more detailed reports.

Resolved:

That the Strategic Plan Progress Report 2016 / 2017 be received.

22.17

Decision

In Year Performance Data Further Education (FE) Report

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the In Year FE Performance Reports, which provided an analysis of the FE provision in the College including GCSE and Functional Skills. The report provided an overview of the key strengths, areas of improvement, action taken to date with impact, and further actions planned with expected impact.

The Vice Principal responded to member questions and supported discussions.

Overall Attendance (95%), retention (expected to hold at 96%) were high. Improvements in attendance seen in the previous year continued at the Merseyside Centre proving embedding of a culture of success. Attendance for the 19 plus age group was 6% higher than last year at 97%.

In line with the national position, the maths and English delivery of GCSEs and Functional Skills remained challenging. Attendance was high compared to national benchmarks though success rates were expected to be below the College's challenging targets. There were 335 learners registered for Functional Skills and 503 registered for GCSEs. 70% of the College FE intake were below a Grade C in maths and / or English indicating the magnitude of the challenge.

Members noted the significant numbers of home-educated students accessing the 14 - 16 courses at Myerscough against recruitment from schools. Overall, the 14 - 16 area showed good progression from year 1 to year 2 and progression opportunities to move to a Myerscough FE or Apprenticeship course.

Members received information on the student support register and how need was categorised and support managed. Student survey questions provided information on how students assessed their safety and wellbeing.

College had successfully trialled City & Guilds technical qualifications, which placed a greater emphasis on vocational skills development in Equine and these would be rolled out across most other areas to replace Btec qualifications.

In Foundation Learning, the new Supported Interns programme had been successful and would be rolled out to the Merseyside Centre. Foundation Learning Programmes were also being rolled out to the East Lancashire Centre for the next academic year.

College had action plans in place to address the temporary blocks imposed by two external examiners. These were released bar one, which was expected to be released imminently.

As members were aware, curriculum reviews were taking place in floristry, fish management and sport to ensure an appropriate mix and balance of class size and staffing.

Members looked in detail at the summary of the key areas for improvement. It was clear that analysis allowed staff to pinpoint exact pockets of concern and check if there were any indications of underperformance.

Resolved:

That the FE In-year Performance Report be received.

23.17

Decision

In Year Performance Higher Education

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the In Year Performance Higher Education Report and the Education Higher Review table.

Overall HE retention was at 97% with attendance at 86%.

Three new HE programmes to complement other provision had been approved, MSc Animal Science, FdSc Strength & Conditioning and FdSc Sport Massage Practice.

HE recruitment for 2017 was slightly lower than the same point last year and this had been allowed for in the 2017 / 18 budget proposal. Members noted that 2016 / 17 recruitment had been lower than previous years. Overall, the trend was downward particularly in Agriculture & Countryside, Greenspace & Creative Design and Sport.

Myerscough had achieved a rating of "Silver" in the Teaching excellence framework.

The Department of Education had confirmed that the College could use the title 'University Centre Myerscough'. A new logo was being produced.

Research income was largely on track to meet the target of £104k and meetings had been held to look at collaborative research and utilisation of the Food Farming & innovation Technical Centre. The Centre would officially open in September 2017.

The HEFCE Annual Provider Review, placed Myerscough with its top outcome that standards were met with no actions required.

Myerscough had achieved a rating of 'Silver' in the Teaching Excellence Framework, details of which appeared later in the agenda.

Members applauded the actions to recruit and noted the detail on these in the report, which included bursary initiatives, suspension of some courses, internal progression events, a new curriculum marketing strategy group, staff and timetable efficiencies and implementation of an HE recruitment action plan. However, members highlighted that HE was an area of concern where efficiencies were required to combat the lower recruitment.

Resolved:

That the Higher Education reports be received.

24.17 ***Apprenticeship & Skills Performance Report Update 2016 / 17***
Decision

Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to the Apprenticeship & Skills Performance Report Update 2016 / 2017.

Performance was on an upward trend with achievement at 74% and potential to reach 79% against the previous year's results of 69%. Timely achievement was at 56.9% with potential to reach 70.4% against the previous years results of 53.8%.

Work continued to raise the number of timely finishers and to close the achievement gap between intermediate and advanced apprentices. 16 to 18 learners achievement is on an upward trend but is lower than other age ranges, action plans are in place.

Staffing changes had been completed, though a review of terms and conditions of service was underway, which included full consultation.

Additional monitoring had been introduced to effect positive change.

Members were pleased to note an improving picture, growth combined with quality.

Resolved:

That the Apprenticeship & Skills Performance Report 2016 / 17 be received.

25.17 ***Teaching Excellence Framework Award***
Information

Myerscough had achieved a rating of "Silver" in the Teaching Excellence Framework. Members were pleased with this good outcome, taking into account that the metrics for highly skilled employment did not accurately reflect the actual outcomes for Myerscough students particularly in relation to Veterinary Nurse qualifications.

