



TRURO AND PENWITH COLLEGE CORPORATION



Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee

Minutes of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee held on Wednesday 11 March 2020 at Truro College.

Members: Mrs L Batchelor, Mr B Crossland, Sir Robert Owen, Ms S Russell, Mrs S Sanderson and Dr E Sheridan (Chair)

Also Present: Mrs L Bradley (Director of Quality), Ms J Cashmore (Director of Operations), Mr S Cryer (Director of Finance), Mrs C Mewton (Director of Studies), Mr A Stittle (Director of Partnerships), Mr M Tucker (Director of Penwith College) and Mrs A Winter (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies: Mr T Hughes, Mr D Walrond, Ms K Wells and Mrs J Woodhouse, School representatives: Ms M Eastburn-Cutts (Penair), Mr M Rabey (Richard Lander) and Mr W Marshall (Humphry Davy)

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
20/01	<p>Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2019 were APPROVED and signed as a correct record.</p>	
20/02	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>02.01 Schools Updates – CASH meeting (Minute 19/30.01)</p> <p>The Committee noted that the Principals of the two FE colleges had recently provided a joint update to the Cornwall Association of Headteachers (CASH) in which the provision of information, advice and guidance on post-16 progression opportunities was raised.</p> <p>02.02 Safeguarding Update – Prevent (Minute 19/30.02)</p> <p>Governors noted that the recent session delivered by the DfE’s National Prevent Lead had been very informative and well received.</p> <p>02.03 Curriculum Development Plan 2019-22 (Minutes 19/35)</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to note that approval for the new Nursing Apprenticeships had had been confirmed following a successful 2 day visit by the Nursing and Midwifery Council. The partnership between the College, the Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust and University of Greenwich was working well. A first cohort of 20 trainees was expected to start in May with a further intake of 40 in September 2020.</p> <p>20.04 SW Institute of Technology (Minute 19/36)</p> <p>Governors noted that the contractors had started work on Valency which was due for completion by the end of November 2020.</p>	

20/03	<p>Response to Covid-19</p> <p>The Director of Operations reported on the College’s extensive contingency planning to manage the Covid-19 risks. The Public Health England and Government guidance was being closely followed and preparations were underway for the online delivery of teaching and learning in the event that the College needed to support learners remotely. Arrangements for specific activities, such as College trips, and particular cohorts, including high needs and vulnerable students, were being carefully reviewed. Plans were being developed to ensure core functions (eg. payroll, IT) were maintained and to manage a potential disruption to external services such as transport and catering.</p> <p>In reply to questions, the Director confirmed that a communication strategy was being implemented to ensure accurate and consistent information was being disseminated to staff and students.</p>	
20/04	<p>DfE Schools and Colleges Post-16 Performance Tables for 2018/19</p> <p>The Committee considered the DfE post-16 performance tables together with a detailed commentary explaining the measures and changes this year. New information included destination data and outcomes for the first cohorts completing the new RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework) applied general and vocational courses.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the data and noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the College remained one of the largest Level 3 providers in the country with over 2,600 at the end of 16-18 studies in 2018/19 • 47% of post-16 (state-funded) learners in Cornwall attended the College, (rising to 55% if Callywith was included in the total) • A Level and International Baccalaureate performance remained very strong, above national and local averages on almost every measure • value added scores on academic programmes remained high, but had declined slightly, largely due to lower performance in a fourth AS subject which students did not continue to A Level • progress towards GCSE English and Mathematics was strong with a marked improvement in Mathematics, placing the College in the top 2% of GFE colleges nationally. <p>The Committee asked about the two areas where outcomes were above local averages but slightly lower than national averages. Governors noted that a relatively small cohort had been included in the Tech Level data due to the ongoing transition to RQF. The socio-economic environment of the County and limited employment opportunities were likely to have impacted on student destinations.</p> <p>The Committee concluded that the performance tables once again demonstrated the College’s exceptional outcomes and value added for a very large number of learners, across a broad curriculum.</p>	
20/05	<p>Self-Assessment Report (SAR) – Review of Action Plans 2018/19</p> <p>The Director of Quality presented the Spring review of the 2018/19 SAR Action Plans, summarised the progress that had been made and responded to questions. Some actions had already been effective although the full impact would not be clear until the end of the year.</p>	

