Preston College

Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 30 November 2023 at 5.30 pm, Boardroom

Present:

Mrs Lynda Mason	Acting Chair
Mr Marcel Driver	To Minute 6
Mrs Jane Hilton	
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater	From Minute 8
Mrs Laura Mason	Remote (Zoom)
Mr Simon Nixon	Principal and Chief Executive
Mrs Jen Walters	

Apologies:

Miss Aoife Cullen

In attendance:

Ms Marie Haworth	Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Mick Noblett	Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner	Clerk to the Board

1. **Welcome and apologies**

   The Clerk explained that the Chair had asked Mrs Mason to chair the meeting as she needed to join remotely.

   The Acting Chair (the Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Clerk reported that all chairs had been invited to attend the meeting for the discussion of the Self Assessment Report. The Chair welcomed Mr Driver, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, to the meeting.

   The Committee noted that apologies had been received from Miss Aofie Cullen (student governor 16-18) and that Mr Marshall-Slater would join the meeting later.

   It was noted that a quorum was present.

2. **Declaration of interests**

   There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting**

   The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 were approved as a correct record.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. **Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the Matters arising report. In response to a query, the Clerk confirmed that there was no difference between "completion" and closure" on the spreadsheet and she would standardise the terms for future reports.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Matters arising report.

5. **Performance against KPIs 2022/23 Outturn**

Mr Noblett, Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning, and Ms Haworth, Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support, and the Principal and Chief Executive, presented the Performance against KPIs 2022/23 Outturn presentation. They reported on:

-   overall 2022/23 performance outturn;

-   2022/23 performance for English and maths continued to be a challenge for achievement and attendance, maths in particular. The College had put in place support arrangements for a high number of learners with additional needs and 250 learners had resat their maths and English GCSE exams in November compared to 50 resits had taken place in November 2022;

-   the resit opportunity for GCSEs had been actively promoted to learners at the start of term;

-   staff continued to motivate learners studying GCSE maths and English in a challenging context. A new Curriculum Lead appointment had been made for maths;

-   basic skills for English and maths were performing at a higher 93.4% achievement rate, significantly above national rates;

-   the ambition framework and the focus on attendance across College.

The Committee acknowledged the challenges and that staff were working hard to motivate learners. The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report.

6. **Self-Assessment Report (Session 2) – Grading Review**

Ms Haworth presented the draft Self Assessment Report (SAR) which was at Appendix A. She reported;

-   the SAR incorporated the outcomes of the Ofsted inspection held in January 2023;

- the SAR had been validated with feedback from teams, strengths and areas for improvement had been identified;

- the proposal to grade "2" "Good" for all Ofsted categories and a 'strong' for Skills which aligned with the Ofsted inspection as there was no evidence that these areas had declined since the inspection;

- key strengths and also areas for improvement which were detailed in the Quality Improvement Plan.

Members discussed with management:

- whether there were any categories which were moving towards a "1" grading. Management confirmed that there were examples of outstanding practice and teaching across all areas alongside areas for improvement;

- the proposed grading of "2" for Leadership and Management and acknowledgement of the rationale for this for 2022/23. However, members were of the view that this should be reviewed for 2023/24 as progress continued to be made;

- that Ofsted had not agreed with the College's 2021/22 grading of Provision for Learners with High Needs as a "1" in the most part due to the process for recording incremental progress. Ms Haworth confirmed that since the Ofsted inspection progress had been made in this area and a new process would be rolled out across the College following a successful pilot;

- areas of progress that had been made since the inspection with examples of everyday activities which changed learners' lives. Members highlighted the importance of continuing to build the confidence of staff;

- that a new Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Sservices and Skills had recently been appointed and was likely to have their own approach;

- that inclusion of the College's new vision and values statements in the SAR was welcomed but it would be helpful to evidence in the SAR how the College lived the values in practice;

- that issues with learner behaviour and attendance would make it difficult for the College to move towards "1" in some areas;

- that the report was well written and easy to read.

Members suggested retaining the "2" in the SAR but adding some information on the commentary of areas which were moving towards a "1" where this could be evidenced.

Resolved: The Committee reviewed the emerging strengths, areas for improvement and proposed grading of the draft Corporate SAR 2022/23. Action: To update the draft Corporate SAR 2022/23 in light of members' comments before it was considered by the Board on 14 December 2023.

The Chair thanked Mr Driver for his attendance at the meeting.

Mr Driver left the meeting.

