

Curriculum & Quality Committee

Meeting at 4.30pm on Thursday 9 March 2017

Location: Board Room, Scottish Borders Campus

Minutes

ITEM	MINUTES
Present	Ian Ireland (Chair) Jane Martin Virginia Grant Andy Winwood Sara Shinton – from item 06/17
In Attendance	Heather Anderson (VP Curriculum) Angela Cox (Principal) Janet Gardner (Education Scotland) David Killean (Board Secretary/VP Quality and Innovation) Sheila McColm (Minute Secretary)
01/17	<u>Chair's Opening Remarks</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He extended a particular welcome to Janet Gardner from Education Scotland.
02/17	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> Apologies for absence were received from Tony Jakimciw and Kevin Armstrong.
03/17	<u>Minutes of meeting held on 1 December 2016 (Paper A)</u> The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 1 December 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record.
04/17	<u>Matters Arising</u>
28/16	The VP Curriculum advised that K Armstrong had discussed his proposal for work placement awards for employers with J George. Further discussion was required.
52/16	This should read <i>the publishing of Board papers</i> .
66/16	The VP Curriculum would provide information on school rolls later in the agenda.
68/16	The updated version of the Access and Inclusion Strategy had been included with the papers for information.
	All remaining actions were complete.

05/17	<p><u>Declaration of any Conflicts of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of any Conflicts of Interest from Committee members.</p>
06/17	<p><u>Presentation – New Quality Arrangements</u></p> <p>A briefing paper was circulated.</p> <p>J Gardner, the College HMI thanked Committee members for the opportunity to attend the meeting and advised that she would focus on areas other than those presented to the Board the previous week. Following her summary the following areas were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades would not be published this year; however there was a possibility of the information being accessed through Freedom of Information requests. • The challenge of ensuring equity across the sector was noted, in particular without a benchmark. J Gardner advised that Education Scotland had a duty to manage this. • Concern was noted regarding the lack of clarity regarding the process. • J Gardner reported that a second HMI was allocated to the College and other HMI or associated assessors could be pulled in if required. • Detail was vague around the report which the Board would sign off. J Gardner advised that the guidance was high level and that further guidance was expected from SFC in June. The sector should seek clarity of how the Outcome Agreement output and HMI output should come together. • The College would continue with its current self-evaluation system until further clarity was forthcoming, without causing an unreasonable amount of additional work. • J Gardner advised that Education Scotland would be taking stock of the feedback received at the College Principals Group. <p>The Chair thanked J Gardner for her presentation.</p> <p>S Shinton arrived at this point.</p>
07/17	<p><u>Learning and Teaching Strategy (Paper B)</u></p> <p>The VP Curriculum presented the new Learning and Teaching Strategy for the Committee’s approval. She explained that this strategy would support the strategic plan “<i>Our Strategy – Towards 2020</i>”.</p> <p>Further to discussion it was agreed to categorise the objectives into “new” and “being maintained” and “sprints” and “marathons”. An action plan of priorities would be produced as an appendix and quarterly updates would be provided at each meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: HA</p> <p>The updates would be planned into the Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting schedule.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: DK/SM</p>