	<p>In response to questions, the Director of Quality explained the process to ensure programme areas were making good progress with regular progress meetings taking place. The Committee asked about progress in a number of specific areas in greater detail including Progression 2 courses and Apprenticeships and discussed ongoing challenges.</p> <p>Governors asked about Ofsted preparation and noted that the March Staff Development Day would include sessions for all staff on the revised Ofsted framework and the new emphasis during inspections.</p> <p>The Committee was satisfied that a comprehensive range of actions and developments were continuing to drive improvements.</p>	
20/06	<p>Early Leavers Data 2019/20</p> <p>The Committee considered the report on the early leavers and noted the weekly monitoring by the Senior Management Team, close tracking and exit interviews. Although a number of leavers had successfully transferred to an Apprenticeship or other pathway at the College, this counted as 'no success' in the DfE data as they had failed to complete their original programme.</p> <p>It was noted that the numbers leaving early were similar to the previous year and remained low (3.3%). An analysis of the data revealed no underlying trends or concerns. Reasons for leaving often related to multiple, complex personal issues and mental health difficulties was often a factor. The role of the Attendance Officers, intervention and additional support provided to learners at risk of leaving early was explained. Attendance for some cohorts, such as GCSE Maths resits, had improved significantly. Provision of effective information, advice and guidance at an early stage was crucial in ensuring students were following an appropriate programme.</p> <p>Governors were content that leavers were appropriately supported and that feedback provided during exit interviews was promptly addressed.</p>	
20/07	<p>Student Progression/Destinations 2019</p> <p>The Committee considered a report on the 2471 leavers in 2019 and Governors were pleased to note that 81% had achieved the DfE measure of a 'sustained' destination in education, employment or further training, against a national average rate of 77%.</p> <p>1176 (48%) of leavers had progressed into HE with 303 starting courses at Russell Group universities. 87% had successfully gained places at their first choice institution and 16 students had accepted places at Oxford/Cambridge. As previously, a large proportion of students had chosen institutions within the South West.</p> <p>Around 10% of leavers had progressed into full time employment and 4% into part time employment.</p> <p>A further 361 students had successfully completed an apprenticeship programme and progressed into paid employment, self-employment, voluntary work, further or higher education. Overall, the 'sustained' destination rate for all apprentices leaving in 2019 matched the national rate of 89%.</p>	

	<p>Governors asked about unconditional university offers and noted that these were still widespread and causing concern throughout the sector. The difficulties created for individual students, the loss of motivation and impact on outcomes were discussed. The OfS had no policy on unconditional offers and did not appear to be addressing the concerns.</p> <p>The Committee considered the data and agreed that this demonstrated a very positive position with excellent outcomes and successful progression achieved by a large number of learners.</p>	
20/08	<p>Equality and Diversity Monitoring Report 2019</p> <p>The Committee received the annual monitoring report which provided a comprehensive account of the key principles and inclusive practices throughout the College and supporting data. The Committee noted that the College's Access and Participation Plan explained the specific measures to promote equality of opportunity in HE.</p> <p>Members noted that as well as internal evaluation, external scrutiny had been provided by the National Centre for Diversity (NCDI) and the College had been awarded Investors in Diversity accreditation following a very positive review in May 2017. The NCDI re-accreditation process was currently underway.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the outcomes for learners and the ways in which achievement gaps were identified and addressed. Governors asked about strategies to address specific issues such as socio-economic disadvantage, which was a particular concern in Cornwall. Although the performance of disadvantaged students at the College exceeded that of non-disadvantaged students nationally, performance had declined slightly compared to previous years. In part, this was thought to be linked to the withdrawal of Attendance Officers.</p> <p>Achievement rates for students who declared a learning difficulty/disability/health problem were also reviewed and remained above national averages. No underlying issues or concerns were identified.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the monitoring report which provided compelling evidence of the College's inclusive approach and underlying practices to promote equality and diversity, despite significant levels of deprivation and rurality in the county.</p>	
20/09	<p>Higher Education</p> <p>09.01 College Board of Studies for HE</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 4 February 2020 were received and NOTED.</p> <p>09.02 Access and Participation Plan 2019-20</p> <p>The current APP setting out the College's approach to improving equality of opportunity in HE was considered and NOTED.</p>	

