

## MINUTES

### *Quality and Standards Committee No. 43*

Date: *01/03/2016 (Tuesday)*

Time: *18:00–20:00*

Venue: *Rural Business Centre*

Committee: *Quality and Standards*

Notes: *Refreshments will be available from 5.30pm.*

Present: *Allan Foster (Vice Chairman), Ann Turner (Principal), Marion Nuttall (Chairman), Megan Cook, Naveed Sharif (Co-opted Member), Robert Robinson and Steve Rigby*

Attending: *Alison Robinson (Vice Principal)*

Clerks: *Ron Matthews (Clerk) and Susan Whiteside (Deputy Clerk)*

## ***Public Minutes***

Item number:      Item description:  
(and category)

- 01.16**                    ***Attendance of College Staff***  
**Decision**                Section 8.2 of the current Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Quality and Standards Committee states:  
"College Management and / or Consultants may attend the meeting by invitation in an advisory capacity."  
  
**Resolved:**  
  
**That College Management staff attend the meeting.**
- 02.16**                    ***Apologies for Absence***  
**Record**                 Rob Robinson had previously agreed a leave of absence and was not in attendance at the meeting. Megan Cook was not in attendance at the meeting. Members enquired about the proposal to increase Committee memberships by one which would mean some members of Corporation sitting on more than one committee. The Clerk and Chair of the Committee reported that a Board member had expressed an interest in joining Quality & Standards Committee and decisions would be made at Corporation at its meeting on 15 March 2016
- 03.16**                    ***Minutes of Previous Meeting***  
**Decision**                The minutes of meeting number 42 held on Tuesday 10 November 2015 were signed and agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting.
- 04.16**                    ***Declaration of Interests***  
**Record**                 There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on the public agenda.
- 05.16**                    ***Strategic Plan Progress Report***  
**Consultation**            Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Strategic Plan Progress Report relevant to the Quality and Standards Committee.  
  
**We will provide an outstanding teaching & learning experience**  
The number of 'Good' or 'Outstanding' lessons observed met target. The percentage of lecturers observed, was shown as below target but an update at the meeting indicated this was also meeting target with 76% observed. Quality of observers and observations was reported later in the meeting. Student Survey feed back was included and showed positive

responses to questions around the knowledge and enthusiasm of teachers and assessments methods and standards expected.

**We will create opportunities for all to succeed**

The key performance indicators were around retention and attendance data and targets were being met for HE and FE. The apprenticeship figures recorded under 'Employer Responsive fell short of target. Members made reference to the short fall and agreed to discuss in more detail under the workplace learning item later in the meeting.

**Resolved:**

**That the Strategic Plan Report be received**

**06.16**

**Consultation**

**Further Education Reports**

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the further education performance reports.

The report provided information on, attendance, retention and performance, and outlined strengths, actions taken and impact, further actions planned and expected impact, staff support and promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion in the FE curriculum delivery.

Quality & Standards Committee asked questions on aspects of the reports as detailed below.

**Attendance and Retention** Key Strengths were outlined to Quality and Standards Committee with overall attendance at 96%, and retention at 97%. There were still challenges at Croxteth, the Merseyside Centre, but incentives, monitoring and close management was showing improvements with attendance 10% higher than the previous year. Members noted a new Assistant Head had been appointed for the Centre, the position had been advertised externally and filled by an internal applicant.

There was some low attendance amongst 14-16 year olds which fell below targets. The figures referred to courses with low numbers which did tend to distort the issue. Management reported that students coming from schools did enjoy and look forward to their sessions at College. Attendance issues could sometimes be linked to school activities and withdrawal of college attendance used as a punishment. Members were informed that the College was successful in engaging with families who had chosen to home school their children, with Myerscough supporting the education of more from this group than any

other college in Lancashire. Commonly these students were accessing English and Maths GCSE programmes with several taking another specific subject offered by the College. Quality & Standards Committee was pleased to hear the extent of this offer, the networking that provided awareness of the College offer to different communities and the professionalism of staff to provide differentiation in classes to give equal chances. Members noted a strategy to highlight progression opportunities to the learners.

