

# HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

## STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 06 March 2019

Membership:	*L Laycock (Chair) S Adamopoulos R Bristow *J Bouffler *G Onyesoh
*denotes present	*K Spencer
In attendance	L Turner, Deputy Principal B Jones, Vice-Principal P Whitehead, Vice-Principal S Boyce, Head of Student Services D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation

#### **635 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from S Adamopoulos and R Bristow.

#### **636 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in addition to those previously declared.

#### **637 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 27 November 2018 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **638 Matters Arising from the Minutes (not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda)**

##### **638.1 Quality Improvement (minutes 627.2 and 617 refer)**

L Laycock asked if review of the Learner Voice processes has been undertaken. B Jones reported that an update will be given at the next Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting.

##### **638.2 Self-Assessment Report for Harlow College 2017/2018 (minute 628 refers)**

L Laycock reported that the data is now starting to come through the new Safeguard software system.

##### **638.3 Maths and English Improvement Plans (minute 630 refers)**

L Laycock asked if a Governor was required to sit on the Maths Centre for Excellence Board. D Sheridan reported that it is not a requirement.

## **639 National Performance Tables Update**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the update on national performance tables, presented by L Turner, Deputy Principal.

L Turner reported that the national performance tables are published every year.

### **A-Levels and Academic Qualifications:**

L Turner reported that the system has changed for these qualifications and that students sit unit exams. AS Levels no longer carry over into the final A-Level exam result. Governors noted that the College's average grade has declined slightly. K Spencer reported that some colleges are maintaining the AS-Level qualification and evidence has shown these colleges achieve better results however the evidence needs to be considered in more detail. L Laycock asked if there is any funding implications associated with this and it was confirmed that there are no implications on funding.

### **Applied General:**

L Turner reported that this measure covers the traditional BTEC qualifications however only three learners are included in the performance table despite approximately 400 learners following this pathway. K Spencer reported that it is thought that only RQF qualifications are included in this measure.

### **Tech Level:**

L Turner reported that the Tech Level covers Level 3 technical qualifications and that only 25 learners were included in this measure.

### **English and Maths:**

L Turner reported that the progress measure is calculated by comparing the grade the student enters College with at 16 and the grade the student leaves the College with or when the student turns 18. The way the measure is scored was highlighted to Governors. L Turner reported that if functional skills were taken out of this measure, the GCSE progress improves and shows more added value.

L Laycock highlighted that a key element of the new Ofsted framework and focus in on progress and that Governors need to fully understand the data and the information that sits behind the data. K Spencer suggested that analysis undertaken should be presented to Governors.

L Laycock asked how the performance tables are used. It was reported that Ofsted will look at the performance tables however they will focus more on the ALPS data. It was also reported that all Governors need to be aware of the data that is available.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the National Performance Tables Update.

## **640 Matrix Re-accreditation**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the report on Matrix re-accreditation, presented by S Boyce, Head of Student Services, which confirms that the College has received re-accreditation.

Governors were informed that Matrix is the quality framework and kitemark for information, advice and guidance and is recognised nationally. It is particularly important for the College as it is part of the mandatory criteria for certain funding which the College accesses. S Boyce informed Governors that the re-accreditation assessment took place over three days in November 2018 and is part of a three-year cycle. The scope of the assessment was outlined by S Boyce.

Areas of strength identified in the report include: achieving KPIs; Stansted Airport College recruitment targets; supported internships, work undertaken by the Supported Studies team; IAG support; positive feedback from students; high quality marketing outputs; successful implementation of the Careers Strategy and the success of Bright Futures.

Areas for development identified in the report include: evaluation of IAG services; identifying CPD opportunities for Student Services staff; impartial and objective IAG from curriculum tutors and the parity of IAG to focus on employment as well as university. A discussion was held around the timing of promoting apprenticeships and employment compared to promoting university applications and the Committee agreed that all opportunities should be promoted at the same time in the Autumn Term.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the Matrix re-accreditation report and thanked all staff involved for the positive report and outcome.

#### **641 Work Experience Policy**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the Work Experience Policy, presented by P Whitehead, Vice-Principal.

L Laycock highlighted that apart from in Section 6.3 of the Policy, no reference is made to safeguarding learners who are out on work placements. The Standards and Curriculum Committee requested reference be made to this under Section 4, Section 6.2 and Section 6.3 and the Safeguarding Policy be added to the list of related policies.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee agreed the Work Experience Policy subject to the amendments detailed above.

#### **642 Higher Education**

##### **642.1 Anglia Ruskin University Monitoring Proforma**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the Anglia Ruskin University Monitoring Proforma, presented by B Jones, Vice-Principal.

Governors noted that most of the actions in the action plan have been completed with the exception of the NSS target and some module evaluation scores on particular courses which have now closed. Governors also noted

the commentary provided in the report based on course areas. Governors noted that there are five targets which the College is currently working on to achieve this year.

Governors were informed that the only courses currently running are Early Years and Bioscience with a total of 23 learners and they are both in their last year of operation.

J Bouffler confirmed that the report will be presented to Senate next month.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the Anglia Ruskin University Monitoring Proforma.

## **642.2 Annual Pearson Monitoring Report**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the Annual Pearson Monitoring Report, presented by B Jones, Vice-Principal. Governors noted that the College is currently running five courses and that the key focus is ensuring students are retained for their second year of study.

Governors were informed that the level of award achieved by learners is not as high as the College would like it to be and this is a key target moving forward.

J Bouffler asked if actions to be undertaken are captured better than on the monitoring report and B Jones reported that a separate action plan has been produced and will be presented at the next meeting. L Laycock highlighted the need for Governors to monitor this provision closely.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the Annual Pearson Monitoring Report.

