

## MEETING OF CURRICULUM AND STUDENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

TIME/DATE 5.00pm, Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 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*  
 Andrea Ferguson

## Co-opted advisor

Jen Walters

## Clerk

Robert Smith

Vice Principal, Curriculum  
 Vice Principal, College Services  
 Assistant Principal, College IT Services, MIS and  
 Sub-Contracting

Claire Foreman  
 Louise Brown  
 Dave Harrison

Assistant Principal  
 Head of Health & Social Care

Maxine Mealy  
 Kendra Chant

## DRAFT MINUTES

Item	The meeting opened at 5.03pm and was quorate with at least 3 members being present.
1  C&SM/18/03/13	<b>APOLOGIES AND CHAIR'S WELCOME</b>  Apologies were received and accepted from Amanda Ammekk, Declan Harrison and Anna Dawe. Gai Murphy was also not in attendance as Skype arrangements had not been put in place by the college.  The Chair welcomed Robert Smith to his first meeting as Interim Clerk and Andrea Ferguson to her first meeting following her recent appointment to the Board of Governors. The Chair also welcomed the Assistant Principal and Head of Department for Health & Social Care, who would be making a presentation to the committee.
2  C&SM/18/03/14	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  There were no declarations of interest.
3  C&SM/18/03/15	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2017</b>  The minutes of the meeting on the 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2017 were approved as a correct record and authorised for signature by the Chair.
4  C&SM/18/03/16	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>  The Chair advised that the presentation of SMART targets would be included under a later agenda item. He also advised that two outstanding items would be presented at the June meeting of the committee, and that a further item would be partly discussed

	<p>under a later agenda item and also included in discussions at the forthcoming Strategic Away Day.</p> <p>The Chair asked whether there would be any adverse consequences in relation to the delay in reporting on entitlement to funding under the Capacity Building Fund. The Vice Principal, Curriculum explained that there were no expected consequences in relation to any delay as plans had been put in place, which had been accepted, and funding was expected in August. She confirmed that the delay was simply a matter of finalising reporting information.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/17</b></p>	<p><b>DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATION: HEALTH &amp; SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>The Head of Health &amp; Social Care thanked the committee for inviting her to make a presentation on the position and progress within her curriculum area. She commented that the presentation was an excellent opportunity to share information on a number of achievements and to explain the positive impact of a variety of recent changes within the area.</p> <p>Members were pleased to learn that, following a period of significant staffing instability, the area had now been able to achieve 90% staff stability over the current year. The Head explained that this had provided significant benefits, including clearer learning and behavioural expectations for students, which had helped deliver improvements in retention and attendance. Members were also pleased to learn that recent curriculum reviews had demonstrated significant improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. The use of “Kagan” support was discussed and clarification was provided in relation to the nature of this support. It was noted that the key focus of “Kagan” support was improving collaborative learning and raising learner’s own expectations. The Assistant Principal commented that this support was helping to deliver improved outcomes and a better learning experience for students.</p> <p>The Head outlined the curriculum area’s approach to Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare (PDBW) and explained that a strong reinforcement of behavioural expectations had helped to bring about significant improvements in both student behaviour and their personal pride in the college and their courses. Enrichment opportunities were also discussed, including experience days at university. The Head provided further updates on collaborative working, quality assurance and the launch of a new Clinical Skills Room. She also advised that the area’s students had indicated an overall satisfaction rate of 95% in the SPOC1 learner survey. It was noted that this part of the survey related to the students’ experiences when first joining the college and during induction and the early weeks of their courses.</p> <p>Learner outcomes were discussed and it was noted that current overall attendance was 87%. The Head explained that she was pleased that Maths &amp; English attendance at 84% was very close to overall attendance, which demonstrated that significant progress had been made in helping students to realise that passing Maths &amp; English was as important as passing the main aims of their courses. It was noted that overall retention in the area now stood at 87% and there were significantly fewer at risk students. The Head explained that this was the result of constant focus on making sure that the right interventions were put in place whenever a student had shown signs of risk in terms of completing their course. She also explained that similar approaches were in place in relation to improving attendance. Nevertheless, members noted that this was still considered an area for further development, along with overcoming</p>

