

## **Preston College**

### **Redacted and Abridged <sup>1</sup>Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 5.30 pm Boardroom, Preston College**

#### **Present:**

Mr M Collard	Chair
Mrs L Doswell	Principal and Chief Executive (Remote)
Mrs J Garcia	
Miss J Hopwood	(Remote)
Mr N Hunter	(Remote)
Mr R Marshall-Slater	
Mrs L Mason	

#### **Apologies:**

Mr J Jepson

#### **In attendance:**

Mr L Doherty	Quality Manager (until Minute 9)
Ms Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr M Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs C Rayner	Clerk to the Board

#### **1. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee in College since the Covid pandemic started.

The Chair welcomed new governors Miss Hopwood (Student Governor - FE), Mr Hunter and Mr Marshall-Slater to their first meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee.

Everyone present introduced themselves.

It was noted that a quorum was present.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were made.

#### **3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were agreed as a correct record. The notes of the engagement event on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021 were noted.

The Clerk undertook to update the website due to committee membership changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that any matters which the Corporation is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis have been removed from these minutes.

**Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March were approved.**

#### **4. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the matters arising report.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the matters arising report.**

#### **5. Learner Recruitment Targets**

Mr Noblett, Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning, presented his report on Learner Recruitment Targets. Mr Noblett reported:

- the campus was very busy for the start of the new academic year;
- recruitment numbers to date in 16-18, Apprenticeships and adult education;
- that 16-18 Study Programme recruitment to date had exceeded expectation.
  
- there was also growth in apprentice numbers which was a sign that numbers were returning to pre pandemic levels;
- adult enrolment numbers were ahead of this point the previous year, and were particularly high in English for Speakers of Languages (ESOL);
- the College had now launched T Levels in Professional Construction, Health and Science, and, the ESFA were pleased with the College's progress which appeared to 'buck the trend' in relation to sector performance;
- new validation provision, such as HNC in Technical Engineering, which were not reliant on a September start, allowed the possibility of increased learner numbers in 2021/22 as the year progressed.

The Committee discussed the report with management. Members asked for reassurance of how quality was maintained with higher learner numbers and whether there were any capacity issues due to larger class sizes. Mr Noblett explained that provision had been made for additional student managers to support learners and additional agency staff cover had been arranged where required. However, it was noted that there were difficulties in recruiting for teaching staff in some sectors.

In response to a query on the impact of GCSE grade inflation on learners, Mr Noblett outlined how the College had addressed this to date, including extending its induction period to allow a careful assessment of the progress of each individual learner throughout the first half-term. He explained that if movement between levels was required during this period, the appropriate action would be taken in conjunction with the learner and their parent or guardian.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Learner Recruitment Targets report.**

## **6. Student Council and Learner Voice Update**

Mr Noblett presented the Student Council and Learner Voice Update. Mr Noblett explained a short update had been provided as it was very early in the Student Council calendar and Student Council meetings for 2021/22 had just started. Mr Noblett reported that during 2021/22 the Student Council had developed a Student Council Charter which was at Appendix A for information and the new Student Council would carry these ideas forward into the 2021/22 academic year.

Mr Noblett referred members to the Learner Voice Survey at Appendix B which had been included on the agenda of the June Quality and Standards Committee meeting and reported on:

- plans for the next round of Learner Voice surveys would include questions on the learner induction;
- the College's approach to HE learner voice.

In response to a query Mr Noblett confirmed that the next Learner Voice Survey would take place after half term.

The Committee discussed with management the challenges for staff and learners when moving from on campus to remote learning and returning to full time on campus learning. The Chair highlighted the challenges for teachers in having to adapt changing teaching styles to online at short notice at the start of the pandemic. Mr Noblett referred to the support for learners and staff as lessons returned to campus, with learning walks and CPD for staff. It was noted that feedback from learning walks had been positive to date.

The Clerk provided an update the Student Governor election (16-18) which had been contested and reported that the outcome of the election would be communicated to the Student Council on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

In response to queries it was noted that apprentice learner voice would be included with learner voice survey feedback and that the College also requested feedback from employers but this was not part of the learner voice survey.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Student Council and Learner Voice Update**

## **7. Performance Outcomes and KPIs**

Mr Noblett, Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning, and Ms Haworth Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support, presented a report on Performance Against KPIs making reference to:

- the 2020/21 Curriculum Quality Performance Indicators report at Appendix A;
- on going quality monitoring by performance reviews by Heads of Schools;
- monitoring of learner attendance and retention and key focus areas for the College;
- an update on monitoring of learner engagement with Head of Schools. The Executive Leadership Team also considered quarterly Quality reports;

- the continued challenges and impact of Covid including on exam process and delays with awarding bodies;
- anticipated 2020/21 outturn report;
- ongoing challenges and priorities;
- Ofsted Interim Arrangements with Ofsted carrying out interim visits and likely areas of inspection. It was noted that the Board would receive strategic Ofsted updates.

