

**MINUTES OF THE LEARNING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE HELD ON  
THURSDAY 16 JUNE 2022**

**PRESENT:**

Mark Allanson	Chair
Lillian Croston	Member
Dr Fazal Dad	Principal and Chief Executive
Ram Gupta *	Member
Catherine Hill OBE	Member
Mark Moren	Academic Staff Governor
Jade Wellings	HE Student Governor

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Caroline Bracewell	Head of School: Higher Education
Nicola Clayton	Director: Business Development and External Engagement
Andrew Gadsdon	Head of Quality of Education
Emma Goodlet	Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience
Damian Stewart	Assistant Principal: Teaching and Learning (Technical Centre)
Rachel Tarplee	Assistance Principal: Teaching and Learning (Academic Centre)
Jean Tracy	Clerk to the Corporation

Sarah Horeesorun                      Director of Governance Designate

\* denotes attended via Microsoft Teams

It was noted that the meeting commenced at 17.00pm and was quorate.

The Assistant Principal: Higher Education and Head of Quality of Education joined the meeting as necessary to present their papers.

The Chair welcomed Sarah Horeesorun to the meeting as an observer, introductions having been made prior to the start of the meeting.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

**2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Chair advised those in attendance that should members of the Learning and Quality Committee become aware of any potential conflicts of interest, they should be disclosed at the earliest opportunity during the meeting.

**3. MINUTES OF THE LEARNING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2022**

The minutes of the Learning and Quality Committee meeting held on Thursday 10 February 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

The Committee noted the updates against previous actions points. There were no other matters arising.

It was **AGREED** that as there was an Open Evening, Item 15 – Student Progress Reports – would be taken first.

#### **15. FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) STUDENT IN-YEAR PERFORMANCE 2021/22 – RETENTION, ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT PROGRESS**

##### **(ii) TECHNICAL**

The Assistant Principal: Teaching and Learning (Technical Centre) presented the Report which provided an update on the in-year performance against set metrics, including retention, value added, maths and English outcomes and quality assurance for the Technical Centre. The Committee noted the overall improvement in value added (Alps) and that retention was comparable to the previous year. The Committee also noted the expected 10% point increase in achievement when compared to the last published national data.

The Committee was informed that all GCSE English and maths papers had now been sat and that there had been a drop in attendance over the three papers. The overall attendance figure was in line with the 2019 (pre-Covid) figure, it being confirmed in answer to a question from a member of the Committee, that attendance for English was better than that for maths. The Committee also asked for and received information on the number of appeals which would be lodged for students not attending the exam(s).

The Chair of the Corporation Board congratulated the College on the improvement in the overall value added figure, and in Childhood Studies in particular. In response to a question from the Chair of the Corporation Board, the Committee was informed that timetable changes in Childhood Studies had resulted in the improvement. However, it was noted that such changes could not be made in other areas because of the programme content, which included work placement requirements.

The Principal and Chief Executive informed the Committee that whilst the attendance in relation to English and maths examinations was disappointing, anecdotal evidence was that this was a similar picture across the sector. The importance of measuring the grade profile improvements was noted.

*17.17pm The Vice Principal: Teaching and Learning (Technical Centre) left the meeting to attend the Open Evening.*

##### **(i) ACADEMIC**

The Report provided the Committee with an update on the in-year performance against set metrics, including retention, value added, attendance and engagement and quality assurance.

Retention for the Centre remained high, though slightly lower than in the previous year. Attendance remained in line with the previous year and information on those areas which were particularly good was contained in the Report and noted by the Committee. The Committee was informed of the detailed interventions which were in place, these being facilitated by the accuracy of data and regular monitoring both in the Centre and by the College. The Assistant Principal: Teaching and Learning (Academic Centre) informed the Committee on the work which had been undertaken to strengthen the Creative Arts department, where retention was a concern.

The Committee noted the provision of an employability course for those NEET students who were leaving early to go into employment and on the current value added figures for the Centre

provided in the Report. Information on value added for the previous year was provided at the meeting and in most areas showed an improvement.

A discussion took place on the intervention strategies in operation – which included the work with the Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience and the pastoral, academic and bursary support.

