

# HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

## STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 13 March 2018

Present: \*Liz Laycock (Chair)  
\*Jon Bouffler  
\* Karen Spencer  
\*Callum Alexander  
Sotirios Adamopoulos

In attendance: Louise Turner, Deputy Principal  
Becky Jones, Assistant Principal  
Deborah Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation

### **601 Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee**

Liz Laycock was appointed Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

### **602 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Sotirios Adamopoulos

### **603 Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared beyond those already made known to the Clerk.

### **604 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Standards and Curriculum Committee meeting held on 28 November 2017 were approved as a correct record.

### **605 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

#### **605.1 QIP and Targets (minute 593 refers)**

The Deputy Principal reported that there was an improvement in the results of male students in GCSE English.

#### **605.2 T-Level Action Plan (minute 594 refers)**

The Principal reported that the College is to receive funding for capacity building with employers in readiness for the introduction of T-Levels. This will be to develop 110 extended work placements in 2018/19. The college had applied to deliver T-Levels in Engineering, Digital and Childcare. Other subject areas will become available and the college will apply for those where it can demonstrate a track record and good retention, achievement and value added. There will be a requirement for a minimum of 15 students to study on the programme.

The Committee asked for a presentation on T-Levels when they are established in terms of content and relationship with other qualifications.

### **605.3 Higher Education Scholarly Activity Plan**

The Committee noted that the Plan had been endorsed by the Corporation on 7 December 2017.

### **606 Harlow College Quality Improvement Plan**

Louise Turner, Deputy Principal presented her report on the Quality Improvement Plan for 2017/18 to the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

In considering outcomes for learners on study programmes, Governors noted that retention rates are currently 97% and success rates are predicted at 91% taking into consideration student flags where concerns exist. The Deputy Principal informed the Committee of measures taken to prepare learners for external assessment particularly in subject areas where external exams had not previously featured. This has included reshaping the delivery of the study programmes and building in mock exams. The Deputy Principal reported that 25% of learners were in receipt of free school meals of whom 18% were looked after children. These learners are now clearly identified to staff and specific interventions are being made to support their English and maths studies. The one-year enrolment is expected to have a positive impact on outcomes.

The Committee asked that quantifiable data 'to date' be included within the 'Measure of Success' column.

Governors noted outcomes for English and maths GCSE taken in November 2017 which showed improvements with 30% achieving maths grades 4-9 (national average 27%) and 29% achieving English grades 4-9 (national average 22%). Governors and managers discussed the College's performance in English and maths which sees the College in the bottom 25% for progress whilst for other qualifications the College is in the top 25% nationally. The Committee endorsed the decision of the College to act in the best interests of the students rather than the College's performance in national Performance Tables. Governors identified that English and maths have a high profile nationally. They asked for greater detail in the review to be carried out at the end of March 2018 and for specific information on training and development for staff in English and maths delivery.

The Committee noted changes to teaching and learning observations and asked for achievements and outcomes to date to be included within the Measure of Success column.

The meeting discussed the development of staff and agreed that the professional development strategy be reviewed and that staff qualifications and skills be considered. Governors noted that there are different approaches for training and developing staff according to their role for example using the Apprenticeship Levy for aspiring managers, weekly CPD for new staff and training for teaching staff.

The Committee discussed progress with Stansted Airport College and noted that there are contingency plans for the building but the project is on track, that applications are good and staffing is being addressed. An application to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for a letter of comfort for funding is underway.

The Committee considered actions to support Apprenticeships and was informed that Apprenticeships for Hospitality and Hairdressing at the College will cease. This is in reaction to a range of poor employment practices including low wages that result in learners

moving to different employers and instances where employers indicate they would prefer students taking full-time programmes. The College would work creatively with employers to identify how extended work placements would meet their needs and those of the student.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee thanked the Deputy Principal for her report and managers noted Governors' requests regarding data.

## **607 National Performance Tables Update**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered a report on the National Performance Tables for learners aged 16-18 including an update on English and Maths from Louise Turner, Deputy Principal. Governors were informed that the data was presented in a new format for 2016/17 that did not allow for easy comparison with previous years.

The Committee noted the data in the report, which demonstrated the impact of the reduction of A\* and A grades at A Level and new assessment conditions for BTEC qualifications. Governors discussed the performance tables and noted that they do not necessarily correlate with the enrolment pattern of further education learners, for example those joining the college at age 17 would not have their outcomes at age 19 included.

Governors asked that for future reports, the College include a summary indicating whether the performance of the College was better or worse than anticipated, showing areas where the college is content or not content and trend information eg improvement or decline.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee thanked the Deputy Principal for her report and managers noted Governors' requests regarding data.

## **608 Higher Education**

### **608.1 Higher Level Technical and Professional Strategy, 2018 - 2020**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the Higher Level Technical and Professional Strategy 2018 - 2020, presented by Louise Turner, Deputy Principal. Governors noted that the Strategy applied to all programmes and Apprenticeships at level 4 and above and was based on a model structure from the Association of Colleges.

Governors noted the Strategy focused on pathways from Level 3 into Higher Education courses and careers, moving from traditional degree courses into HNC/HND programmes that can be studied in different modes to enable the widest possible access. Where appropriate there are top-up arrangements with Anglia Ruskin University to full degree level. The Strategy maintained a high standard of teaching, learning and assessment with established quality systems.

The Standards and Curriculum Committee endorsed the Higher Level Technical and Professional Strategy 2018 – 2020.

### **608.2 Quality Review Visit Submission**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received and considered the Quality Review Visit Submission, presented by Louise Turner, Deputy Principal.

Governors noted the documentation prepared for the review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and they thanked staff for their hard work in compiling the evidence. They thanked Callum Alexander for the student submission, compiled after a number of meetings with students. This two-day process was new to the College and Governors thanked all staff involved. The outcome of the QAA visit will be reported to the Committee and Corporation when the outcome is known.

## **609 Power of Three**

The Standards and Curriculum Committee received a presentation by Becky Jones, Assistant Principal and Gayle Peachey, Quality Implementation Manager on the Power of Three used to observe teaching staff performance and to identify criteria for best practice that can be shared with other teachers.

The Committee received information on the professional development process and how it will improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all curriculum areas. Its scope covers all teachers, trainers, instructors, sports coaches and those who provide support for learning (ALS). Governors learned that each individual academic member of staff will have an individual action plan which will be monitored, supported, and developed by themselves with the support of trained observers. There will be meetings to support the planning of the lesson, a peer observation of teaching and learning and then a further meeting to share reflections and areas for future development. The process promotes team work and collaboration, allows for experimentation and boosts teacher learning. The sharing of best practice is contributing towards an improved experience for learners and supplies evidence of teaching, learning and assessment for Ofsted.

The Committee discussed the Power of Three and noted that, in conjunction with walk throughs and appraisal, outstanding and poorly performing lecturers can be identified. Data from the processes are stored on Pro-observe at individual and team level. This feeds into team performance reviews and development points. All teams are reviewed twice yearly and this feeds into performance dashboards. Concerns are identified and acted upon.

The Committee agreed that the Power of Three be trialled for 2017/18 and then written into a paper for the Corporation to consider. Governors urged that staff maintain the rigour behind the process so that Quality Team staff can explain why there are no observation grades. Governors were pleased that the Power of Three is felt to be a positive experience particularly as it involves staff in their own improvement. The Committee thanked Gayle Peachey for her presentation.

## **610 Any Other Business**

Karen Spencer, Principal, reported on her visits to Denmark with the Department for Education and to Norway with College staff to look at engineered housing.

## **611 Dates of Future Meetings**

Summer Term                      Tuesday 26 June 2018      08.30am