	<p>challenges in finding the right volume and quality of work experience opportunities and delivering further improvements in Maths and English achievement rates.</p> <p>Members sought clarification or further explanation in relation to a number of matters discussed during the presentation. This included seeking an explanation for a lower rate of retention in relation to Level 1 students. The Head explained that this was primarily related to a small number of genuine and unavoidable sets of circumstances leading to certain students leaving their course. She added that, because of the relatively small number of students, the statistical impact of a small number of such cases appeared more significant. The Co-opted Advisor also asked what the attendance rate was for the Level 1 group and the Head advised that this was around 86%. The potential for identifying and sharing good practice in areas where the attendance and retention rates had improved significantly was also discussed.</p> <p>Members asked whether the rates of improvement and the current data position were sustainable, given that the current peak in staff stability may not continue and the fact that support from the “Kagan” programme may be time limited. The Vice Principal, Curriculum responded that it was often easier to maintain performance once improvements had been secured than it was to deliver the improvements in the first place. The Vice principal, College Services also outlined a number of the Human Resources approaches adopted to help ensure that good staff stability can be maintained across all college activity. The Chair asked the Head to predict the likely self-assessment position for the area. She responded that it was likely to remain Grade 2 (Good) but a more secure Grade 2 than the previous year. She commented that it would be unrealistic to expect the provision to reach Grade 1 only a year after the current team had been in place.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Head and Assistant Principal for the presentation and commented that this was a really positive message and reflected on the hard work of all those concerned with the curriculum area.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal and Head of Health &amp; Social Care left the meeting at 5.35pm</p>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/18</b></p>	<p><b>HE STRATEGIC UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum explained that this update focused primarily on a number of external changes and the development of college strategy in relation to curriculum delivery and student experience. It was noted that the new Office for Students would be operational from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and that a number of internal systems and procedures would need to be adjusted to meet revised requirements. The impacts of the new Teaching Excellence Framework were discussed and the Vice Principal reported that the college had some concerns that a number of college students would not meet the required parameters for inclusion in the National Student Survey due to the part-time nature of their courses. The Chair highlighted the potential for further external influences in relation to recent cases of litigation in the HE sector. It was recognised that the college would need to be clear about what a course would entail and include, in order to be certain that student expectations were delivered.</p> <p>Opportunities to reach additional potential HE students were discussed and the Chair asked whether there may be further scope to offer distance learning courses or combined courses where the level of physical attendance could be reduced. He</p>

	<p>suggested that this may open up additional market potential. The Vice Principal responded that the college's priority was to focus on core HE provision and deliver further improvements before expanding the range of opportunities available. Members pointed out that, whilst it may appear that distance learning could be financially attractive as the level of direct contact time is reduced, development of courses would still require significant time and financial investment. However, it was acknowledged that it would be important to be flexible in the future as further changes in how education is delivered would be inevitable.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/19</b></p>	<p><b>STRATEGIC UPDATE</b></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 highlighted the fact that, in 24 study programmes, overall student satisfaction rates were below 90%. He asked for further information in relation to what actions would take place to address this. The Vice Principal responded that the key issue appeared to relate to satisfaction with the induction process. She advised that, whilst good practice was evident in many areas, there were some issues in terms of consistency. She added that this would be an area of significantly increased focus at the start of 2018/19. The Vice Principal also outlined a number of additional factors that may have influenced the satisfaction rating and the ways in which these had been addressed.</p> <p>The Co-opted Advisor commented that it was vital for the college to ensure that work experience opportunities offered to students helped support expected educational outcomes. The Vice Principal responded that she was confident that, where work experience was a mandatory element of a course, the quality was good and the activity was of significant benefit in terms of achieving educational aims. However, she acknowledged that some non-mandatory work experience opportunities could be improved further. She added that, in all cases, the college had a thorough approach to ensuring that Health &amp; Safety and safeguarding arrangements were good.</p> <p>HE attendance was discussed and it was noted that this had decreased from the previous year from 85.3% to 83.8%. The Vice Principal explained that improvements had been made in the way attendance is recorded and that it was likely that the apparent reduction was not a reflection of actual reduced attendance but, rather, the result of the improved recording.</p> <p>A number of challenges had been experienced in identifying work-ready candidates for apprenticeship opportunities and it was acknowledged that this was a challenge for some employers and may add risks to the potential of the apprentices succeeding in their programmes. The potential to use summer schools to improve work-readiness was discussed, although it was acknowledged that timing of employment was likely to be an issue as it would require advance notice of employment start dates that would be sufficiently aligned across a number of apprentices to create an adequate summer school cohort. The Staff Governor advised that the college was increasing its use of Traineeships to help develop work-readiness and increase the potential for those learners to secure an apprenticeship. However, it was acknowledged that successful completion of a Traineeship programme would not guarantee that those learners would then progress onto an apprenticeship.</p> <p>Sub-contracted provision was discussed and the Chair asked for an update in relation to improvements required in this area of activity. The Vice Principal advised that there was evidence that suggested that outcomes would improve considerably this year, although it was too early to provide a firm assurance that this would be the case.</p> <p>The Co-opted Advisor commented that there was good evidence of positive impact in</p>

	<p>relation to support for students.</p> <p>Challenges in recruiting and retaining quality staff in some areas were discussed, for example in Civil Engineering. It was noted that staff in these areas were often taking on a career change when they entered teaching and, in some cases, later decided that the change was not one they wished to continue. The Vice Principal, College Services explained that there were a variety of reasons why people left the college and these were monitored by the college.</p> <p>Jenny Bullen left the meeting at 6.10pm.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/20</b></p>	<p><b>CURRICULUM AND QUALITY MATTERS</b></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 slightly below the previous year and acknowledged that, whilst many areas had a good focus on this, some would need to review arrangements to help further encourage retention. It was noted that this was currently being reviewed to identify required improvements for implementation in 2018/19. She added that more work would need to be done in terms of identifying learners' reasons for leaving to make sure that key issues are addressed.</p> <p>The potential to use Teaching Assistants was discussed as a way of helping to prevent learners falling behind in their groups. The Vice Principal explained that, whilst this was not disallowed in the sector, the cost of such an approach may be prohibitive. However, it was noted that a number of Achievement Officers would be recruited to help learners over the line to achievement. The Staff Governor added that further support would be in place for English and Maths, including the appointment of five Literacy Mentors.</p> <p>A number of further points were discussed, including sub-contracting performance, BTEC outcomes and observation grades. It was also noted that the report now included the Quality Improvement Plan for Apprenticeships as requested by the committee.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/21</b></p>	<p><b>TEACHING, LEARNING &amp; ASSESSMENT</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum outlined progress in relation to teaching, learning and assessment and stressed the importance of a strong focus in these areas in order for a college to deliver successful outcomes for its students. Governors discussed the report content and the Chair commented that the report was broadly positive.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/22</b></p>	<p><b>CURRICULUM PLANNING</b></p> <p>Governors received a presentation on curriculum planning and its context within the overall Greater Manchester (GM) Strategy. The Vice Principal, Curriculum reported that significant attention was now being applied to the challenge of remaining relevant in delivery to ensure that teaching and learning focused on what will get learners into jobs and careers. The GM priorities were discussed, including the ways in which they related to college activity. This primarily related to attainment in English, Maths and Digital Skills, increasing work skills for parents, and supported apprenticeships for looked after children and those with special educational needs. The ways in which the college could support more local priorities under the Wigan Economic Prospectus</p>