	<p>The Chair complimented both VPs on this good piece of work.</p> <p>The Committee approved the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the proposed appendix.</p>
08/17	<p><u>Trust Fund Applications (Paper C)</u></p> <p>A proposal was presented from the Students Association for Trust Funds to be used more directly with individual students and in relatively small amounts where students were in hardship and had no alternative source of funding. The proposal was for the Students Association to decide at their discretion how to allocate the funds. It was agreed that this would be difficult in terms of the committee acting as trustees.</p> <p>The VP Quality and Innovation confirmed that the Trust Fund would be the last port of call after exploring all hardship funding. There was currently £5k in the Fund.</p> <p>Committee members noted concern around their ability to oversee the process due to the timing of meetings.</p> <p>It was noted that some programmes had additional areas for employability which incurred fees and could be paid through Bursary; however not all students were eligible. The Committee could be made aware of such instances early in the academic year in order to plan payment.</p> <p>A Winwood advised that ILA's were often available for bolt-on courses. He considered the Trust Funds would be better used in helping to retain students.</p> <p>The Principal noted the need to be able to respond in a timely manner, ensuring accessibility and keeping students engaged.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to an emergency respite situation. Claims would be made to the VP Quality and Innovation, who would then make a recommendation to the Committee by email.</p> <p>A simple set of criteria would be produced for claims. The Student Services department would be asked to identify the main issues which could not be met around finance. C Nairn would present this at the next meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: DK</p>
09/17	<p><u>Risk Register (Paper D)</u></p> <p>The Committee received the final version of the old Risk Register for information. The new version had been approved at the Regional Board the previous week.</p>
10/17	<p><u>Current Performance Indicators (Paper E)</u></p> <p>The VP Curriculum presented the Early Withdrawal figures for courses on the Courses for Concern list, the Courses for Praise and an updated Key Performance Indicator snapshot.</p>

	<p>She explained that the Head of Student Services had contacted all students concerned in order to gain more insight and understand reasons for withdrawal. The information was then passed to Faculty Heads to follow up.</p> <p>Courses for Praise highlighted a number of courses with a reduced number of withdrawals from the previous year. The Care and Access Faculty was praised for having no Courses for Concern this academic year.</p> <p>Actions were being put in place to address growing mental health issues and help support students. An “At Risk” system was also being put in place for those students most at risk of withdrawing. The Learning Support team was now fully in place, where this area had been under-resourced for a while previously.</p> <p>The VP Curriculum noted concern that early withdrawal figures were higher than anticipated. She explained that Faculty Heads work closely together and share good practice. Some areas had struggled with recruitment last year, therefore entry requirements had been relaxed for some courses.</p> <p>The VP Quality and Innovation reported a change to bursary payments from April. Attendance would be reviewed weekly and payment removed for that week in the event of under attendance.</p> <p>The VP Curriculum advised that recruitment numbers had improved since the KPI Snapshot had been circulated, with the total figure now 310 below target. The FE full-time figure was furthest from the admissions target to allow for drop-out. A closing date of 15 March had been set for guaranteed interviews and an influx was expected. It was noted that more pupils were now staying on at school and that this was a national issue. All current students that had not re-applied for next year had been contacted.</p> <p>The VP Curriculum confirmed that a student could withdraw before the end of a course but still achieve partial success. A Winwood explained that some students gain their qualification early and progress to employment. The Principal suggested that, in certain cases programmes could be front loaded in order to plan for an early finish to gain employment.</p>
12/17	<p><u>School Rolls and their Impact on the College</u></p> <p>A document containing Scottish Borders Secondary School data was circulated.</p> <p>The VP Curriculum advised that the figures had not declined as predicted in the Regional Skills Assessment due to a greater number of pupils staying longer within the senior phase. The RSA prediction for 2016 was 6100 while the actual figure was 6391.</p> <p>Pupils in the senior phase were undertaking more vocational qualifications at SCQF Level 4 and 5. Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF Level 6 were being promoted to S5 and S6 pupils as a progression route to apprenticeships or university. The College was currently offering three of the nine Foundation Apprenticeships.</p>

