



## Northern College

### THE CURRICULUM, QUALITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on **16 June 2022**.

**Present:** Prof Mike Bramhall (Chair), Colin Forrest, Bob Craig, Prof Tim Thornton, Henry Otulakowski, Sarah Tyler, Mark Sanders and Yultan Mellor (Principal).

**In attendance:** The Assistant Principal – Curriculum, Quality, Business Development (Emma Beal), the Assistant Principal – Student Experience (Diane Lawson) and the Clerk to the Governors (Sarah Johnson).

**Apologies:** Prof Sue Horner.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Q22/33 Each governor present declared any potential interests/conflicts of loyalty related to items to be considered at the meeting. With respect to his roles as Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Huddersfield and HE advisory member of the West Yorkshire Employment and Skills Committee Prof Tim Thornton declared a potential conflict of loyalty in items relating to the College's higher education provision. It was agreed that no decisions to be taken at the meeting would be affected and it was not considered necessary for the member to withdraw.

### MINUTES

Q22/34 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

### MATTERS ARISING

Q22/35 None.

### SECTOR REPORT

Q22/36 The committee received a verbal update on sector developments and changes in the external environment that could have an impact on quality, curriculum and student experience, including:

- a review of the post 16 Ofsted process and forthcoming new handbook;
- the impact of the skills for jobs and levelling up and regeneration bills, including funding and accountability changes;
- the development of the local skills improvement plan;
- the new 2025 lifelong learning entitlement;
- the current review of the ONS classification of colleges;
- the new film about the College produced by the National Trust;
- competition in the local adult skills market.

Q22/37 The committee particularly considered:

- the new skills element of the Ofsted process and the impact in relation to governance;
- the potential impact of an even greater emphasis on the skills agenda.

**Resolved:** i That the report be noted.

## PERFORMANCE (Document 3i)

- Q22/38 The committee considered the **KPI dashboard for 2021/22 to 8 June 2022**, noting that:
- application to enrolment conversion rates remained static;
  - attendance was slightly below target at 89%;
  - best case achievement was above target at 95.1%;
  - class sizes were significantly below target at 6.3.
- Q22/39 The committee particularly considered:
- application to enrolment conversion data, noting that the College was seeking a relevant benchmark and exploring developments and challenges;
  - attendance, noting that the data was robust and whilst performance was not where the College would like it to be it was acceptable given the context for the year;
  - achievement data, noting that the data was not yet complete, and even taking into consideration the context for the year the College was on track to have a strong outturn;
  - maths and functional skills performance, acknowledging that this was likely to remain an area for improvement in the 2021/22 self-assessment and noting that appropriate actions were being taken.
- Q22/40 The committee considered a report on **student recruitment for 2021/22 and 2022/23** to date, particularly noting that:
- recruitment for 2022/23 was underway and initial indicators in most areas were positive, particularly compared to the same time in previous years;
  - short courses had been reimaged into termly packages for students, providing planned programmes for those students with a career goal in mind, and marketing for these would commence in June 2022;
  - the College was in the process of securing delivery in the community as part of the Stocksbridge Towns Fund project, and promotion was planned to commence in January 2022, with the first students on programme from April 2022;
  - it was still very early in the recruitment process to draw any strong conclusions from the data for 2022/23;
  - recruitment performance was closely monitored and was reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team in detail on a weekly basis.
- Q22/41 The committee considered **conversion data** in detail, noting that:
- conversion rates were being carefully tracked and a full 'keep warm' action plan was in place;
  - the overall position reported in relation to offers was positive, but it was difficult to assess what this meant as the process and timing was different to previous years;
  - overall 40% of offers to date were residential, but this varied significantly across courses;
  - a robust approach to 'keep warm' activities with applicants was in place but the College had to be careful not to over contact potential students.
- Q22/42 The committee explored:
- the reasons applications were not converted to enrolments, noting that this was being analysed but there were no clear trends, rather a wide variety of causes;
  - the work being done to promote business and management provision which was a key area of need identified by the combined authorities, and the option for students to commence a course generically and then specialise at a later point.
- Q22/43 The committee considered a **student progress report** which provided a detailed breakdown of retention and achievements against courses/programme areas, noting that:

- whilst it remained too early to rely on achievement data, 98% retention was a strong position;
- there was some variance in retention across courses and the actions being taken were welcomed;
- an updated report would be provided once achievements were concluded.

Q22/44 The committee welcomed the report, particularly the level of detail provided, and looked forward to reviewing the updated position.

Q22/45 The committee considered a **student voice report** which included:

- a summary of student surveys and results to date for 2021/22;
- information regarding regularly held catering contract meetings attended by students;
- details of student representation on the College equality, diversity and inclusion committee;
- an update regarding student council.

Q22/46 The committee:

- explored the survey results in detail, noting a 51% survey completion rate, high levels of satisfaction and positive comments;
- explored where improvements were required, and noted the welcome opening of the new student hub;
- noted that there were other areas of student involvement in shaping policies and learning which had been reported elsewhere that should be included in future reports to show the breadth and depth of student voice activities;
- noted that as previously the chair of the committee would be invited to attend student council meetings in 2022/23;
- agreed that conversion, on-boarding and IAG should be a focus for student feedback in order to inform development of effective processes, and where possible this should include students who didn't enrol;
- agreed that future reports would include a summary of actions taken to address all negative comments.

Q22/47 The committee noted that no **complaints/compliments** had been received since the last meeting.