Quality and Standards Committee expressed satisfaction with the report and wished to acknowledge the efforts being made, particularly at Croxteth.

**Resolved:**

**That the FE Performance Reports be received.**

**07.16**

***Consultation***

***Value Added Report***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Value Added Report for the year 2014 / 2015 which measured the performance of those on the College's level 3 courses against their starting point to the end of their level 3 programme. The difference between a student's actual performance and projected performance gives the score. The scores of all students can then be averaged to find the Colleges Value added score in the various subject areas and as a College overall. The College ALPS grade was 4 on a 9 point scale. This is classed as 'Very Good'

Members asked questions on the various types of level 3 qualifications and their A level equivalent values and noted ALPS only reflected part of the College 'Level 3' offer as some delivery was through City & Guilds.

Previously Sport students had showed difficulty with some of the science modules which had been reflected in the scores. This still tended to be the case, mixtures of performance had been apparent to management though Sport had achieved a Grade 4 'Very Good'. There were initiatives to share good practice.

Quality & Standards Committee engaged in dialogue around the Sport offer in the context of student perception, performance and area review priorities. Members received assurance of strong management in the area, recent staff promotions to senior lecturer category and work on sharing good practice and a professional positive culture in the team. There had been good examples of stretch and challenge.

Quality & Standards Committee noted Value Added as an important measure of educational development and advance and asked if there

were alternatives to ALPS as more of the College delivery moved over to City & Guilds qualifications. Management were liaising with LANDEX and exploring alternatives. Management would judge whether to continue with ALPS for the current year.

**Resolved:**

**That the Value Added Report be received**

**08.16**

**Consultation**

***Work-Place Learning Report***

Quality & Standards Committee gave detailed consideration to the Work-Place Learning Report which provided a summary of strengths, areas for improvement and actions taken and their impact.

Members commented on challenge in this area and referred to previous discussions.

There were strengths in the development of employer links and industry partnerships catering for business needs regionally and nationally. Actions had been implemented to address high risk and underperforming schemes which were demonstrating positive impacts through rigorous performance management.

There was increased attention to data monitoring, which under the recent restructure was reported from via the centralised Data Management team. Apprentice withdrawals were being analysed through ensuring all apprentices at risk were promptly identified with and intervention and support plans in place. There had also been extensive focus on health and safety.

Members were concerned that the analysis of in year performance and end of year forecasts predicted a further decline in success rates but noted that this was due to the 'mopping up' of data and learners who would not achieve as timely successes but would achieve overall. It was requested that for future reports the in-year performance table showing benchmarking data against College targets and actuals also display student numbers. It was clarified that the framework length varies from apprenticeship to apprenticeship and has to be achieved within 90 days of planned end date.

The report provided transparency and detail of current withdrawals. Members welcomed the evident embedding of the culture to 'recruit with integrity'.

The College is one of the largest providers of apprenticeships in Lancashire and has potential for growth. Quality & Standards Committee was informed of national framework changes which had a

greater academic focus and was expected to lead to Colleges taking a greater share of provision. The academic focus would come with challenges especially as some programmes required apprentices to start their programmes with prior achievement in maths and English at grade C.

Quality & Standards Committee was aware of current staff shortage, welcomed the interim support from 2 consultant managers, and was pleased to hear that on this day interviews had been held for the position, 'Head of Apprenticeship & Skills, Performance and Development' with an offer of employment due to be made. Discussions with the Apprenticeship & Skills team were taking place to realign positions and provide more linkage with the wider College services to promote efficiency, opportunity, transparency and sharing of good practice and resources. A further vacant managerial post would be advertised shortly.

