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| **MINUTES** | | | | | | |
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| *Quality and Standards Committee No 59* | | | | | | |
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| Date: |  | *22/06/2021 (Tuesday)* |  | Time: |  | *18:00–20:00* |
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| Venue: |  | *Rural Business Centre* |  | Committee: |  | *Quality and Standards* |
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| Present: |  | *Alison Robinson (Principal), Allan Foster, Allison Jones, Barbara Godby, Jane Booker, Jenny Wilson, Kevin Burke and Louise Bell* | | | | |
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| Attending: |  | *Helen Eaton, Lisa Hartley, Mick Cottam, Paul McGrail, Paul Thompson, Steven Downham-Clarke (Vice Principal) and Sue Keenan* | | | | |
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| Clerks: |  | *Ron Matthews (Clerk)* | | | | |
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| ***Public* Minutes** | |
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| Item number: | Item description: |
| (and category) |  |
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| **19.21** | ***Attendance of College Management Staff*** |
| ***Decision*** | Section 8.2 of the current Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Quality & Standards Committee states:  “Consultants or members of staff may attend meetings by invitation in an advisory capacity.”  The Vice Principal, Assistant Principals Higher Education, Further Education, Apprenticeships & Skills, Liverpool & Partnerships and the Directors of Quality & Performance, and Student Support and Welfare were in attendance to present papers and support discussions.  **Resolved:**  **That College Management staff attend the meeting.** |
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| **20.21** | ***Apologies for Absence*** |
| ***Record*** | Apologies had been received from Kevin Burke. The Committee was informed that Jenny Wilson, Student Governor, had left the College. |
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| **21.21** | ***Minutes of Previous Meeting*** |
| ***Decision*** | The public minutes of meeting number 58 held on Tuesday 9 February 2021, published on the Extranet, were agreed and signed as a true and correct representation of the meeting. |
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| **22.21** | ***Declarations of Interest*** |
| ***Record*** | There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda. |
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| **23.21** | ***Strategic Plan Progress Report*** |
| ***Decision*** | Quality & Standards Committee considered the Strategic Plan Progress report 2020/2021.  Recruitment to FE was exceeding target although overall attendance was below target mainly due to Covid lockdowns.  Recruitment to Apprenticeships indicated that targets, in terms of student numbers and finances, were close to meeting target.  Overall, numbers on Higher Education full time programmes were on target. HE part-time numbers were below target but not significantly.  Retention and attendance figures for Higher Education were high.  Standards of teaching in FE and HE were meeting and exceeding expectations with walkthrough observations although below only 78.8% had been carried out to date.  Full Course Recovery was below the financial targets due the Covid lockdowns.  Student responses to the surveys were well above 90%, although some responses were slightly below target.  Details would be explored in greater depth in the individual reports later on the agenda.  **Resolved:**  **That the Strategic Plan Progress Report be received.** |
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| **24.21** | ***In Year Performance Data - Further Education*** |
| ***Decision*** | Quality & Standards Committee considered the In-Year Further Education Performance Report 2020/2021.  Recruitment was 1891 against a target of 1707.  Attendance, retention and punctuality, precursors of success were strong with monitoring in all areas ensured that pockets of concern were identified and addressed.  Overall attendance was at 91.3%, against a College target of 95% (including authorised absences).  Punctuality was excellent across all centres at 99%.  Retention for all FE programmes (16 to 18 and 19 plus) was excellent at 95.6% above the College retention target of 95%. Continued high retention would be a feature of performance. Retention for 14 to 16 year old students was 94.2% overall.  Maths and English students had been divided this year between Functional Skills and GCSEs.  At the time of writing the GCSE estimated grades were as follow:  Anticipated grades 9 - 4  GCSE English 49.2%.  GCSE Mathematics 31.6%  GCSE Chemistry 96%  GCSE Biology 80%  These were robust estimates and would hopefully be confirmed by the regulators.  To date recruitment via Furness College for Animal Care and Management was:  Level 2   9  Level 3   18 (1st and 2nd year students)  For Ullswater Community College:  Animal Care:  Level 2   8  Level 3   20  Agriculture:  Level 2   4  Level 3   18  Arboriculture:  Level 2   3  Level 3   7  **Resolved:**  **That the Further Education Progress Report be received.** |
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| **25.21** | ***In Year Performance Data - Higher Education*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | Quality and Standards Committee considered the Higher Education Performance Report for 2020/2021.  The HE In Year performance paper reported high levels of HE student retention 98.3% (against a target of 97%), progression to Year 2 at 98% and attendance at 90.5%. The key priority was to ensure continued high levels of retention for students across both full and part time courses for the remainder of the year. |   HE applications for September 2021 entry, both full time and part time, were currently up compared with the same period last year and it was important to maximise the conversion of applicants to enrolments. Emphasis remained on increasing recruitment.  Included in the report were details of student destination data for 2018/2019 which was managed centrally by HESA.  The report indicated a high response rate for the NSS survey of 70%, although the results would not be known until later in the year.  **Resolved:**  **That the Performance Report for Higher Education be received.** |
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| **26.21** | ***Office for Students - Update*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Quality and Standards Committee considered a report on the continued requirements from the Office for Students.  The paper indicated that the College had continued to meet all the requirements and deadlines of the Office for Students.  The College has responded to a significant number of OfS and DfE consultations in the recent period:  • OfS Quality and Standards – Consultation response provided (inc. baseline requirements for Condition B3 - continuation rates, degree outcomes and Graduate Outcomes)  • OfS Reportable Events  • OfS Approach to Monetary Penalties  • OfS Public Information about HE Providers  • OfS Recurrent Grant Funding  • OfS Capital Grant Funding  • DFE Post Qualification Admissions  The OfS has issued guidance for HE providers on tackling sexual harassment. This was likely to become part of a regulatory requirement in the future.  The DfE and OfS have reminded providers about adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Association (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. The College has already written this into the College policy and included it in staff CPD sessions.  The DFE had also issued guidance on freedom of speech and academic freedom for HE institutions. This was also likely to be part of a future Government Bill as well as future OfS regulatory requirement. The College was currently undertaking work to map the guidance to the College Code of Practice and identify any gaps.  The OfS have provided additional Hardship funding for providers to distribute to students. Our allocation was as follows:  • Dec 20 -   £22,996  • Feb 21 -   £53, 035  • April 21 - £17,266  Our monitoring return for the December and February allocations confirmed that the additional funding had been distributed to students in most need via additional hardship bursaries. Our April allocation is currently being distributed through further bursaries to students facing continuing hardship and must be allocated by 31 July 2021.  Monitoring on the actions arising out of the Access and Participation Plan showed good progress.  The Chair noted that this would be the last meeting for Mick Cottam, Assistant Principal, Higher Education, who was retiring on 31 July 2021 and expressed her thanks for the work he had done for the College. The remaining members of the Committee concurred with the Chair's comments.  Mick responded accordingly.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **27.21** | ***In Year Performance Data - Apprenticeships and Skills*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Quality and Standards Committee considered the In-Year Performance Report for Apprenticeship and Skills.  Current achievement was at 76.7% with a best case scenario of 82.4% which would be above College target.  Timely information and targets did not form part of the new Standards for Apprenticeships.  The current income forecast appeared on target to meet budget.  Retention was 77.2% against a target of 75% with attendance high at over 95% and destination data high at 97%.  Observations had taken place with 91.3% meeting expected standards.  Employer satisfaction was maintained at 87.1%.  Whilst apprenticeship numbers were lower than at the same period last year they achievements were better than the national performance.  **Resolved:**  **That the Performance Data Report for Apprenticeship and Skills be received.** |
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| **28.21** | ***Quality Performance and Standards Report*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Quality and Standards Committee considered the report on Quality Performance and Standards.  The report indicated that Teaching staff have done an excellent job in ensuring high quality continuous delivery on site and online during a very challenging year and this had contributed to maintaining  retention high overall.  The current number of walk-throughs completed at 01.06.21 was 593 of which 50 were joint observations. This number included 117 in Apprenticeships and Skills which have been a combination of walk-throughs, professional visits and static walk-throughs.  It was anticipated that the performance for walk-throughs of 78.8% would improve by the end of the academic year.  Staff had been trained to undertake 'deep dives' in the FE areas to aid performance prior to a possible Ofsted Inspection in the autumn.  **Resolved:**  **That the Quality Performance and Standards Report be received.** |
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| **29.21** | ***Quality Improvement Plan 2020 - 2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | Quality and Standards Committee considered progress on the Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021.  English and Maths remained high priorities.  It was noted that the final figures for the year on the Quality Improvement Plan would be reported to the Corporation meeting to be held on 1 November 2021.  **Resolved:**  **That the Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021 be received.** |
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| **30.21** | ***FREDIE Report and Action Plan 2020/2021*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the FREDIE, (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement) Report and Action Plan for 2020/2021.  The report noted that the College had been placed 6th (25th last year) in the top 100 of the most inclusive workplaces in the National Centre for Diversity Awards 2021. The Director of Student Support and Welfare had also been nominated for the Employer of the Year Award. This demonstrated the College's commitment to FREDIE.  The report also outlined the work required to embed FREDIE throughout the College.  Activities and improvements for 2020/21 were detailed in the Action Plan.  **Resolved:**  **The Committee received the report and congratulated Officers on the College performance at the National Centre for Diversity Awards.** |
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| **31.21** | ***Safeguarding Report*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee considered the Safeguarding Report which gave an update on current progress.  The report detailed the number of Safeguarding Alerts which had seen an increase over recent weeks. Also included were partnership arrangements, record keeping, campus security, subcontractor arrangements, staff training and the monitoring of online safety.  Governors welcomed the report.  **Resolved:**  **That the Safeguarding Report be received.** |
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| **32.21** | ***Learner Voice*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | The Committee considered a report on recent FE surveys. The FE end of year survey was nearing completion and showed an improved participation from last year. Responses to date were very positive.  Key outcomes had been noted from Course Reps Meetings, Focus Group and Residential Students meetings, which had continued on a virtual basis due to the pandemic.  Golden Rose Awards and My Star Awards had taken place amongst students. |   The National Student Survey (NSS) results for HE would be published later in the year.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **33.21** | ***Subcontracting Report*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | The Committee received an update on the in-year subcontracting provision.  The report covered details of the various contractors, the services they provided, the number of student starts and retention factors (remaining high at 96.5%), together with the value of each contract and the retention fees retained by the College.  The College’s subcontracting provision was audited in May 2021 when a positive report was received with only one recommendation identified; to merge the Sub-Contracting Policy and Procedure with the Sub-Contractor Supply Chain and Charges Policy. This would be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee at their meeting to be held on 29 June 2021.  Discussions would commence shortly with existing subcontractors on allocations for 2021/2022. One subcontractor would cease their relationship with the College once existing students had completed their course of study.  The College had reduced its subcontracting provision over recent years. Of the current five subcontractors one would conclude their arrangements in the coming year.  Finally, lesson observations had been undertaken with all subcontracting teaching staff with positive feedback. |   The Committee received the report and were pleased to note positive subcontracting provision.  **Resolved:**  **That the report be received.** |
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| **34.21** | ***Statutory Risk Register*** |
| ***Decision*** | |  | | --- | | Quality and Standards Committee considered the Strategic Risk Report for 2020/2021 prepared by the Deputy Principal, Finance and Corporate Services and presented at the meeting by the Vice Principal. Included in the report was a reference to the risk appetite statement, risk assessment framework and risk heat map.  The Deputy Principal had reviewed the Register and re-ordered it to match the revised Strategic Aims of the College. |   **Resolved:**  **That the Statutory Risk Register Report be received.** |
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| **35.21** | ***Annual Cycle of Business for 2021/2022*** |
| ***Decision*** | The Committee received a report on the proposed business of the Committee for 2021/2022.  **Resolved:**  **That, subject to the removal of the item on the Draft College Self- Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan for 2020/2021 from the meeting scheduled for 16 November 2021, the report be received.** |
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| Acting Chairman: |  |  |
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| Date: |  |  |