

MEETING OF CURRICULUM AND STUDENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

TIME/DATE 5.00pm, Tuesday 19th June 2018

VENUE Conference Room (PS108) Professional Studies Building, Parson's Walk, Wigan Campus

Committee Members

Frank Costello (Chair)
Gai Murphy (Vice Chair)
Amanda Ammekk (Student Governor)
Declan Harrison (Student Governor)
Jenny Bullen
 Janet Minto
 Catherine Langstreth (Staff Governor)
 Anna Dawe

Co-opted advisor

Jen Walters

Clerk

Robert Smith

Vice Principal, Curriculum
 Vice Principal, College Services
 Assistant Principal, IT, MIS and
 Sub-Contracting
 Head of Studies & Programme Manager 19+

Claire Foreman
 Louise Brown
 Dave Harrison
 Anne Frear

MINUTES

Item	The meeting opened at 5.00pm and was quorate with at least 3 members being present.
1 CSM/18/06/29	<p>APOLOGIES AND CHAIR'S WELCOME</p> <p>Apologies were received from Gai Murphy and Jenny Bullen. Amanda Ammekk and Declan Harrison were also not in attendance.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Head of Studies & Programme Manager for 19+, who would be making a presentation to the committee.</p>
2 CSM/18/06/30	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3 CSM/18/06/31	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th MARCH 2018</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on the 13th March 2018 were approved as a correct record and authorised for signature by the Chair.</p>
4 CSM/18/06/32	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The Chair advised that two of the three items on the Action Sheet had been completed and that a written update was included in the committee papers for the final item. Members noted the planned actions in relation to the NSS Survey feedback.</p>
5 CSM/18/06/33	<p>DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATION: ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION</p> <p>The Head of Studies explained that she had joined the college midway through the year and had taken up the post of Programme Manager for 19+ which included her</p>

	<p>role as Head of Studies for Access to HE. Members acknowledged the achievements and challenges within the Access to HE curriculum area and invited the Head of Studies to provide further detail. She reported that it had been clear from the outset that, whilst there were some major strengths within the area, there remained a number of challenges that would need to be addressed to bring about further improvements. These included improving attendance, monitoring of progress from starting points and reviewing the structure of the level 2 Pre-access course. It was noted that actions had been implemented to address these for 2018/19.</p> <p>Members discussed further actions being taken to re-launch Access in 2018/19 and considered improvements being delivered in 2017/18 to ensure that the area was well-prepared for an improved approach in the coming year. These actions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on culture, compliance and continuous improvement • Involving teams more in improving quality and compliance through the introduction of coordination meetings • Sharing new office space with the Teacher Education area to improve the “HE Feel” for the area’s staff and students • Improving the learner experience through trips and other enrichment activity • Bringing speakers in from college services and HE to improve students’ understanding of the support available • Introducing a ‘back to basics’ approach to absence management • Introducing ‘stop the track’ days where every tutor gives feedback on work produced. <p>The Head of Studies outlined some key highlights of the current performance position. Members noted that the majority of learners on Access Level 3 had achieved university places and that a small improvement in overall retention was expected. They also noted that the majority of retained learners had completed and that support continued for those yet to complete. The Head of Studies commented that there was an improved culture amongst the teaching staff, which was helping to improve the focus on continuous improvement.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether many of those students who had found university places had chosen to stay at the college. The Head of Studies responded that only a small number would stay at the college as the range of university level provision available did not cater for all students’ requirements.</p> <p>Members thanked the Head of Studies for her presentation and acknowledged the positive progress being made in the curriculum area. She left the meeting at 5.30pm.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>CSM/18/06/34</p>	<p>CAPACITY BUILDING FUND: WORK PLACEMENT INITIATIVE</p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum explained that this matter had been discussed at the recent Strategic Workshop and invited members to raise any questions on the content of her report. The Chair commented on the current targets for specific curriculum areas and sought clarification in relation to the absence of some construction trades areas, whilst Carpentry & Joinery had a target of 20 learners to participate in work placements. The Vice Principal explained that many of the targets related to those areas where the college had well-established and successful engagement with groups</p>

	<p>of employers. She added that this often reflected areas where there had been greater success and where apprenticeship provision had worked well and increased the level of commitment to the college from those employers.</p> <p>The Co-opted advisor asked whether risk assessments had been carried out in relation to proposed placements. The Vice Principal confirmed that all placements were subjected to thorough risk assessments. The Co-opted advisor commented that these placements related to specific groups covered under the initial stages of this initiative and asked whether other arrangements were in place for students outside the included areas. The Vice Principal responded that efforts continued to find work placements for relevant students, whether or not they were included in the initial stages of the Capacity Building Fund initiative. The Principal also reminded members that there was a study programme entitlement for work experience, which the college is required to meet. She explained that the requirements varied between 'work experience' and 'work placements', but the college aimed to ensure all students secured vocational experience.</p> <p>The Principal advised members that there were a number of inherent issues and challenges in the national policy to provide work placements for such a large number of students. These included getting all students and their families to accept the additional commitments, and finding a sufficient number of employers willing to provide the placements in the first place. The Assistant Principal commented that, when requirements for the extended (50 day) programme were in full force, the college would be expected to find 1,260 work placement opportunities based on current student numbers. The Principal added that she was confident that the college's positive relationships with local employers would mean that they would be very supportive in meeting this challenge, but this may still not be enough to reach the numbers target. She agreed to keep members informed as the initiative developed.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>CSM/18/06/34</p>	<p>STRATEGIC UPDATE</p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum outlined achievements to date in terms of delivering the college's strategic objectives and invited questions from governors on the report content. The Chair commented that there appeared to be no major issues in relation to Study Programmes or in relation to Adult Education, Community Learning and HE.</p> <p>The Co-opted Advisor acknowledged the positive improvements in staff recruitment for Workplace Learning and asked whether contingency plans were in place should the challenges of finding adequate staffing for this activity return. The Vice Principal, College Services advised that the college had developed strong recruitment networks to help in identifying and recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced staff, which could be used again to meet these challenges. She also advised that the college had identified a range of trusted agency staff to help provide additional capacity should this be required. Members noted that staffing challenges in relation to Workplace Learning were a national issue experienced by most other providers.</p> <p>The Principal commented that, as a result of deploying additional recruitment strategies, the college was now close to fully staffed for its requirements. However, she explained that retaining staffing levels in this area would remain a challenge as other providers would also use multiple strategies to recruit staff and may well seek to recruit staff from Wigan & Leigh College. The Principal also identified recent challenges in apprenticeship provision as a contributing factor in retaining good assessors because of difficulties in taking over existing caseloads. Members were pleased to learn that these challenges had now reduced considerably, which was</p>