## **(ii) WORK BASED LEARNING**

The Report provided the Committee with an update on Apprenticeship performance for 2021/22 to date. Corrections to the dates in the achievement to date section of the Report were noted – ‘gateway end date in 2021/22’ ‘..some may roll into 2022/23..’ (not 2020/21 and 2021/22 as per the Report).

The Committee noted the current Apprenticeship achievement and attendance information, both having been impacted by Covid. Information on destination data for apprentices completing their programme showed a strong position. The Report also provided information on the other developments in the area. This included the College’s involvement in the Lancashire Enrichment of Apprenticeship Programme (LEAP), the qualifiers for the World Skills UK and other enrichment opportunities available to apprentices.

The College was asked for and provided information on the ways in which the College could evidence that it was continuing to develop the English and maths skills for those students who had already achieved these qualifications at the necessary level for their apprenticeship programme.

It was confirmed that the College did have a number of out-of-funding learners, these being monitored on a monthly basis internally and with reporting to the Quality Summit meetings. It was **AGREED** that information on these learners would be included in future reports.

**Action: Director: Business Development and External Engagement**

## **5. CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE STRATEGY 2022 - 2024**

The Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience presented the Report and informed the Committee that the revised guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) had been taken into account when drafting the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy (the title of which was “Careers and Employability Strategy”). The scope of the Strategy was included in the Report and the Committee was informed that Strategy was designed to enable the College to achieve the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (as per the final page), and that KPI3 was a key focus.

In answer to a question from a member of the Committee, the Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience provided information on how the College ensures that all students receive a careers guidance Interview with a professional careers adviser. The Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience was also asked to consider the wording to be added in the Evolve and Establish columns after ‘Meet Employers’.

**Action: Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience**

The College also provided information on how student feedback is obtained on the careers advice process and on how students are ‘rewarded’ for completion of each stage of their career planning. The Chair also asked whether there was a notion of the ‘Blackburn College student’ which could be brought into the work being done: the relaunch of the Advanced Certificate would be useful in this respect.

Noting the comments made during the meeting, the Committee **APPROVED** the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy 2022- 2024 (known as the Careers and Employability Strategy).

17.55pm The Assistant Principal: Student Support and Experience left the meeting.

## 6. ACADEMIC BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered the proposed changes to Academic Board Terms of Reference which would reflect changes in titles and membership. Other changes covered a change to the title of a strategy and the removal of a Committee which was no longer in existence. The requirement to review of the Human Resources and Organisational Development Reports was also to be removed, these reports being considered by Policy and Resources Committee. Full details were included in the paper.

Learning and Quality Committee **APPROVED** the revised Academic Board Terms of Reference.

## 7. STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 – 2025

The draft Strategic Plan had been updated following feedback from the Governors' Strategic Seminar and Policy and Resources Committee meeting held in March and May 2022 respectively.

A further discussion took place on the key milestone for success in relation to that for the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes (TEF) award. The Principal and Chief Executive explained the reasons for the milestone proposed.

From points raised by members of the Committee, it was **AGREED** that the College would look at the following:

- 1) Page 3, Para 9 – wording of the first sentence
- 2) College to be consistent in its use of percentage/percentage points
- 3) Page 9 – the inclusion of percentage figures in relation to the measure of high grades for Academic and Technical courses
- 4) Page 10 – inclusion of 'academic' in the first sentence – 'To have an academic and industry led curriculum.....'
- 5) Inclusion of the wider extracurricular experience

The Committee was informed of requirement to publish a skills statement and that changes to the Ofsted Inspection had been made. An update paper would be provided to the Board at its meeting on 1 July 2022.

**Action: Principal and Chief Executive**

18.17pm The Assistant Principal: Higher Education and Head of Quality of Education joined the meeting.

## 8. T-LEVELS

The Principal and Chief Executive presented the Report which provided an update on the College's plans to deliver T-Levels. This included the programme areas, the funding request made to the DfE to support delivery, and the staffing requirements and training. Information on the next cohort of T-Levels to be delivered from September 2024 would be provided to the Committee at its next meeting.

**Action: Principal and Chief Executive**

The Principal and Chief Executive and a member of the Committee provided information and feedback on the T-Level information event which had been held that day with a number of local employers. The Chair asked that thanks be passed on to all those involved in the event.

