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Standards & Performance Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday 16th March 2022
Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Boardroom

Present:

Sue Lomax (Chair)
Andrew Fawcett
Gill Waugh
Fardean Farooq
Tom Martin
Bill Webster (Principal)

In Attendance:

Deborah Bradburn (Clerk to the Board)
Karen Westsmith (Director of Curriculum and Quality)
Kate Wallace (Director of Curriculum Employer and Student Services)
Jill Hebden (Minute Taker)

1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

1.1 Welcome to Members/Officers

Members were welcomed to the meeting, which commenced at 2.05pm.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Chris Ball, Rameen Ambar, Rebecca Davison, Mark Burgoyne and Tracy Clarke.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interests in relation to any item on the agenda.

No interests were declared.

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were received.

1.5* Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 January 2022

The minutes of the meeting held 19 January 2022 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

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

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1.6 Matters arising from the previous minutes

The action progress log was presented.

Additional Funding:

The College would continue to review other sources of additional funding.

English and Maths:

The Principal had raised maths and English learner achievement at the Bolton Vision Executive Group. It was agreed that wider action was required and would be taken to the Director of Children's Services in Bolton.

(Fardean Farooq joined the meeting at 2.18pm)

2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

2.1 Progress Reports

(i) Adult, Community & HE

The following update was provided by the Director of Curriculum and Quality:

- Overall retention by department had declined by 2% but there remained a high retention rate.
- Attendance continued under the level it was pre-pandemic with improvements that could be seen month on month.
- Enrolment continued with the priority to maximise rich progression and achievement improvements.
- Adult and Community quality improvement plans ('QIP') had a high level of focus concentrated on learner destination. The Adult QIP included a focus on the adult pastoral programme, initial assessments in RARPA, robust personalised learning targets and high quality support for English and maths.
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- Writing the new Higher Technical Qualification ('HTQ') in Computing was underway that would replace the Higher National Qualification and would be a natural next step following a T Level. The College would be involved in writing programme specifications for health, construction and engineering alongside the Greater Manchester College's Group.

Governor Questions:

- Would the University deliver HTQ's alongside the College?

This would be part of a strategic discussion although the appetite of the University at the moment was not to deliver HTQs. It could be that HTQ's are validated by the University and run by the College.

- How do HTQ's compare to a HNC and HND?

They are larger qualifications which are shaped and written by employers in the same way as T Levels.

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- When does the College hope to deliver HTQs?

From September 2022, the College is working with employers to develop course content and projects.

- Has the College HE offer changed since becoming a Designated Institution?

HE enrolments had decreased following strategic decisions to not duplicate provision. There were new OfS conditions that may result in some provision returning and being provided by the College. COVID-19 had made an impact on numbers with the University seeing a reduction in enrolments but starting to increase.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the report provided and that the new qualification gave the College a new product to market.

ACTION:

Update on HTQ's in addition to T Levels to be provided at next meeting.

(ii) Apprenticeships

The Director of Curriculum, Employers and Student Services presented the report with the following points highlighted:

- Achievement had increased to 39.4% with a best case of 72%. This was an increase of 8% on achievement since the last report. 109 withdrawals sat in the 2021/22 data set and 71 achievers with an additional two withdrawals since the date of the report.
- Withdrawal surgeries continued to take place on a weekly basis providing wrap around support for each apprentice and to ensure retention strategies were implemented.
- The electrical scheme remained a concern due to ongoing staffing challenges that would have an impact on recruitment in 2022/23 with intensive support and increased performance boards put in place.
- Monthly performance boards were reintroduced with curriculum leaders driving the process with Ofsted style 'deep dive' reviews and RAG rated. Actions would be put in place and presented to a panel with any actions not completed fed into the performance enhancement review referrals.

Governor Questions:

- Were there staff shortages in electrical?

Yes, staff shortages were a risk that would be carried into next year. Unless the College could recruit to certain areas this would have an impact on learner recruitment, programme quality and learning.

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RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the Apprenticeship Update report and asked that the data be presented differently in order to assess the issues.

ACTION:

Apprenticeship data to be presented differently looking at each cohort and in-year recruitment, completions to assess the issues and any improvements.