**Resolved: i That conversion, on-boarding and IAG should be a focus for student feedback in order to inform the development of effective processes, including, where possible, students who didn't enrol.**

**ii That future student voice reports include a summary of actions taken to address all negative comments.**

### QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PROGRESS TO DATE (Document 3ii)

Q22/48 The committee considered an update on progress against the actions identified in the **quality improvement plan**, noting that:

- one action was rag rated as red - achievement rates on Maths L1 & L2 Functional Skills - noting that whilst the best case achievement rate of 75% was an improvement on 2020/21, it would remain an area for improvement as previously reported;
- a number of actions were rated as amber, with staff resource challenges arising from the context in 2021/22 being a key factor in progress in some areas;

The committee agreed that overall the report demonstrated good improvements and good oversight.

Q22/49 The committee explored how the new governors' statutory duty to review provision would be built into the quality process and noted that this was currently being considered and would most likely form part of either the strategic planning or self-assessment processes.

Q22/50 It was noted that staff names, rather than roles had again been included in the report and this would be amended to include job roles in future reports.

**Resolved: i That job roles be included in future QIP reports.**

### **DESTINATIONS REPORT (Document 3iii)**

Q22/51 The committee considered the **student destinations** report to June 2022, noting that the new approach had been implemented, and going forward the destinations question would be mandatory for all students. It was noted that:

- technical issues which had impacted on the data collected had now been resolved and further data would be presented at the next meeting;
- over the summer longitudinal surveys would be undertaken.

Q22/52 The committee:

- agreed that good progress was being made in this very important area and looked forward to a further enhanced report at the next meeting;
- explored how the richness and depth of the data could be further developed;
- considered how the data could be used to inform student recruitment and marketing activities;
- agreed that the data needed additional clarification in future reports.

**Resolved: i That the report be noted.**

### **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE (Document 3iv)**

Q22/53 The committee considered an equality, diversity and inclusion update which included:

- an overview of the monitoring of the College's equality objectives;
- an update on the review of the EDI policy by students with a particular focus on the Muslim faith;
- details of relevant staff CPD;
- an update on support processes and services for students;
- details of relevant partnership work;
- further actions planned including an accessibility audit, further training, and the development of an equality café.

Q22/54 The committee:

- noted that in year pass rate data was 2% higher than the whole College for those who had disclosed a learning difficulty/disability;
- explored how the College was engaging with ethnic minority groups, male community groups and organisations to recruit new students into College and its effectiveness;
- explored diversity data, noting that outcomes for different groups was tracking well against overall results, but that male recruitment was below target but was above sector benchmark;
- noted that the College had secured some employer based ESOL provision to be delivered over the summer;
- agreed that future reports should include data/information regarding staff and governors.

**Resolved: i That future EDI updates include data/information regarding staff and governors.**

## MARKETING SCHEDULE AND ANALYTICS (Document 3v)

Q22/55 The committee considered the marketing schedule and analytics for March – May 2022 which included:

- campaign details and results;
- outreach activities;
- barriers;
- web statistics;
- Summer campaign plan;
- findings and next steps including focus groups, leavers' survey, accepters' survey.

Q22/56 The committee:

- noted the impact achieved but agreed that it remained challenging to identify what actions were most effective;
- agreed that the College presence on social media was now much stronger, and whilst further work was required on the website it was also much improved;
- agreed that a great deal of proactive work was being undertaken;
- explored how the College was targeting diverse groups and communities and noted the College's current recruitment process for community outreach workers;
- noted that there was no plan to repeat the previous leaflet drop;
- welcomed the whole College recruitment activity day planned for 4 July 2022.

**Resolved: i That the report be noted.**

## CURRICULUM PATHWAYS 2022/23 (Document 4i)

Q22/57 The committee considered an outline of the College's proposed curriculum pathways/packages for 2022/23, noting that:

- pre-designed pathways or packages of courses had been developed to enable students to enrol for more than one course at a time;
- it was envisaged this would both improve the student experience and aide recruitment;
- had been designed to respond to feedback from the jobcentres;
- the approach allowed for more accreditation in the offer and at an earlier stage;
- a student facing version of the pathways would be produced which would include career options/information.

Q22/58 The committee welcomed the breadth and depth of the offer, and the opportunities for progression both within the College and at clear stepping off points.

**Resolved: i That the report be noted.**

## RISKS OVERSEEN BY THE COMMITTEE (Document 4ii)

Q22/59 The committee considered the risk register noting that the areas allocated to the committee for oversight related to student recruitment targets, Ofsted, workforce retention, and recruiting with integrity.

Q22/60 The committee agreed that the risks were suitably reflected in the register and the controls and mitigation were appropriate.

**Resolved: i That the risk register be noted.**

## SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

Q22/61 The committee considered a detailed update regarding Safeguarding and Prevent matters, including an update from the Lead Governor – Safeguarding.

- Q22/62 The committee particularly considered:
- training and upskilling for staff and students;
  - partnership working;
  - further actions planned;
  - observations arising from the recent training undertaken by the lead governor – safeguarding.

- Q22/63 The committee:
- welcomed the assurance provided by the lead governor - safeguarding that the College was very well placed in relation to the good practice set out on his recent training course;
  - noted that KSIE changes had been reflected in the updated policies.

**Resolved: i That the report be noted.**

### **POLICIES FOR CONSIDERATION (Document 5ii)**

- Q22/64 The committee considered and recommended to the Board of Governors for approval the following policies:
- Additional Learning Support;
  - Admissions;
  - Residential Admissions;
  - Safeguarding – Adults;
  - Safeguarding – Children and Young People.

- Q22/65 The following minor amends were agreed:
- inclusion of the role of the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee in the review of the safeguarding policies;
  - minor typos in the Additional Learning Support Policy.

**Resolved: i That the Additional Learning Support, Admissions, Residential Admissions, Safeguarding – Adults and Safeguarding – Children and young People policies be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.**

### **DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS**

- Q22/66 5 December 2022 – 1.30pm  
20 February 2023 – 1.30pm  
12 June 2023 – 1.30pm