## **643 Governance**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the report on Governance, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation. The Clerk reminded the Committee that governance has been removed for the Search Committee's remit and now feeds into the Standards and Curriculum and Audit Committees.

Governors' attention was brought to the internal audit report on risk management and governance and noted that governance received a strong assurance, the highest possible assurance, and risk management a significant assurance.

P Whitehead reported that a value added point arising from the risk management audit was to assign risks on the risk register to Committees. A first draft of this was presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 26 February 2019. There are some overlaps where risks could be assigned to more than one Committee and it was agreed that these should be assigned to the Corporation. Committees would then take ownership of the risk and receive reports and monitor the risks as part of the Committee's remit. Committees already do this with some risks therefore it would not be an overly onerous task. The Standards and Curriculum Committee agreed the

approach of assigning risks to Committees.

D Sheridan highlighted the issues relating and affecting governance arising for the Ofsted report as follows:

- The format of the QIP and KPIs to be revised.
- The possibility of including student disciplinary incidents on the safeguarding system.
- The self-assessment process identified as an issue by inspectors.

The Committee noted the training and development activities undertaken by Governors. Appropriate induction training is being identified for new Governors, three Governors are attending the AoC's Governance Summit in March and L Laycock is attending one of the ETP governor training sessions.

L Laycock asked why Governor learning walks do not take place. K Spencer reported that it had been decided not to do them and that Governors would be linked to areas of interest following the self-assessment validation sessions. D Sheridan informed the Committee that Governors will be offered the opportunity to visit areas of the College after each Corporation meeting.

L Laycock asked whether a Governor attends student rep meetings. D Sheridan confirmed that this used to happen. K Spencer reported that one was held as part of the self-assessment validation event. It was also noted that the College had attempted to arrange a student conference however there was a lack of interest from students.

B Jones reported that learner voice is good at team and academy level and that focus groups on particular topics have proved to be successful. A key consideration is where Student Governors are representing the entire student body, where is the information coming from other than their immediate peers. L Laycock asked if the College has a student council. K Spencer reported that this has not worked however suggested that when students are involved in an event that a brief session before the event would take place to meet with Student Governors. The Standards and Curriculum Committee agreed that this would be the best approach and L Laycock offered to attend any sessions along with the Student Governors.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the report on governance.

#### **644 Harlow College Ofsted Inspection January 2019**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the Harlow College Ofsted Inspection Report, dated January 2019, presented by B Jones, Vice-Principal.

Governors noted that the College had been graded "Good" across all categories and management believe that is a better "Good" grading than the previous inspection in 2016 at which the College was also rated "Good".

B Jones highlighted the key strengths as identified in the report and made particular reference to the use of digital technology to reinforce learning, how employability and work-readiness is embedded across the College and how staff take swift action to address any emerging issues.

B Jones highlighted the areas for development as identified in the report as follows:

- Teaching and Learning – focus on stretch and challenge on the most able students. Inspectors reported that they could see stretch and challenge is planned for but not always instigated in lessons. Management reported that this is part of developing the craft of teaching within staff. The Power of 3 also needs to be further embedded.
- English and Maths – the College is aware that improvements need to be made in this area and that the College has strategies in place to address this.
- Apprenticeships – gaps in achievement for different groups of learners were identified by Ofsted however the College has studied the data and has concluded that there are issues with the qualification and sector area rather than an issue with the achievement of different groups of learners.

A detailed discussion was held around the strengths and areas for developed as identified in the Ofsted report.

K Spencer highlighted the key issues for Governors raised by Ofsted were the question of whether the Self-Assessment Report was useful, that Ofsted did not like the target setting in the QIP and KPIs and that there should be as much emphasis on teaching, learning and assessment KPIs as for those non-teaching, learning and assessment KPIs. Governors noted however that financial risks are significant in the current climate along with ensuring the College has sufficient resources to invest in teaching, learning and assessment. K Spencer informed the Committee that the format of the QIP and KPIs would be revisited and asked L Laycock to support the College in this process.

Governors were informed that the College's strength is in the action that it takes rather than having detailed action plans outlining action to be taken.

Governors were informed that it had been recommended that student disciplinary incidents were to be recorded on the Safeguard system however the College needs to assess whether it is appropriate to do so as some concerns around this have been raised. This is being considered by the Safeguarding Steering Group Committee.

Governors noted in particular the strong and positive comments regarding learners in receipt of high needs funding. L Laycock asked why this area was not graded outstanding and it was reported that the College does not at present have a strong enough 'story' for high needs funded learners on mainstream programmes.

B Jones confirmed that the College is putting in place plans to address the areas for development identified in the report and the QIP will be updated accordingly and that the College is aware of the potential for a post-Ofsted dip and ready to take appropriate action.

L Laycock highlighted that there was nothing identified in the report that was not already known to the College or Governors.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee congratulated the College, staff and students on the strong outcome of the Ofsted inspection and thanked B Jones for

leading the inspection as the College's Ofsted nominee.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted the Harlow College Ofsted Inspection Report.

#### **645 Any Other Business**

K Spencer provided the Standards and Curriculum Committee with an update on safeguarding initiatives, particularly in relation to the recent publicity on knife crime. K Spencer reported that the College has a strong safeguarding team and have put plans in place to address drug and knife crime prevention over the coming weeks. There are on-going discussions around lock down of the campus and Governors noted that this is not easily achievable on campus. L Laycock highlighted the need to have something in place to show that the College and Corporation are addressing issues.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee noted that this is L Turner's last meeting before she retires. The Committee thanked her for her hard work and commitment to the College and wished her well.

#### **646 Dates of Future Meetings**

Summer Term	Tuesday 18 June 2019	08.30am
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