## **9. APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING PROVIDER ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK 2021 TO 2022**

The Report provided information with an overview of the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework including the quality and supplementary indicators and thresholds. The Committee noted that there were no 'at risk' areas and that reporting and monitoring would continue through the Quality Summit meetings and MIS<sup>1</sup> monthly reporting.

The College was asked if the reporting would be by an individual or by learning aim. The Committee was informed that there would be a mix, with final clarification being made when the data dashboard, currently under development, was received.

## **10. QUALITY OF EDUCATION STRATEGY 2022/23 – 2024/25**

The Head of Quality of Education presented the Report. The Strategy laid out clear aims and objectives and covered FE, HE and Apprenticeships and had been written with the 3 I's in mind – intent, implementation and impact. Operational Plans would be developed to cover the fine detail.

The College was asked that extra curricula activities and widening student experience should be included – and undertaken in the College and that these should be embedded in the curriculum.

The College was asked to check the wording under 6.1 re vocational/technical.

**Action: Head of Quality of Education**

## **11. COLLEGE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – 2021/22 PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Report provided information on the College's current position against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2021/22. It was confirmed that at this stage, one was on target, three on target in part, one was under target and that fourteen were not yet reportable. The Principal again noted the impact on attendance in relation to maths and English resit students. Attendance Monitors were now in place for each of the academic areas and were working to bring about further improvements.

## **12. HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) STUDENT PERFORMANCE – RETENTION, ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT PROGRESS INCLUDING REFERENCE TO PROGRESS AGAINST THE OFS METRICS**

The Committee considered the Report which provided an update on progress against the key performance indicators, including information on in-year progress against the Office for Students' (OfS) B3 metric and the Centre's in-year retention target for 2021/22.

Attendance continued to remain a key focus in order to improve engagement and outcomes. Student surveys had been carried out internally to understand what were the barriers to learning and the Committee was informed that an Access and Support Officer was now in post. Finance was an issue in the summer term and changes to the financial support available would come into effect at the start of the next academic year.

In answer to a question from a member of the Committee, the Assistant Principal: Higher Education confirmed that students whose attendance was low would still achieve. The College was therefore looking into other ways to reward engagement whilst still maintaining some attendance requirements. The loan of an iPad and a credit to the student account to allow them to print were two examples of suggestions made by current students.

The Assistant Principal: Higher Education was also asked about the final data and confirmed that she had confidence that this would be achieved. The Centre was currently working with 30

---

<sup>1</sup> Management Information Systems

students, who each had their own individual action plan, to ensure engagement and thus achievement.

### **13. HE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2021/22 – PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Head of Quality of Education presented the Report and noted that the College was now in the sixth cycle of monitoring. The inclusion of historical data was welcomed.

The Committee was informed, in answer to a question from a member, that the latest RAG rating for the Target 1.1c – in relation to repeat year students successfully continuing or achieving was now 9 red, 8 amber, 14 green, 12 withdrawn and 1 has suspended their studies. Of the nine who are 'red', 5 are expected to recover and pass.

The Principal and Chief Executive commented on the hard work and consideration of the issues had taken place but that whilst improvements could be seen, there was still much to be done.

### **14. BLACKBURN UNIVERSITY CENTRE HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY (DRAFT)**

As suggested by the Board, an external consultant had been employed and the draft Strategy, as per the papers, had been produced for discussion and comment. The Assistant Principal: Higher Education explained the process involved in its production which had included meetings with staff and students, and consideration of the data. Observations and recommendations resulting from the staff interviews and data review were included in the Report.

The Committee welcomed the draft Strategy, which it was agreed was a very good document, as it provided the College with information on the issues which needed to be addressed. The Chair posed a number of questions which he felt were not, as yet, covered strongly enough in the draft Strategy - what was the strategic positioning of Blackburn College in terms of the market, what is it that would attract a student to Blackburn College, what was the portfolio which would be offered, what does the College do really well and what were the benefits to our FE students feeding into the University Centre.

The Assistant Principal: Higher Education confirmed, in answer to a question from a member of the Committee, that an action plan for the coming years would be developed and taken forward. It was also suggested that the College should consider the skills market for each area of provision and then look at whether the HE portfolio matched in order to ensure the correct core provision, including the technical qualifications which would be needed in the area.