	<p>09.03 HE Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the revised APP for the coming 5 years which provided a more detailed account of the raft of measures and initiatives which were being implemented to promote participation and access.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the particular challenges and priorities for the region and asked about the planned strategies to tackle under-participation in HE and evaluation processes that would be used to assess the effectiveness of the various measures. In response to questions about the evaluation process, the Committee noted that a new part time appointment would be made to monitor delivery of the APP and carry out the assessment.</p> <p>Governors SUPPORTED the priorities and targets identified in the Access and Participation Plan for 2020-21 to 2024-25 and ENDORSED the planned strategies to improve participation by underrepresented groups.</p> <p>09.04 OfS: Transforming Opportunity in HE</p> <p>The Committee considered the executive summary from the recent OfS report analysing APPs submitted by 171 HE providers for 2020-21 to 2024-15. The monitoring and intervention work of the OfS with regard to delivery of the APP was also explained.</p> <p>Governors NOTED the key findings of the report.</p>	
20/10	<p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>The Director of Studies reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Section 157/175 Annual Safeguarding Audit had been completed and submitted to Our Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) following review by the Safeguarding Lead Governor • a new Head of Student Services, Caroline Keech, had recently started in the role • useful weekly meetings of the safeguarding leadership team and termly training events for all safeguarding contacts were continuing and provided an opportunity to monitor and review specific concerns • the next termly staff development session would include discussion with local police liaison officers on homelessness – it was hoped that links with the police could be further developed • the College’s safeguarding workload was relentless with increases detected in issues related to self-harm, suicidal thoughts and substance misuse • safeguarding staff were currently supporting more than fifty students with active safe plans and risk assessments in place. <p>In response to questions, the Director confirmed that the College’s Single Central Record listing all those who had been DBS checked to work within the College was regularly checked and updated on a monthly basis.</p>	

20/11	<p>Governor Learning Walks – Autumn/Winter 2019/20</p> <p>The Chair provided feedback from recent learning walks and indicated that no concerns or issues had arisen from the governor visits.</p> <p>Governors were encouraged to take part in additional learning walks during the Spring and Summer terms.</p>	ALL to note
20/12	<p>Dates of Meetings in 2020/21</p> <p>The dates for meetings in 2019/20 were confirmed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed 7 October 2020 (Truro) • Wed 10 March 2021 (Truro) • Wed 9 June 2021 (Penwith) 	ALL to note
20/13	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The Committee would next meet at 5.00 pm on Wednesday 3 June 2020 at Penwith College.</p>	ALL to note
20/14	<p>Higher Education Quality Assurance Group</p> <p>The Committee received and APPROVED the confidential minutes of the HE QA Working Party meeting on 22 November 2019.</p>	
20/15	<p>Self-Assessment Report Working Party</p> <p>The Committee received and APPROVED the confidential minutes of the SAR Working Party meeting on 27 November 2019.</p>	
20/16	<p>Report of College Complaints and Compliments 2018/19</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the confidential report and discussed a number of individual complaints in further detail. Governors noted that a wide range of mechanisms were available to enable learners to give views and feedback and specialist software was used to monitor informal feedback on social media. It was recognised that a great deal of time and care was taken to address any issues raised. In most instances it was beneficial to talk through problems with complainants and few complaints remained unresolved.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that each issue was often unique and that there were no obvious trends – the number of complaints at Truro had reduced in 2018/19 to 46 (compared to 69 in 2017/18) and risen at Penwith to 23 (14 in 2017/18).</p> <p>In response to questions, the Committee noted that feedback from the public about student behaviour or rudeness was often difficult to investigate as individuals could not usually be identified.</p> <p>The compliments were gratifying and it was noted that many related to the quality of support provided to students across the College.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the range of issues raised and processes to address concerns and was pleased that overall the number of complaints remained low in relation to the numbers of students, staff, clients and customers interacting with the College.</p>	