In response to a suggestion from the Chair that case studies could be developed to demonstrate the destinations of learners that did not return to their studies following a break in learning during Covid, Ms Haworth confirmed that destination data was collected. She explained that during the pandemic many health and beauty learners had moved in to the care sector and many construction apprenticeships had found full time employment in the construction industry due to the increased demand for staff in this sector. It was noted that high level data, e.g. did learners move on to employment, change course or another destination, could be shared with governors and also with Ofsted if required. It was noted that apprenticeships had been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic as many companies had made their apprentices redundant when cutting costs. However, it was expected that the sector would recover.

A staff governor referred to a number of student managers at the College progressing to teaching roles. It was noted that the College was currently advertising for additional student managers.

The Committee discussed with management the likelihood that, as a result of the pandemic, many learners were experiencing more anxiety related issues which would have a knock on impact on attendance. It was noted that there was a significant increase in learners with Education and Health Care Plans and an increase in Looked After Children during the pandemic, with many learners at the College with complex needs. Members also discussed with management the importance of reminding learners that they had developed significant resilience skills during the pandemic. It was commented that the media tended to focus on wellbeing and anxiety rather than the importance of resilience and tenacity. Ms Haworth confirmed that the tutorial package on getting back to study contained reference to the importance of resilience skills. Members noted the importance of student managers in conveying these messages to learners and parents.

In discussing attendance, management referred to the importance of taking a bespoke approach to attendance with learners, depending on that learner's base line attendance level. Members agreed and were cognisant that many 16-18 learners had undertaken a significant amount of remote learning since the start of 2020 and therefore the change to full time College attendance was likely to be challenges for some learners.

In response to comments from a staff governor, it was noted that consideration was being given to increased sharing of relevant confidential learner information with staff, whilst still remaining in line with the College's safeguarding and data protection policies and procedures. It was noted at present learner information from schools was not shared with colleges in the Lancashire area.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the report on progress against key Quality key performance**

**indicators (KPIs) targets for 2020/21.**

**Action: To provide the Committee with high level destination data for learners.**

## **8. College Self-Assessment Report 2020/21 – Part 1**

Ms Haworth reported that, in order to allow more time for discussion, the Committee's discussion on the College Self-Assessment Report would be considered at both the October and November meeting. Ms Haworth explained that this meeting would concentrate on quality of education, the November meeting would review grading and the Board would consider the Leadership and Management Section at its strategic planning meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 as part of its Board evaluation of 2020/21.

The Committee split into two working groups for discussion. Members discussed with management:

- some of the statements were considered too modest and should be reviewed and strengthened e.g. where strong examples could be provided to celebrate the good work of the College. It was noted that more data would be added to the draft SAR in the coming weeks;
- the Committee needed a greater understanding of the threshold to "outstanding;"
- more detail was required on overall effectiveness;
- it was important for the Board to review governance during 2020/21 and in particular to reflect on the effectiveness of governance when working remotely during the pandemic;
- importance of continuous test and challenge to agree strengths and area for improvements;
- understanding pathways for learners and supporting learners in finding the best route available for them;
- programmes for staff outside of formal qualifications including the mentoring programme which was part of an Education Training Foundation project;
- importance of understanding destination for learners and not solely focusing on data for outcomes e.g. signposting the College's work as a College of Sanctuary. Members noted references in the report to the College's winning the AoC Beacon Award for its support for learners.
- adding reference to employers in list of stakeholders.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions. The Committee noted that gradings would be considered at the next Committee meeting and would be considered by the Board at its December meeting.

**Resolved: The Committee reviewed the emerging strengths and areas for improvement of the draft Corporate Self-Assessment Report.**

## **9. Higher Education Update**

Ms Haworth presented her Higher Education Update report.

Ms Haworth reported that the Office for Students (OfS) had asked all universities and colleges to undertake a review of their compliance with consumer law and also to provide assurance to their governing bodies of ongoing compliance with condition C1 (guidance on consumer protection law). Ms Haworth explained that this conduction required a provider to demonstrate that in developing and implementing its policies, procedures and terms and conditions, it had given due regard to relevant guidance about how to comply with consumer protection law. Ms Haworth referred members to the Student Protection Plan, at Appendix A, which had been reviewed and updated to include the changes to the College's partnership arrangements with the University of Derby and the Covid 19 Risk Assessment – Addendum. Ms Haworth highlighted the proposed amendments which were shown as track changes in Appendix A.

The Committee approved the updated Student Protection Plan for recommendation to the Board.

The Committee discussed with management the University of Central Lancashire's (UCLan) validation of provision previously validated by the University of Derby. Members noted:

- existing learners had the option to stay with the University of Derby under the teach out programme or transfer to UCLan;
- the advantages of transferring to UCLan from a learner perspective.

In response to concerns of whether the College's HE provision could be at risk again in the future, reassurance was provided as UCLan had been a partner of the College for c. 30 years.