A discussion took place on the proposed name and it was **AGREED** that subject to a check on any legal requirements, the name would be 'Blackburn College University Centre'.

*19.16pm The Assistant Principal: Higher Education left the meeting.*

### **15. FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) STUDENT IN-YEAR PERFORMANCE 2021/22 – RETENTION, ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT PROGRESS**

- (i) **ACADEMIC**
- (ii) **TECHNICAL**
- (iii) **WORK BASED LEARNING**

All items were covered earlier in the meeting. Minutes were recorded in order taken at the meeting.

### **16. FE AND WBL COLLEGE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN - 2021/22 PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Head of Quality of Education presented the paper which provided the Committee with an update on the actions included within the FE Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2021/22.

Information on the final attendance at the GCSE English and maths examinations had previously been covered in the Student Progress Report taken earlier in the meeting.

## **17. URGENT CARE/PROGRAMME IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

- (i) **FE AND WBL**
- (ii) **HE**

The combined Report provided the Committee with an overview of the courses that were currently being scrutinised as part of the Urgent Care process for 2021/22. Improvements had been made in a number of cases and those areas which were still of concern were covered in the Report. The Committee was informed that actions would be reviewed for the new academic year to ensure that they were having an impact.

The Chair thanked the Head of Quality of Education for the Report, commenting that improvements in HE programmes were still required.

*19.23pm The HE Student Governor and Head of Quality of Education left the meeting.*

## **18. STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE**

- (i) **11 MAY 2022 – FEEDBACK**

The Principal and Chief Executive provided feedback on the discussions which had taken place at the Student Voice Committee meeting.

The comments received, including those around the teaching they had received – were very positive. Areas for improvement such as library opening times and taster sessions prior to course selection, had been raised internally. As usual, the minutes of the Board would be included 'for information' in the Board papers.

## **19. STUDENT SURVEYS**

- (i) **NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) 2022**

The Principal and Chief Executive informed the Committee that student participation in the survey had been good. The results were expected imminently and would be reported to the Committee at a later date, as per the Calendar of Business.

## **20. LEARNING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE**

- (i) **MEETING DATES 2022/23 AND 2023/24**
- (ii) **REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR 2022/23 AND PERFORMANCE AGAINST FOR 2021/22**
- (iii) **CALENDAR OF BUSINESS 2022/23**

The Committee considered the Report, as presented by Clerk to the Corporation.

Changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference were proposed to take into account the change of role titles and the amendments to Academic Board Terms of Reference (as approved earlier in the meeting). The Committee did not wish to make recommendations on further changes to its Terms of Reference.

The Committee noted that it had satisfied all of the requirements under its Terms of Reference and did not wish to add the commentary.

The Calendar of Business had been reviewed and updated, the Committee being reminded that this was a working document and would be updated as necessary during the year.

Having considered the Report, the Committee:

- **APPROVED** the meetings dates for 2023/24, noting that those for 2022/23 had been approved previously
- **AGREED** to recommend to the Board the amended Terms of Reference and that it did not wish to make further changes
- **AGREED** the commentary covering its progress against its Terms of Reference for 2020/21 and that these would be presented to the Board for approval
- **APPROVED** the Calendar of Business for 2022/23

**21. CHAIR APPROVED MINUTES OF ACADEMIC BOARD – 24 MAY 2022**

The Committee noted the Chair Approved minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 24 May 2022, these being presented for information.

**22. COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021/22 – UPDATE ON PROPOSED TIMINGS**

The Committee noted the Report which provided an update on the proposed timescale for the 2021/22 Further Education Self-Assessment Report, including the validation events.

**23. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Business.

**24. REVIEW OF MEETING**

The Chair thanked all members for their contribution to the meeting and the details discussions which had taken place. The standard of documentation was agreed to be good.

**25. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Learning and Quality Committee would take place on Thursday 10 November 2022 (from 20 October 2022) at 5.00pm in the Harrison Centre Board Room (HC012) / via Microsoft Teams.

*19:30pm: The meeting ended.*

Signed: .....

Date: .....