

Present: Jo Venn (Committee Chair), Yvonne Bradshaw, David Grime, Safaa Hafiz, Robert Cobourne, Graham Murphy, Richard Evans, Dominic Martinez Clare Russell (Principal)

In Attendance: Zoe Smallman (Deputy Principal), Martin Rigby (Deputy Principal), Fatema Hussein (Head of Governance), Jenny Tierney (Observer)

Meeting began: 1.30pm

Meeting closed: 3.30pm

Attendance: 81%

1. APOLOGIES

Richard Evans, Dominic Martinez and Jenny Tierney were welcomed and introduced to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Steven Haycocks and Tony Webster.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Governors / members were invited to declare any pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interest in any matter on the agenda for the meeting

There were no declarations made.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2021

3.1 Approval of the Minutes

Agreed that: the minutes are signed as a correct record and authorised for publication.

3.2 Matters Arising

In response to a question regarding a review of the quality processes for the learner surveys, the Principal advised that a full review was to be undertaken and would include learner voice strategies.

4. TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES / RESULTS

The Committee reviewed and discussed the Teacher Assessed Grades / results for 2021 and the following points were noted:

4.1 A Level

- With the constraints of the Centre Assessed grades process removed, top grades, highest grades and high grades had all increased significantly on previous years
- Value added had also returned to the levels previously achieved before the “dip” in 2019
- This may suggest that teachers had awarded TAGs commensurate with those that might have been expected based on students’ prior attainment
- College was comfortable that the Teacher Assessed grades process had been rigorous but fair
- There was no accountability for 2021 A level results as they were based on teacher assessment only
- Although they could be considered more accurate, as College was not bound to reflect previous years’ outcomes when determining grades, it was difficult to draw conclusions or comparisons with results in examination years

Governor Questions

Q. Had other Colleges published their Teacher Assessed grades?

A. Most Colleges had taken a similar approach to Runshaw and not published any grades due to a lack of external exams

4.2 Advanced Vocational

- High grades and highest grades on the 2-year Extended Diploma (ED) had fallen in comparison to previous years
- However, this was the first year of the RQF results, which was a reformed specification that was more challenging
- A comparison to national benchmark (NBM) data highlighted that the College results were still incredibly strong: 36.28% above NMB for high grades, 30.37% above NMB for highest grades and 31.83% above NMB for the top grades
- Headline results for the L3 Foundation Diploma (or equivalent) (Year 1) also remained very pleasing despite the move to the more challenging RQF specification and the disruption caused by COVID-19
- The programme level Extended Diploma (2 year) Alps score (a measure of value added) remained a grade 2, and this was outstanding and particularly pleasing due to the move to the RQF

Governor Questions

Q. How concerned was College that students had not sat any exams, and would this have an impact on results next year?

A. College was very concerned about this, and strategies were in place to try and prepare students. It would be difficult to make comparisons to previous results and College would be looking to undertake comparisons on a subject-by-subject basis

4.3 Pre-Advanced Vocational

- Headline results for L2 vocational courses remained very positive despite the disruption caused by COVID-19
- High grades, highest grades and top grades were lower in comparison to 2019/20 data
- However, 2019/20 data was based on CAGs, which were derived from incomplete units and a reduced assessment plan
- The outcomes for 2020/21 were based on TAGs that covered, in most cases, the full assessment plan, which was more comparable to a ‘full delivery’ associated with 18/19
- A comparison to national benchmark (NBM) data highlighted that the results were very strong: 40.53% above NMB for high grades, 26.44% above NMB for highest grades and 15.87% above NMB for the top grades
- Headline results for L1 remained very pleasing despite the disruption caused by COVID-19. The average grade remained a DM and a 100% pass rate was maintained

- A 100% pass rate was maintained on the E3 Future Skills course, E3 Foundation Studies and Skills and L1 Foundation Studies and Skills (Gateway)

4.4 GCSE English & Maths

- Results in both GCSE Maths and GCSE English were significantly improved on previous years
- College was conscious that, if the grade improvements in GCSE Maths and English courses have been mirrored in the GCSE results of incoming students, new GCSE resit students may find both courses more than usually challenging in the coming year
- A large number of GCSE Maths/English classes had been closed as numbers of GCSE resit students in both subjects were significantly reduced
- As GCSE resit numbers were usually relatively consistent year on year, College was working on the assumption that reduced numbers meant that many more students than usual had been awarded grade 4 or above in Maths/English and were accessing College programmes that do not include a GCSE resit
- In order to address concerns about the knowledge and skill of incoming GCSE Maths/English resit students, College was ensuring that GCSE resit classes were smaller than usual and additional individual and small group support was being planned by making use of 16-19 Tuition Funding

Governor Questions

Q. How had the knowledge and skill of incoming students affected the College's expectation of student progress and had it impacted on the targets and predicted grades that were being set?