The Panel considered the College submission in relation to the TEF criteria and its judgement reflects in particular, evidence of:

- The consistent and frequent preparation of students for employment in their chosen field through the integration of Career Development, Business and Entrepreneurism and Professional Practice modules.
- A highly-valued culture of personalised learning, including small class sizes and high levels of tutor support, resulting in high levels of engagement and challenge for all students in order to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding.
- An institutional approach to developing high quality physical and digital resources which are frequently used by students, including a Livestock Innovation Centre, Sportsturf Technology unit, high-technology glasshouse, and a Motorcycle Race Technology workshop.
- A strategic commitment to staff development, including a comprehensive teaching observation scheme and the College-wide Golden Roses and student nominated MyStar staff awards.

The award was made in June 2017 and was valid for three years.

Resolved:

That the "Silver" award in the Teaching Excellence Framework be noted.

26.17 *Learner Voice Report*

Decision

Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to the Learner Surveys together with key outcomes from Course Representative Meetings, and the We Heart U and Golden Roses student led staff awards.

The survey take up at 79.3% was high and responses indicated high levels of satisfaction. Responses to 5 of the 20 questions recorded lower satisfaction than the previous year. These related to Catering, Library, Bus services, feeling safe and the Virtual Learning Environment. The latter would be a reaction to a change from 'Bloom' to 'Canvas'.

Members were pleased to note that satisfaction around computer facilities and assessment clarity had risen by 4%.

Resolved:

That the Learner Voice Report be received.

27.17 *Employer Voice Report*

Decision

Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to the Employer Voice Report.

Responses to the recent Skills Funding Agency FE Choices Employer Satisfaction Survey showed an upward trend for Myerscough College and favourable comparison to other organisations. The survey findings form part of the publicly accessible information that will be available on the new digital Apprenticeships website.

The report also highlighted some of the key employer engagement activity led by the staff team. Partnership opportunities continue to grow and strengthen the College position within many of the key delivery sectors.

Employer Services continued to evolve and develop the sales focused approach and attention was being paid to timeliness from application to sign up. The number of active businesses the college engages with was 1225 which was up on last year but below target however, the increase in numbers leads to efficiencies and improved margins.

Engagement with public schools, particularly in the south, indicated growth as did engagement with universities for turf maintenance. Members noted attention to salary, location weightings and the roll

out of the working from home and car allowance policies. Staff recruitment to construction training remained a national challenge.

Ongoing discussions were being held with levy paying employers.

Members noted the challenges and opportunities through the onset of the new standards funding and the employer levy.

Resolved:

That the Employer Voice Report be received.

28.17

Decision

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment report which showed trends in performance for lesson observations. All teaching staff had been assessed.

HE staff were all at the higher levels, Grade 1 and Grade 2. 97% of FE staff were assessed as Grade 1 or Grade 2.

Members wished to congratulate the teaching staff on such a strong performance and noted the College investment in the Advanced Teaching Practitioners and the support provided by the new management in the Teaching & Learning and Quality Assurance Teams.

Resolved:

That the Teaching Learning and Assessment Report be received.

29.17

Decision

Strategic Risk Register

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Strategic Risk Register.

Members had made mention of risk and strategy in terms of the Myerscough offer throughout the meeting.

Quality & Standards Committee received assurance from the development of the College approach to risk leading to closer attention to curriculum risks.

Resolved:

That the Strategic Risk Register be received.

30.17 **Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2016 / 2017 Update**

Decision

Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to the update to the Quality Improvement Plan for 2016 / 2017 and noted that most actions had been completed.

In response to a question members noted that what appeared to be under achievement from females was a subject issue which was being addressed.

Outstanding actions were picked up in the various reports to the meeting.

Resolved:

That the Quality Improvement Plan be received.

31.17 **Equality Diversity & Inclusion Report**

Decision

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Report which consisted of the Myerscough College equality objectives, targets and action plan for 2017 / 18.

Leaders in Diversity

As members were aware the College had achieved the award, 'Leaders in Diversity' in March 2017. The journey to this award informed the Action Plan. A re-assessment for 'Leaders in Diversity' would be in 2 years time.

The College Equality Objectives:

Develop a College wide culture, which actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.

Ensure a positive, inclusive student experience through equality of opportunity and the celebration of diversity.

Ensure an inclusive approach to the staff experience, which promotes equality and diversity.

The College wide targets:

Maintain Leaders in Diversity.

Student attendance, retention and achievement for protected groups is within a 3% tolerance of non-protected groups.

Staff recruitment matches the local community.

A recommendation from the Leaders in Diversity Action Plan was to appoint a link Governor for EDI. Jane Booker was scheduled to take over from Clare Platt as the link Governor for Safeguarding at the end of the year when Clare would retire from the Board. Jane had

attended the meeting to see Governance from the perspective of Quality & Standards and following due process she had agreed to undertake this role. The role would complement that of Safeguarding Link Governor.

Resolved:

1. **That the Equality Diversity Inclusion Report be received.**
2. **That Jane Booker be recommended as link Governor for Equality Diversity and Inclusion**

32.17 ***Learning & Information Services***
Information

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the report on the learning and information services.

The report was produced following a visit to the Library, which was conducted as an introductory overview for the approval and review of Uclan Higher Education initiatives at Myerscough College, in support of the periodic comprehensive review.

The Library service which included IT facilities for HE students was commended for its customer care, its collections and its high profile within the College. In addition it was complemented for its professionally run service with proactive and supportive staff. The report concluded that Myerscough College had all the necessary elements to support the needs of Uclan's HE students.

Resolved:

That the Uclan Learning and Information Services Report in relation to HE students be received.