Actions taken were having impact. These included attention to tutor case loads, performance management, monitoring reports, support to learners, cross College support including from General Education, apprentice and employer inductions, workshops, 'face to face' engagement, staff training, assessment and internal verification, data reporting, improved processes and reporting of withdrawals. Standard practice dictates that all staff regardless of location report to College every two months.

Overall Quality & Standards expressed some concern but also encouragement from the report. Members were rigorous in their scrutiny and questioning in this high risk and challenging area which was key to Government objectives.

Members appreciated the intense management which exposed the Committee to the difficulties and challenges. The Committee noted the transparency of a worst case scenario concerning projected success rates. Members endorsed the potential and intent for growth and wished to acknowledge the work and dedication of the Assistant Principal, Apprenticeship & Skills who was a relatively recent appointment to the College.

**Resolved:**

**That the Workplace Learning Performance Report be received.**

**09.16**

**Consultation**

***Higher Education Reports***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Higher Education Reports:

In Year Performance Data HE - Retention / Withdrawals;  
In Year performance HE - Attendance;  
With a summary of Progress against Strategic Plan Targets.

Retention was at high at 99% with attendance at 90%.

Five new higher education programmes were due to go through the University course approval process with a further four to be submitted in May including additional Masters degrees.. The new programmes would complement other provision in these areas and support both full and part time recruitment for 2017 / 2018.

College was leading in an AoC project funded by HEFCE to develop a national framework and kite mark for scholarly activity in college based higher education. A post was funded for a Scholarship Development Manager and an appointment had been made.

The annual monitoring report and action plan had been submitted to Uclan and for the third year running this was commended for its high quality. Marketing materials were also praised for their high standards.

The report showed that Management continued to monitor and address areas of concern and implement actions. A student engagement project discussed previous years National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes. The QAA Higher Education Review was included, Myerscough remains as top performer. The review lists those Colleges that have been through the QAA review since the introduction of the new framework in January 2014. The Principal informed members that the format for the future reviews was currently being considered.

Quality & Standards Committee noted the good report which boded well for high success rates in HE.

**Resolved:**

**That the Higher Education Reports be received**

## **10.16**

### ***Consultation***

#### ***Learner Voice***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Learner Voice Report which provided an analysis to date for academic year 2015 / 2016.

Strengths included the induction survey results which indicated high student satisfaction. College was completing the FE Choices Learner Satisfaction survey, an external survey to feed back to the Skills Funding Agency, the Colleges' major funder. There had been Governor attendance at HE and FE course representative meetings. Governors

attending reported on a valuable engagement experience and noted good attendance from cross College Managers and good evidence of the student voice being heard and responded to. They noted positive comments about the library and that most matters raised were not of an educational nature.

Areas for improvement included a review of internal surveys to align with the new Ofsted framework. There was focus on induction survey responses from Croxteth, the Merseyside Centre. In response to feedback a Sportsmaker position for East Lancashire would be created.

The Myerscough Student Union officer, a new position for this academic year, was having a positive impact and reaching students at the Centres.

There was work to improve response rates to the NSS survey.

**Resolved:**

**That the Learner Voice Report be received.**

**11.16**

***Consultation***

***Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report.

The Vice Principal provided an update on numbers of observations undertaken together with completed associated reporting, which indicated areas were on target for 100% completion apart from Apprenticeships and Skills. The updated figure for this area was 34% from the 10% reported. Scheduling had been delayed due to the absence of a manager and realignments of the observation team but was now underway.

There was also an update on the percentage of those observed achieving a grade 1 or 2 which was 92%. To date there was a 33% increase in those achieving a grade 1.

Members sought assurance on the rigour of the process and were satisfied with management responses. They also noted the actions taken to date and impact documented in the report which included CPD activities for staff. There was a focus on walk through activities which aligned to how Ofsted would arrive at their judgements for teaching, learning and assessment. Quality & Standards Committee wished to ensure this alignment was not to the detriment of existing good teaching practice appreciated by students and conducive to their success. A discussion took place and members noted the encouraged



teaching practice was recognised good practice in the sector and designed to refresh lessons and keep students interested and engaged. This discussion was again picked up as members considered the LANDEX Peer Review Report later in the meeting which provided further assurance on the rigour of the process at Myerscough.