A. An intermediate grade had been introduced on the A Level programme

4.5 Adult F.E & H.E.

- Not all Adult FE results were currently available
- Of the courses with complete data sets, most had achieved a 100% pass rate including PGCE
- The pass rate for L2 Foundation Certificate in Accounting had fallen to 87.5% this year (from 100% last year)
- High grades and pass rates were disappointing in BA (Hons) Community and Social Care and FD in Criminology and Criminal Justice, but this was the last year that HE was running

5. APPRENTICESHIP PROVISION UPDATE

- The overall position was positive, and work was ongoing to address the small areas of concern
- Three Team Leaders were in post with the remaining two sector area posts currently being advertised
- These additional posts would support further monitoring, intervention and the sharing of good practice across the programme
- A new employer report had been developed to further strengthen employer engagement with the review process
- The start of term apprenticeship conference had focussed on the outcomes of the external review, including the highlights and areas for further development
- Off the job training booklets had been developed for every curriculum area to further strengthen planning and employer engagement

Governors agreed that the action plan was very clear. The Co-opted member David Grime confirmed that the off the job booklet had been well received.

Governor Questions

Q. What was the headline figure for best case and timely achievement?

A. This was being finalised

Governors requested that this was emailed to them when available

ACTION:

Best case and Timely achievement rate data to be emailed to Committee

6. MISSED LEARNING / SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

The Deputy Principals reported that:

- Both Year 1 and Year 2 students had experienced disruptions to their learning
- The challenge in addressing this missed learning was that every student had been affected differently
- For incoming Year 1 students, transition resources for every course had been made available to students over the summer holiday
- Year 2 A level students were set comprehensive summative assessments towards the end of last year, with students also set individualised work to complete over the summer period to help them address their personal learning gaps
- 2021-22 had commenced with a focus on diagnostic assessment
- College was ensuring that clear plans were in place for regular and ongoing diagnostic assessment and for follow up action to be taken to address any learning gaps identified
- It was focussing heavily on identifying and addressing students' individual learning gaps, both in Year 1 and Year 2
- In some subjects, students were lacking in behavioural skills, and activities had been put in place to address this
- In addition to the actions being taken across all courses, plans were in place for utilising the allocation of £360,000 16-19 Tuition Fund monies
- Runshaw was also leading a College Collaboration Fund project (with Bury and Tameside Colleges) to share good practice and develop a set of resources addressing learning gaps
- The plan was to collate and catalogue the resources being posted by the curriculum teams and combine them with the resources that were used over the summer into a "professional" package of resources which would be shared as widely as possible

Governor Questions

Q. Were the issues that students were experiencing in the three Colleges similar or different?

A. They were similar issues

Q. Was College intending to provide support on exam technique as students will not have sat exams for two years?

A. The Student Governor confirmed that support was being provided on exam technique

7. STAFF AND STUDENT GOVERNOR FEEDBACK

The Staff Governor reported that the Year 1 students were not significantly different than in previous years and were happy to return back to face-to-face teaching.

The Student Governor reported that students were feeling very positive and pleased to be back on campus. College was providing lots of support and there was an extensive range of enrichment activities on offer.

8. MONITORING OF KEY ISSUES - PERFORMANCE vs TARGETS

It was noted that:

- 60% (12 out of 20) of all Key Issues areas had achieved their target against the College SAR QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) target of 75%, with 80% having improved performance compared to 2019-20
- 8 courses had not achieved the target set
- 20-21 Apprenticeship data was not yet finalised and results from functional skills exam re-sits had not been issued

Governor Questions

Q. Why had the targets for key issues subjects been the same as the previous year as this looked like College was content with the same performance?

A. This had been previously discussed and was due to the absence of exams and the use of Centre Assessed grades. The key issues had been rolled forward from the previous year and the rationale had been for the achievement rate to be the same as or at the Centre Assessed grade

Q. Were target grades for students personalised in relation to their individual potential?

A. The expected grade was based on the students GCSE grade and shared with them

9. DETERMINATION OF NEW /CONTINUING KEY ISSUES AND CONFIRMATION OF NEXT STEPS

The proposed key Issues list for 2021-22 was presented for consideration.

Governor Questions

Q. Level 1 Maths & English Functional skills was on the key issues list last year but had not been included this year. What was the reason for this?

A. Management had discussed this in detail and had decided not to include it as the course had been negatively impacted by Covid

Q. How had this affected retention?

A. Retention had been affected but pass rates were much higher than in other Colleges

Q. Had any students who undertook the pre-induction course for the vocational programme decided not to enrol?

A. Students had enrolled including some who did not attend the pre-induction course

Q. Why had L3 Engineering not been included on the Key Issues list?

A. It had not been included as the achievement rates were above benchmark

Q. Could subjects be added to the key issues list in year?

A. It was confirmed that this had been done previously with Apprenticeships and L2 Childcare having been added in year

A discussion ensued on whether subject leaders for key issues courses should attend the Committee meeting and present action plans for their course.