7. Start of Term Report

Mr Noblett presented his start of term report. He reported:

- on the Learner Voice summary 2022/23 which had raised some emerging themes including requests for a wider range of enrichment activities, the necessity for further education that misogyny and inappropriate comments towards peers were unacceptable and positive comments on visits from industry speakers;

- on initial findings from the induction survey and actions taken as a result, including issues with transport and smoking areas; managing queues in the canteen remained challenging as a result of increased learner numbers and three staggered lunchtimes had been introduced to assist. The College timetable would be further reviewed in the New Year as a result of high numbers of learners accessing the canteen and buses at peak times. The full induction survey results would be shared with the Committee at its next meeting;

- on Student Council activities. He reported that all student ambassadors were now members of the Student Council. The Council was involved in the plans for the 50th anniversary of the College and was keen to focus on key areas of discussion which could then be feedback to College management and the Board;

- that learner attendance was an ongoing challenge. However, the pattern was different this autumn term as attendance had started lower but was increasing, in previous years it had started higher and decreased. There had also not been the usual drop in attendance after half term. He reported that interventions were ongoing and the letter from the Principal and Chief Executive had created discussions with learners;

- the feedback from Scholarship Year 1 learners at Appendix B.

In response to questions and comments from members, the Committee discussed with management:

- that learner attendance continued to vary across College schools and there were some courses with very high attendance, well above the target of 84%;

- a learner comment on boring lesson content and ongoing discussions with staff about the content of lessons and ensuring that College was as engaging as possible;

- changes to the way that learner feedback was captured following the session with Scholarship learners and the Board in March 2023;

- recognition that the Student Council had a key role to play in exemplifying the standards and expectations across College;

- that letters regarding attendance could only be sent to parents with the learners' permission and c. 76% of 16-18 learner had given permission;

- that learners, including adult learners, valued the 100% attendance certificates which were also shared with employers;

- whether certain groups or subjects skewed the overall attendance result and that 15 absence categories had been introduced so management could gain clarify on the reasons for absence;

- provision such as Visual and Performing Arts had higher attendance levels as high expectations were set at the start of term and learners were more likely to attend due to the team dynamic and the vocational nature of the course.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report.

8. **Higher Education Update**

Mr Marshall-Slater joined the meeting.

Ms Haworth presented the Higher Education (HE) Update. She reported:

- HE providers were required the by the Office of Students (OfS) under Condition F1 to publish on their website the Transparency 20223 information workbook and the College had published its Transparency information;

- plans to enhance HE Learner Voice;

-   an update on the National Student Survey 2023 and 2024;

-   outcomes of the external examiner summary 2022/23 and recommendations going forward;

-   HE curriculum development;

-   that the College's initial teacher education provision was due to be inspected by Ofsted following changes to the University of Central Lancashire Contract. It was anticipated in that most inspections the North West would occur in spring or summer terms, with scheduling determined by risk assessment. The College was working hard in preparation for the inspection;

In response to question and comments from members, the Committee discussed with management:

-   the reasons why some learners did not complete their End Point Assessment when they achieved their HNC qualification;

-   on development of College HE tutors and an expectation that HE tutors would have a Masters or would be working towards a Masters.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report and that the Transparency 2023 information had been published.

9.   **Quality Improvement Plan Close-down**

Ms Haworth presented the Quality Improvement (QIP) Close down report. She reported:

-   that that challenges with attendance highlighted in the report had been discussed earlier in the meeting;

-   on the ongoing challenges with T Levels which were continually changing.

In response to question and comments from members, the Committee discussed with management:

-   why impact review targets text was in red when there was evidence of 10% improvement;

-   acknowledgement that the items shown in red where not unexpected issues and had been previously highlighted to the Committee.

Members recognised the amount of text in green which was a significant achievement given the changing FE landscape and in particular the introduction of T Levels.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the performance and progress against key Quality Improvement Plan milestones and the final outturn for 2022/23.

10. **Complaints and Compliments 2022/23**

Ms Haworth referred members to the Complaints and Compliments report for Term 3 of 2022/23. She referred to the number of complaints and compliments and reports that a number of complaints related to the higher use of agency staff during 2022/23.

In response to queries Ms Haworth provided additional information on some of the complaints.

Members suggested that a further update could be provided on the outcome for some complaints in future reports. Following discussion with management it was agreed that the outcomes column on the table should be renamed as the action column.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee reviewed and noted the report.
Action: To rename the outcome column on table as action on future reports.

11. **Date of next meeting**

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on 29 February 2024.