	<p>Actions were being put in place to mitigate the impact of secondary school changes. The Principal had begun discussions with SBC Education Department around using school facilities. She was visiting Eyemouth High School the following week to look at streaming lessons there to avoid travel.</p> <p>There was discussion around the impact of the Borders Railway. The VP Curriculum advised that some students from the Borders region had gone to Edinburgh College for Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy courses but had returned to Borders College the following year. Music and Drama courses were offered at Edinburgh College, which may attract students from the Borders, while students from Gorebridge were coming to Borders College as it was more accessible than Edinburgh College.</p> <p>The Schools Academy programme had been distributed and some new subjects were being offered next year.</p> <p>Copies of the latest edition of the Involve newsletter were circulated, the focus of which was on apprenticeships.</p> <p>The VP Curriculum left the meeting at this point to attend the CDN Marketing Awards in Edinburgh. The Committee passed on good luck wishes to the Marketing team.</p>
11/17	<p><u>College Performance Indicators 2015-16 (Paper F)</u></p> <p>The VP Quality and Innovation presented a table which he had created from the annual national College Performance Indicator report published by SFC in order to compare the College's performance against sector benchmarks for 2015-16.</p> <p>Overall, HE results were better than FE. The areas of most concern were Under 18 Success and 20% Most Deprived Postcode Success. It was suggested that a higher number of ESOL students could be in this category and this would be investigated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: DK</p>
13/17	<p><u>Internal Review (standing item) (Paper G)</u></p> <p>The VP Quality and Innovation presented progress reports for Internal Reviews 1-3 of 2014-15. He reminded the Committee that internal reviews had been replaced by special measures for performance improvement in 2015-16. Action plans would be added for Internal Reviews 1-3 2016-17 in due course.</p> <p>Progress in relation to absence reporting was queried. The VP Quality and Innovation advised that attendance reports were being received on a weekly basis, with faculties feeding back on interventions.</p>
14/17	<p><u>Learning for Leading Reports (Paper H)</u></p> <p>Two Learning for Leading reports were received.</p> <p>V Grant had found her visits to the Rural Industries department to be very</p>

	<p>interesting. Some of the issues at the Newtown St Boswells site had been resolved and her overall impression was that staff were doing their best; however it was not sustainable in the long term. Despite the challenges she considered that staff were achieving extraordinary results and the student experience was positive.</p> <p>The report of L Parke's visit to the Engineering programme area was noted.</p> <p>Board members were also invited to attend Faculty Council meetings. Dates would be circulated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: DK/KA</p>
15/17	<p><u>Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Update (standing item)</u></p> <p>The VP Curriculum circulated a leaflet entitled "What is Developing the Young Workforce" which had been produced as a guide for parents.</p>
16/17	<p><u>Quarterly Complaints and Compliments Report (Paper I)</u></p> <p>The VP Quality and Innovation presented the Complaints and Compliments report from July 2016 to the present date. He highlighted that the complaints were now categorised in line with guidance from the College Development Network Complaint Handling Advisory Group.</p> <p>There had been 13 Level 1 complaints and 4 Level 2 complaints, one of which had been escalated from Level 1 and two of which were related to the same issue. Level 2 complaint 16/L2/04 had HR implications and was incomplete.</p> <p>It was agreed that a summary of learning points, interventions and actions would be added, either by expanding the Outcome and Lessons Learned column or by adding bullet points to the cover sheet.</p> <p>Incorrect figures on the performance table would also be amended.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: DK</p>
17/17	<p><u>Equality and Diversity (standing item)</u></p> <p>The VP Quality and Innovation reminded Committee members that volunteers were required on Wednesday 5 April from 2.00 – 5.00 pm to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment of the Regional Outcome Agreement. J Martin and S Shinton volunteered to join the group.</p>
18/17	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>The Chair passed on congratulations to the three Lantra award winners and the staff involved.</p> <p>The new style front sheet templates with links to Strategic Goals were considered very helpful and would be adopted for all Board committees.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: DK/SM</p> <p>Following discussion it was agreed to publish all papers with the exception of paper C and the paper circulated by the VP Curriculum.</p>

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Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility and Date
07/17	Categorise objectives and produce action plan of priorities as an appendix to Learning & Teaching Strategy, provide quarterly updates at each meeting	H Anderson
	The updates would be planned into the Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting schedule	D Killean/ S McColm
08/17	A simple set of criteria would be produced for claims. Student Services would be asked to identify the main issues which could not be met around finance. C Nairn would present this at the next meeting.	D Killean
11/17	Investigate if a higher number of ESOL students are in 20% Most Deprived Postcode category	D Killean
14/17	Circulate Faculty Council meeting dates	D Killean/ K Armstrong
16/17	Incorrect figures on the Complaints performance table would be amended	D Killean/ S McColm
18/17	The new style front sheet templates with links to Strategic Goals were considered very helpful and would be adopted for all Board committees	D Killean/ S McColm