The Principal advised that College had a process for reviewing and monitoring all courses. The role of the Committee was to provide oversight and monitor that processes were operating effectively in College. Governors had also undertaken virtual learning walks last year and attended the SAR validation sessions for some of the key issues subjects where they had an opportunity to assess how much rigour was being applied by management.

It was suggested that the results of student surveys for Key Issues subjects were analysed separately so that any trends or anomalies could be identified.

It was also suggested that an additional column was added to the Key Issues table which specified how long the subject had been on the key issues list

ACTION:

SMT

RESOLVED:

The Committee approved the list of key issues subjects

10. GOVERNORS DATA DASHBOARD

The dashboard was reviewed, and a Governor requested that the People & OD Committee was included on the internal stakeholder feedback column.

ACTION:

SMT to amend dashboard

11. INTERNAL PROGRESSION REPORT

11.1 A Level - Year 1 to Year 2

The Deputy Principal Zoe Smallman presented the report with the following points highlighted to the Committee:

- Despite the substantial Covid disruptions to the A level programme last year, the proportion of Year 1 completers was broadly in line with the previous year, and above the year before
- The progression rate to Year 2 was slightly lower than last year, but remained above the year before
- Progression on Early Modern History, Modern History and Physics was low and there would be continued focus on in year retention

Governor Questions

Q. What was the current situation with History?

A. Work was ongoing to address the previous issues. There had been some significant changes in staffing and management were confident that the staffing and curriculum changes would have a positive impact

Q. What were the reasons for the lower progression from Year 1 to Year 2?

A. Last year had been difficult for some students due to the switch to blended learning

Q. Had some students left to go to other Colleges?

A. The Student Governor stated that some students had left as other Colleges had been offering more face-to-face teaching. However, students in other Colleges had ended up taking more time off because of having to self-isolate due to Covid

Q. Did College have KPI's for internal progression?

A. It was confirmed that it did

Q. When was the deadline for the census data?

A. October half term

Q. Was College on track to meet the enrolment target?

A. Enrolment was on track but due to the smaller number of Year 2 students, there would be a negative financial impact

Q. Had the deadline for students wanting to change subjects been extended?

A. This had been extended as College had not been able to have in person open events

Vocational Programme Internal Progression Report

The Deputy Principal Martin Rigby advised that the report would be presented at the next meeting as some of the data required further verification.

ACTION:

Head of Governance / February 2022 Committee Agenda

12. STRATEGIC PLAN MONITORING REPORTS 2021/2022

12.1 Innovation

12.2 Quality

The strategic plan reports were reviewed, and it was noted that all actions were in progress and on track to be completed within the timescales.

13. RISK REGISTER

The risk register was presented and reviewed.

Governor Questions

Q. When was the announcement on the reform of vocational qualifications due to be made?

A. The DfE was currently focussing on the roll out of T Levels and no news had been issued on Applied General qualifications

A Governor suggested that an update on some of the lower-level risks was also provided.

14. COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT – REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee completed the self-assessment exercise and reviewed the Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that the terms of reference were re-adopted for the current academic year.

15. POLICIES

15.1 Student Harassment & Bullying

Governor Questions

Q. Was the reference to UCLAN students still required?

A. SMT to check and clarify

RESOLVED:

The Committee approved the policy subject to clarification by SMT

15.2 16-19 Bursary Fund & Free College Meals

Governor Questions

Q. Was the section on page 134 to be deleted from the policy?

A. SMT to check and clarify

RESOLVED:

The Committee approved the policy subject to clarification by SMT

16. GOVERNANCE IMPACT STATEMENT

- Monitoring of Apprenticeship action plan and feedback from Co-opted member on
- Discussion on Key Issues Subjects and suggestion to amend key issues table
- Suggestion re separate analysis of learner surveys for key issues subjects
- Discussion on support for lost learning for new students and Year 2 students
- Policies reviewed and approved

17. APPROVAL OF RESERVED BUSINESS MINUTES – 18TH JUNE 2021

Agreed that: the minutes are approved as a correct record.

16.1 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

19. GDPR / CONFIDENTIALITY*

Governors were reminded to delete any personal or confidential information that had been circulated with the meeting papers.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 4th February 2021 at 1.30pm

It was noted that this was Yvonne Bradshaw's last meeting as a member of the Standards & Curriculum Committee. Governors led by the Chair thanked Yvonne for the support that she had given to the College and her contribution to the work of the Committee.