(iii) Maths and English

The Director of Curriculum, Employer and Student Services presented the report with the following points highlighted:

- Maths and English had been placed in intensive support following a self-assessment of Grade 3. A new Head of Area had been appointed and was implementing the intensive support action plan.
- Attendance remained a challenge but had improved by 10% since last academic year. Face-to-face teaching would increase next year that would take place in vocational groups.
- 95 learners had not met the conditions of funding which fell below the 5% tolerance.
- 50% of learners who resat in November achieved grades 9-4. A new strategy would be put into effect using the November resits as a motivational tool.
- University discussions were underway to review how support could be provided for English and maths development with meetings taken place with the link governor for this area.
- The English and maths strategy and changes for the new academic year would be presented at the Board training day.

Governor Questions:

- Would vocational groups enhance contextualisation?

Yes, there will be a clear connect with the area and much stronger working links between English and maths and vocational tutors. It was a model that had been seen before and had worked. The outcomes from last year were not positive but it was not a failure in the teaching it was the way in which English and maths were taught due to COVID-19. The strategic decision made was the right one at the time.

- What staff training and development is in place?

Support will be provided by managers and peers. Details of the support and development provided will be presented at the Board training day.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the English and Maths Update report.

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(iv) 16 – 19 Study Programmes and T-Level Provision

The Director of Curriculum, Employers and Student Services presented the report with the following points highlighted:

- Enrolment allocation from the ESFA for 2021/22 was 2371 with 2385 as the current enrolment figure. ESOL and Foundation recruitment would continue throughout the term.
- T Level recruitment sat within the data at 53 that was below the 116 target.
- Shockout Arts and ABS continued to be monitored and supported and would both be attending the 'Ofsted – EIF' session on 1 April 2022. The arrangement with ABS was currently under review.
- The Employer Engagement team continued to engage with employers to support work experience and industry placement requirements.
- The School Liaison Team continued discussions with schools and provided presentations and supplied resources to raise T Level awareness.

Governor Questions:

- When could a national T Level campaign be expected?

There were radio campaigns and the College had noticed the increased number of parents enquiring about T Levels. There were case studies and marketing materials on the College website.

- Are schools more familiar with T Levels?

Schools are more knowledgeable and the College had engaged with schools. However, there still appeared to be a knowledge gap.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the information provided in the 16 – 19 Study Programmes and T Level Update report.

2.2 Intensive Support Action Plan

The Director of Curriculum, Employers and Student Services presented the report, highlighting the following key points:

- Action plans were created with the intent to identify and implement earlier interventions that would have targeted impact.
- Support would be provided by the wider curriculum management team with intensive support not being utilised as a performance management tool.
- The action plan was piloted in construction and as a result an increased number of apprentices would achieve.

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RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Intensive Support Action Plan.

2.3 Link Governor Scheme

The Clerk noted that a number of link governors meetings had taken place with the remaining scheduled for March and early April.

A link governor for digital had been recently appointed and would meet with Director of Curriculum Development and MIS in due course. Recruitment to the link area of environment and sustainability remained a challenge.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Link Governor Scheme update.

ACTION:

Principal and Clerk to review options for an environment and sustainability link governor.

3 SECTION C - UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS - FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

3.1 ESFA / FEC – Section 28 Designation Review

The review would take place on the 22 and 23 March 2022 discussing the benefits and outcomes of the Section 28 merger.

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 College Staff Supply

More work could be done in this area and looking at how the University could assist staff recruitment to the College by assessing the skills needed and any gaps. This would be a 9-month review process reviewing pipeline supply and 'home grown' talent.

ACTION:

Director of Curriculum and Quality to meet with the University Dean of the Faculty of Professional Studies.

4.2 Support for Ukraine

There would be a College wide fundraising day of activities to support Ukraine that would culminate in a meal at the Signature restaurant that all Board members would be invited to join.

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4.3 British Sign Language Bill

A number of College learners and staff would be travelling to London on 18 March 2022 to observe the democratic process that would support the third reading of the British Sign Language Bill in the House of Commons.

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 21st June 2022 at 2.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 2pm