Ms Haworth referred to the scope of the second phase of the OfS consultation on quality and standards which was currently in progress. It was noted that more collaboration between colleges was expected.

Ms Haworth explained that management proposed to enhance and re-brand its dedicated HE space as Preston College University Centre. During discussion, members noted that:

- the College would need to seek permission from the UK government to change the name;
- the College had a strong professional relationship with UCLan, and they fully supported the College's ambition to provide Higher Education students with an enhanced dedicated learning space;
- whilst UCLan validated most of the College's HE provision, the centre would not be branded as part of UCLan.

The Committee approved a proposal to brand the Higher Education Centre: Preston College University Centre for recommendation to the Board.

In response to a query, management provided an update on the Institute of Technology bid.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the report and:**

- **approved the updated Student Protection Plan for recommendation to the Board;**
- **approved a proposal to brand the Higher Education Centre: Preston College University Centre for recommendation to the Board.**

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Higher Education Update.**

#### **10. Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme**

The Clerk outlined the draft Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme (FWP) 2021/22 which detailed the anticipated business of the Resources Committee in 2020/21. The Clerk highlighted:

- the FWP was not a static document and could be subject to change as new issues arose during the year;
- the FWP would be kept under review by the Chair of the Resources Committee, the Chief Executive and Principal, Vice Principals and the Clerk and the Committee would be informed of any substantive changes.

During discussion with the Clerk and management the Committee noted:

- that the November meeting would be held on Zoom as additional guests would be invited;
- the Association of Colleges had just published the revised Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and the Clerk would review the changes and see if any changes needed to be made to the Committee's work programme in light of this.

It was noted that safeguarding would be a regular item on Board agendas.

The Committee approved the Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme.

**Resolved: The Committee reviewed and approved the Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22.**

#### **11. Committee Effectiveness Review**

The Clerk reported that the Board had agreed at its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021 to return to separate Board and Committee effectiveness reviews. The Clerk referred members to the web link to the draft Quality and Standards Committee Questionnaire which was based on the

questionnaire used by the Committee in 2019. The Clerk explained that the collated responses would be compiled into a report for discussion at the next meeting.

The Committee approved the draft Committee Effectiveness Review questionnaire.

**Resolved: The Board approved the draft Committee Effectiveness Review questionnaire.**

## **Part 2**

The Chair referred members to the reports deferred from the June Committee meeting which had been changed to an engagement evening involving wider Board members as it would not have been quorate.

### **12. Complaints and Compliments**

The Committee noted the Complaints and Compliments Termly Report August to December 2020, at Appendix A, the Complaints and Compliments Termly Report January to March 2021, at Appendix B and the Complaints and Compliments Termly Report April to June 2021 at Appendix C.

The Committee discussed the reports with management and noted that there were a lower number of complaints in 2020/21 due to Covid and the introduction of an additional informal stage at the start of the complaints process. In response to a query, management provided more information on how the College responded to complaints and compliments.

The Committee discussed with management the collation of compliments and noted that staff were encouraged to pass on compliments they had received but might not always do so. Members highlighted the importance of encouraging staff to share compliments with management.

**Resolved: The Committee noted the Complaints and Compliments report for 2020/21.**

### **13. Learner Experience – Careers and Progression**

The Committee noted the Learner experience – Careers and Progression report. It was noted that considerable work was ongoing to implement the Gatsby benchmarks and this would be reflected in the 2020/21 SAR. The Chair, as the Careers Link Governor, provided further information on benefits of a quality mark for careers for learners and the College and the positive work that was ongoing. Mr Noblett reported that the College was sharing its careers work at the next AoC conference.

### **15. Progress and Performance Against the Quality Improvement Plan**

The Committee noted the Quality Improvement Plan. It was noted that the Committee would consider the final report for 2020/21 at the next meeting.



**16. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report**

The Committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report.

**17. Curriculum Development and Planning Update**

The Committee noted the Curriculum Development and Planning Update. It was noted that a curriculum update would be considered by the Board at its December meeting.

**18. Support for Learners**

The Committee noted the Support for Learners report which included a Safeguarding Summary and Case Studies. The Committee noted that a presentation had been given on this report by Ms Southworth, Student Services Manager, (Safeguarding and Prevent Lead) at the engagement event on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

**Resolved: The Committee noted items 14-18 which had been deferred from the June meeting of the Committee.**

**19. Any other Business**

Mr Noblett reported that, following approval by the Board in June, the College had rebranded as Preston College and invited members to review the new campus signage.

The Chair reported that this was Mr Readett's last meeting as he would retire from the Board at its next meeting. The Chair recorded thanks to Mr Readett for his contribution to the Committee and wished him well. Mr Readett thanked everyone for their best wishes and wished everyone well.

The Chair also reported that this would be Mr Jepson's last meeting as he would retire from the Board at the end of October. The Chair recorded thanks to Mr Jepson for his contribution on behalf of the Committee.

**20. Date of next meeting**

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee would take place on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.