	<p>expected to have a positive impact on staff retention in these areas.</p> <p>The Chair stressed the importance of maintaining focus on improving apprenticeship provision, including for those learners where provision was delivered by sub-contractors. He was pleased to learn that improved quality assurance mechanisms and better tracking of individual progress were expected to deliver further improvements in apprenticeship outcomes. The Chair commented that the college would need to ensure that its improvement actions were proportionate to the significant challenges identified in this provision. Members discussed the implications of the new Apprenticeship Levy arrangements and the Principal reported that a considerable amount of time and effort had gone into preparing for the Levy changes and engaging with employers to make sure there was a clear understanding of the new funding and employer contributions regime. Members were pleased to learn that there were indications that improvements were accelerating now that the Levy changes had been successfully put in place.</p> <p>Members noted the content of the report in relation to Support for Students and Teaching Learning, Assessment & ILT. The Co-opted Advisor asked whether HE observations were carried out by the college or by university partners. The Vice Principal, Curriculum responded that these observations were carried out by college staff members who had been carefully selected to ensure that they would be able to vary the observation approach appropriately for HE provision. She explained that this included increased 'stretch & challenge' expectations. It was noted that UCLan was expected to produce further guidance on HE observations that would be available in the next academic year.</p>
<p>8</p> <p>CSM/18/06/35</p>	<p>CURRICULUM AND QUALITY MATTERS</p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum provided a summary of the year to date position in relation to curriculum performance, and presented the dashboard of key data. She advised that 16-18 retention was improving but was unlikely to improve beyond the level achieved in 2016/17. Members were pleased to note that data indicated that an improvement in pass rates was expected, as well as improved higher grade outcomes. The Chair drew members' attention to the report in relation to early indications of likely improvements in some HE outcomes, including Computing. He commented that the results in Computing for the previous year had been disappointing and asked whether the likely improvements would bring these outcomes to an acceptable level. The Vice Principal confirmed that that this was expected to be the case.</p> <p>The Vice Principal summarised the overall data position and suggested that outcomes were likely to be similar to initial expectations at the start of the year.</p>
<p>9</p> <p>CSM/18/06/36</p>	<p>INTERNAL AUDITS</p> <p>The Chair explained that audit reports relating to curriculum activity were attached for information, although the implementation of specific audit recommendations would be monitored by the Audit Committee. Members noted that the HE Strategy audit and the Curriculum Planning audit had concluded that there were good levels of assurance for the Board. They also noted that no improvement actions had been identified in relation to Curriculum Planning, which indicated that this was an area of good practice at the college. The Principal reported that the proposed audit of English & Maths Strategy had been carried out but that the audit provider had agreed with the college that it had failed to consider relevant points and had made recommendations to introduce controls that were already in place. The Principal stressed the importance of learning from audit activity so that improvements were delivered. It was noted that it had been agreed that this audit would be carried out again early in 2018/19 and reported to the Audit Committee at that time.</p>

<p>10</p> <p>CSM/18/06/37</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING UPDATE</p> <p>The Vice Principal, College Services provide an update on Safeguarding activity and monitoring carried out by the Safeguarding Team. This included an update on staff training. She provided an update in relation to Project Encompass, which worked on a multi-agency basis to tackle issues of domestic abuse and to safeguard those children and vulnerable adults affected by it. Members also discussed activity relating to 'looked after children' and new guidance for sub-contractors. The Chair commented that the retention data for looked after children at 87% (year to date) was encouraging.</p> <p>Safeguarding against sexual violence was discussed, including the recent national focus on cases where children had been identified as perpetrators of sexual violence, as well as those identified as victims. The Vice Principal, Curriculum explained that the college had a strong focus on helping young people to develop positive and healthy relationships and to have confidence in making positive decisions in situations where their safety may be at risk. The challenges experienced by children who are carers for family members were also discussed.</p>
<p>11</p> <p>CSM/18/06/38</p>	<p>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UPDATE</p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum advised that her report focused on planned stakeholder engagement activity and was intended only as a reminder to governors of the activity expected to take place. Members noted that further reporting would provide information relating to the outcomes of the planned engagement activity.</p>
<p>12</p> <p>CSM/18/06/39</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>
<p>16</p> <p>CSM/18/06/40</p>	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Schedule of Business to be approved by Governing Board</p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 6.20pm</p>