Learner Voice feedback indicated satisfaction with teaching standards.

Support for the embedding of British Values as part of the PREVENT agenda was being rolled out as staff implement this into learning delivery.

Animal and Equine areas had been asked to undertake enhanced confirmation sampling as part of the BTEC Standards verification process.

Members wished to acknowledge and formerly thank Martin Burkinshaw, Head of Teaching and Learning for his 32 years employment at the College carried out without a single day off sick. Members wished him well for his retirement. An external advert had been placed for the position and internal candidate, Steph Wilkinson has been appointed.

There had been governor representation at the recent Teaching and Learning Fair. Governors reported excellent feedback on Maths and English sessions and the Good to Outstanding programme.

**Resolved:**

**That the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report be received.**

## **12.16**

### ***Consultation***

#### ***Equality Diversity Inclusion Action Plan***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Report and Action Plan.

The College has invested heavily in equality, diversity and inclusion over the past two years. To ensure all stakeholders of the College were fully engaged in the strategic development of EDI the College decided to work towards a national kitemark with the support of the National Centre for Diversity and one of their mentors. The College achieved the kitemark of Investors in Diversity Stage 1 in June 2014, with Stage 2 achieved in January 2016. The Stage 2 report highlighted some of the progress made in relation to EDI and areas for improvement.

The Strategic Equalities Group and the Investors in Diversity Steering Group have both met and come up with an action plan to follow up the recommendations.

Quality & Standards Committee congratulated the College on achieving Investors in Diversity Stage 2 but did express concern at some of the feedback from the external survey staff completed as part of the process. On the visit the accreditor had been satisfied to make the award based on discrepancies between the survey and face to face interviews and general perception of the College.

All findings from the survey were taken seriously and built into the documented action plan. This plan would be shared with the Investor in Diversity mentor as College sought further feedback on the steps needed to achieve Stage 3 of Investors in Diversity – Leaders in Diversity. The mentor had scheduled the meeting for May which did mean there would be some slippage in the targeted timeline for full achievement.

Members referred to the action plan contents and were reassured that matters would receive consideration and outcomes documented.

**Resolved:**

**That the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Report be received**

**13.16**

***Consultation***

***College Quality Improvement Plan***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the College Quality Improvement Plan.

At this stage in the academic year items remained open as actions were ongoing. Updates were highlighted so members could track progress.

Members received clarification on the "High Needs Learner" student group and the additional funding they received. They noted the challenges in supporting others with needs, particularly in Maths and English. The number of FE students declaring a learning disability in the College had increase from 21% to 31% against a national average of 18%. College worked to support all its learners from those with high ability requiring stretch and challenge across the board to those requiring differing forms of additional support. Some extra staffing was in place.

Members discussed with management how the PREVENT and British Values were being established in the College. The Vice Principal updated them on her latest presentations to staff.

**Resolved:**

**That the Quality Improvement Plan be received**

**14.16**

***LANDEX Peer Review Report***

***Consultation***

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the LANDEX Peer Review Report which contained information about the various visits to the College and Myerscough staff visits to other Colleges. The Peer review process linked to structured improvement plans continues to be an effective method of sharing good practice and forming shared views of required standards.

The main peer review gave a general overview of the College, its finances, resources, quality of teaching, learning and assessment. With reference to discussions on the teaching, & learning, assessment report earlier in the meeting there was further assurance on the rigour of Myerscough's lesson observation programme.

**Resolved:**

**That the LANDEX Peer Review Report be received.**

***Confidential Minutes*** (no items available)

***Strictly Confidential Minutes*** (no items available)

Chairman: Marion Nuttall

Signed:

Date: