

**Minutes** of a meeting of the Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committee held on 17 May 2021 via Teams

**Trustees Present:** Mr J Burnett, Mr M Davis, Prof A Phippen, Mr C Twigg, Mr D Walrond (Chair), Mrs S Wright and Dr J Grey (Principal)

**In Attendance:** Mr A Jeffries (Assistant Principal) and Mrs A Winter (Clerk to the Trustees)

**Apologies:** Ms J Brown (Assistant Principal), and Mrs D Tarrant

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
21/15	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2021 were <b>APPROVED</b> as a correct record.</p>	
21/15	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>15.01 Student Destinations 2019/20 (Minute 21/06)</b></p> <p>The Assistant Principal provided additional information about the students who left the College in summer 2020 as more of those with an ‘unknown’ destination had been contacted. The data indicated positive outcomes for many learners with large numbers progressing into higher education and many gaining employment or an apprenticeship. Additional data would be circulated with the Minutes.</p> <p>Trustees asked whether outcomes for vulnerable learners was in line with the whole cohort and discussed whether the disruption to education in the past year had disproportionately impacted on these students. It was noted that new tracking software, Unifrog, had been implemented which would increase data analysis capability for 2021.</p> <p><b>15.02 FE White Paper (Minute 21/10)</b></p> <p>Further detail on the reforms set out in the White Paper <i>Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth</i> were awaited. The proposals emphasised the importance of education leading to jobs, filling skills gaps, investment in higher level technical qualifications and access to training throughout learners’ lives.</p>	AJ to provide data
21/16	<p><b>Lesson Observations and Student Reviews 2020/21</b></p> <p>The Committee received a report explaining the teaching observation process, student course and tutorial reviews which provided an opportunity for staff to reflect on and develop their own teaching practice. Learner feedback also helped to shape provision.</p> <p>Trustees noted that the usual observation process had been adapted this year due to the Covid lockdowns and remote delivery.</p>	

	<p>Ungraded learning walks were being conducted by experienced senior staff (usually the SMT or a PTL) with an emphasis on supportive, constructive dialogue about strengths and areas for development.</p> <p>Trustees asked about the rationale for not grading learning walks and debated the benefits and disadvantages of re-introducing graded observations next year. Trustees noted that Ofsted no longer graded lesson observations and there was little comparative data available. The Committee also asked about the next steps if a learning walk identified unsatisfactory teaching and the follow up support and capability processes were explained.</p> <p>The value of peer observations was also discussed and recognised as a valuable way of sharing good practice and professional development. However, the constraints of social distancing and other restrictions had curtailed peer observations this year.</p> <p>Online Student Course Reviews and Tutor Reviews had been completed by students and the data analysed for trends and feedback which needed further consideration. The response rates for some cohorts (eg. GCSE classes) were low and were still being followed up to provide a more comprehensive overview.</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to note that overall results remained very positive, were similar to last year and no concerns were identified.</p>	
<b>21/17</b>	<p><b>Student Retention Rates 2020/21</b></p> <p>The Committee received data on student retention for 2020-21 compared to the previous three years as well as a breakdown of retention by course type.</p> <p>Trustees were pleased to note a very high overall rate of 96.7% which was well above benchmarks and the 93% target set by the Board. However, this was a fall from 99.4% in 2019-20 and the likely reasons for this were discussed, including further growth in the size of the cohort and the considerable disruption due to the pandemic and switch to remote learning.</p> <p>The Committee supported the strategies to maintain the quality of the student experience and support retention and the planned actions to be implemented in 2021-22.</p> <p>In response to questions, the Principal indicated that although formal exit interviews were conducted, senior staff usually had significant interaction with individuals prior to leaving and were aware of the circumstances in each case. The Committee suggested it could be helpful to analyse retention rates for vulnerable learners to identify common issues and assess the adequacy of support provided.</p>	
<b>21/18</b>	<p><b>Assessment Arrangements for 2021</b></p> <p>The Principal explained the three different approaches for Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) for A levels/GCSEs, vocational UAL qualifications and BTEC awards. For each course, specific milestones had been identified and appropriate assessments and work completed to provide evidence on which to determine TAGs. Internal moderation and quality assurance processes were also explained.</p>	