	<p>were also discussed, including how the college could respond to predicted areas of economic growth.</p> <p>The Vice Principal outlined plans to develop Technical and Apprenticeship Pathways and a number of challenges relating to the launch of new Apprenticeship Standards were highlighted. It was noted that these new Standards were expected to apply to new T Level activity. The ways in which employer groups had influenced the new Standards were discussed and it was acknowledged that varying approaches had led to less consistency and standardisation. The Vice Principal commented that this had contributed towards delays in terms of developing T Levels and some uncertainty in terms of what they would eventually look like. The Vice Principal drew attention to the planned timetable for the introduction of T Levels and highlighted the fact that small scale trials were not expected until 2020, with further development expected to take until 2022.</p> <p>The Vice Principal explained that EMSI had been carrying out work to map current qualifications to the new Routes and Pathways under proposed changes. She advised that EMSI had concluded that training for 71% of existing jobs could be covered by the planned T Level arrangements. Categories of skills shortages, key Pathways and local employment data by sector were also discussed. Members were pleased to note that 89% of the college's current provision would successfully map across to T Level arrangements, compared to a 75% sector average. The Vice Principal stressed the importance of taking opportunities to make organisational changes in readiness for T Levels, including recruitment planning and the introduction of relevant terminology.</p> <p>The Vice Principal provided further updates in relation to the planned Institute of Technology, Skills Capital opportunities and the devolution of Adult Education Budget control to the combined authority.</p> <p>The Chair commented that the current position appeared positive, although there would be considerably more to do. He commented that reporting to governors should clearly indicate what progress the college had already made, what still needed to be done and how this would be achieved. He suggested that simplifying the presentation of information in this way would help understanding during discussions at the forthcoming Strategic Away Day.</p>
<b>11</b>  <b>C&amp;SM/18/03/23</b>	<b>INTERNAL AUDITS</b>  <p>The Chair circulated the Internal Audit report on HE Strategy, which had been omitted in the circulation of committee papers. He drew members' attention to the key audit outcomes and summarised that the audit had found both the design and compliance of systems of control to be good and that the overall level of assurance was "substantial", the highest level under such audits. It was noted that two low priority areas for improvement had been identified.</p>
<b>12</b>  <b>C&amp;SM/18/03/24</b>	<b>EQUALITY &amp; DIVERSITY</b>  <p>The Vice Principal, Curriculum outlined the key matters within the Annual Equality &amp; Diversity Report for 2016/17. Key achievements and challenges were discussed, including areas where the information in the report may need to be expanded. The Chair suggested that future reports may benefit from the use of examples of how Equality &amp; Diversity activity had been applied in specific cases, and the way in which</p>

	<p>this had improved outcomes for learners.</p> <p>It was noted that gender pay gap reporting for the college would be presented to the Resources Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Board be recommended to approve the Annual Equality &amp; Diversity Report 2016/17</p>
<p><b>13</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/25</b></p>	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal, College Services outlined recommended revisions to following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding Children Policy</li> <li>• Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy</li> <li>• Prevent Policy</li> </ul> <p>Members noted that these recommendations did not amount to substantial changes, but were generally minor changes in terminology and updates to align the policies with changes in public policy or legislation.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Board be recommended to approve the proposed changes to the Safeguarding Children Policy, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Prevent Policy</p>
<p><b>14</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/26</b></p>	<p><b>COMPLAINTS REPORT &amp; POLICY</b></p> <p>The Annual Complaints Report was discussed and key themes were considered. It was noted that anonymous complaints were not investigated as a matter of course and governors sought clarification on this question. The risk of anonymous allegations being raised formally at a later date was highlighted and it was suggested that, in some cases, it would be wise to investigate a matter while clearer information was available, which may not be the case if an investigation is delayed. The Vice Principal, Curriculum confirmed that serious matters were investigated even in the case of anonymous allegations and the Vice Principal, College Services confirmed that anonymous complaints are also included within the relevant recoded data.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Board be recommended to approve the Annual Complaints Report and the associated College Complaints Procedure (unchanged).</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/27</b></p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There was no further business.</p>
<p><b>16</b></p> <p><b>C&amp;SM/18/03/28</b></p>	<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p><b>5pm Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b></p>
	<b>The meeting closed at 7.05pm</b>