	<p>The Committee asked about the impact for students, for parents/carers as well as employers and universities and discussed the implications and concerns. Also, trustees considered the implications for staff, the additional pressures, workload and challenges of potential appeals.</p> <p>Overall the Committee was satisfied that thorough, robust processes had been put in place and the College was well prepared to meet deadlines and requirements.</p>	
<b>21/19</b>	<p><b>Student Recruitment Forecast for 2021/22</b></p> <p>The Principal provided an up to date summary of current applications which indicated recruitment broadly in line with last year despite a lack of open events and onsite visits. Staff were ensuring a rapid response to applications and more than 700 individual interviews had been completed and offers accepted.</p> <p>The Committee also discussed the geographical distribution of applicants, schools attended, course type and subject choices. Applications for new courses were being closely monitored to assess viability and staffing requirements.</p> <p>In response to questions about transition arrangements for the new intake, the Committee noted a range of online resources, podcasts and course-specific preparatory work had been made available via the digital campus. Transition and induction support was especially important as many school leavers had missed considerable periods of education during the pandemic.</p> <p>The Committee also noted an opportunity for prospective students to visit the College at the planned Open Day on 3 July 2021.</p>	
<b>21/19</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding Update</b></p> <p>The Assistant Principal provided an update on recent activities and Trustees noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the College’s statutory Annual Safeguarding Return had been submitted and feedback was awaited</li> <li>• the safeguarding team continued to be very busy and C-POMS software to track safeguarding issues indicated a 25% increase in reports and notifications compared to last year</li> <li>• with most students back on site, the range of safeguarding and support issues had shifted with a growth in concerns around mental health, post-Covid anxiety and lifestyle issues</li> <li>• staff had noticed a tendency for increased risk-taking amongst young people as social lives resumed</li> <li>• support activities were being focused on awareness raising and offering proactive preventative guidance</li> </ul> <p>In response to questions, the Principal indicated that accessing support from external agencies and specialist services was challenging and the College’s safeguarding team were responding to some very high level and complex cases. Trustees noted that structured supervision had been introduced to help ensure safe working and protect the wellbeing of the Student Services team.</p>	

21/20	<p><b>Review of Policies</b></p> <p><b>20.01 Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)</b></p> <p>The Committee reviewed this new policy providing a framework to support sensitive discussions and a positive culture around sexuality and relationships. RSE resources and guidance were being strengthened on legal issues, consent and online e-safety. Following the 'Everyone's Invited' initiative, Ofsted was reviewing RSE policies and any recommendations would be incorporated into the College's approach.</p> <p>Following discussion, the Committee <b>APPROVED</b> the proposed policy.</p> <p><b>20.02 SEND Policy</b></p> <p>The Committee reviewed and <b>APPROVED</b> the SEND Policy with no changes.</p> <p><b>20.03 Fitness to Study Policy</b></p> <p>Trustees noted the proposed updates to the policy to ensure it provided a clear framework for responding to concerns about a student's health and the impact on teaching and learning. The policy had been revised to provide a more systematic approach and help to balance the duty of care to individual learners, to staff and to the wider College community.</p> <p>In response to questions the Principal confirmed that policies were discussed with new students as part of the induction processes.</p> <p>Following consideration, the Committee <b>APPROVED</b> the proposed policy.</p>	
21/21	<p><b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan</b></p> <p>The Principal provided an update on the EDI action plan and the various actions that were being taken forward, including a student-led group addressing taboos, dialogue with other colleges to share experiences of wider EDI issues and potential accreditation for the Investor in Diversity award.</p> <p>Trustees <b>NOTED</b> the ongoing progress.</p>	
21/22	<p><b>Cycle of Annual Business for 2021/22</b></p> <p>The Committee considered and <b>APPROVED</b> the proposed cycle of annual business for 2021/22.</p>	
21/23	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The Committee would next meet on Monday 11 October 2021.</p>	ALL to note