

ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE



WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2014

GATESHEAD COLLEGE

Report: Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 29
January 2014

Author: Clerk

Action: Approve

Status: Open

Present: David Mitchell (Chair)
Keith Cann Evans
Tom Cantwell
Catherine Dennis
Judith Doyle
Gail Etherington
Darren Heathcote
Mark Taylor

In attendance: Gillian Forrester
John Gray
Gwyneth Jones (Minutes)
Samantha Pritchard (Clerk)
Tim Poolan
Andrew Robson

1. Welcome/Apologies

David Mitchell welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Ian Renwick.

The Chair invited members to declare any interests on any item on the agenda. No interests were declared at this stage in the meeting; however, members noted that should the direction of debate on any item result in a potential conflict of interest, this should be indicated during the meeting. Members were also reminded to advise the Clerk of any changes to be made to declaration of interests.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 20 November 2013

Andrew Robson (AR), Strategy Manager, Quality & Performance referred to page 3 and suggested that the wording should be amended to read 'Long Level 3 success rates had still not reached national rates'.

A Governor referred to page 5 and commented that the Long Level part-time courses for SSA 5 (Construction) were a concern. The Chair confirmed that a report on SSA 5 would be presented at the meeting.

Gillian Forrester (GF), Strategy Manager, Teaching and Learning Development referred to page 9 and requested that 'and said the area was leading the quality of teaching in other areas' be removed.

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A Governor thought monitoring of individual student progress needed to improve and GF confirmed this was a core aspect on today's agenda.

John Gray, Strategy Manager, Customer and Learner Services referred to page 16 and requested that 'there was an emerging achievement gap' be amended to read 'that there was a closing achievement gap for BME students'.

Following the amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 20 November were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising which were not substantive items on the agenda.

4. Updated Self-Assessment Report

The report and the record of discussion on it are 'closed to public access' until such time as they are considered to be no longer commercially sensitive

5. College Performance Report

Andrew Robson (AR), Strategy Manager, Quality & Performance introduced the College Performance Report. He explained that the document demonstrated evidence of retention and predicted success rates.

Discussion and challenge:

A Governor asked if there were legacy issues with the YTD Long Level 3 19+ (87.1%) and AR replied that there were. The Chair commented that the attendance data for the full year 2012/2013 had shown 82% for Automotive and for the YTD 2013/2014 it was 82%.

The Principal indicated that some students had complex social needs which kept them at home but there was online learning and phone calls from the students. There was intensive level support but they could not say that a student was in College. Tim Poolan commented about curriculum design in the future and said that they may need to do something else to get students used to learning before they came into College.

The Chair commented that Employer Based Apprenticeships looked positive and AR replied that it was predicted to do well. The 25+ Age Band for Apprenticeships showed a bit of a dip but a lot of it related to work with the RAF where learners were redeployed and so were not able to complete their apprenticeships in a timely way. He was working with the Funding and Data Team and the Work Based Learning Team to address that issue.

The Principal advised that in SSA 4 where there appeared to be poor performance on 16-18 Long Level 3 (84.3%) this had been due to learners transferring into work or JSA. The College could not claim achievement for this but it would not be penalised.

The Chair concluded that the reports were helpful to look behind the headline figures.

6. Teaching & Learning Assessment Report

Gillian Forrester (GF), Strategy Manager, Teaching and Learning Development introduced a report which updated the Committee on progress towards improvement in

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Teaching, Learning and Assessment since the last report which had been taken to the September 2013 meeting.

Discussion and challenge:

The Chair had noted that COMs were doing Learning Walks but wanted to know if GF was confident that all the managers were doing this. GF replied that the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Forum met each Thursday morning and had a focus on improving the practice of teachers. They were now working within the Forum to help those areas which were not performing so well.

The Principal indicated that all Curriculum Managers had a target to ensure COMs did their Learning Walks and some of their teaching commitments had been removed. GF said that during the last academic term, it had been decided to stop unannounced observations for the two weeks before Christmas. John Gray, Strategy Manager, Customer and Learner Services indicated that there had been regular approaches to receive feedback from the students.

A Governor commented that he was very impressed with the paper. If it was maintained it would force the standards up for everyone. He said well done to everybody involved.

GF advised that she would provide an updated report on Teaching, Learning and Assessment for the next meeting.

The Chair expressed his appreciation for all the hard work that had been done.

ACTION: An updated Teaching, Learning and Assessment report would be brought to the next meeting in March 2014.

7. SSA 5 (Construction) Progress Review Report

Tim Poolan, Strategy Manager, Curriculum, gave a verbal progress report on SSA 5 (Construction).

Catherine Dennis left the meeting at 5.30pm

Discussion and challenge:

The Chair commented that SSA 5 (Construction) was a great asset to Gateshead College in terms of the campus and the facilities. It focused on the whole spectrum from basic to very-skilled levels and was ready to respond to the needs of employers. Tim Poolan indicated that the area had to justify the facilities it had.

A Governor said that he could not recall the Committee identifying a problem area and bringing it back to the next meeting. He congratulated Tim Poolan and the Chair in driving the direction this area was going.

The Principal thanked Tim Poolan for picking this area up. They were seeing improvements but knew there were still things which needed to be done. New learners were getting a much better experience.

The Chair expressed his appreciation for what Tim Poolan was doing and indicated that he would like another verbal report at the next meeting.

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A Governor thought the learning profile data needed to be used more systematically across the College.

The Chair concluded that the College's students had been failed by poor performance in the past but anticipated that this would not be the case in the future.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the verbal report

8. Support and Challenge Visit November 2013

The record of discussion is 'closed to public access' until such time as it is considered to be no longer sensitive.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the verbal report

9. Any Other Business

There were no items for discussion.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair listed the reports that would be brought to the next meeting:

- Performance Report (Andrew Robson)
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Gillian Forrester)
- SSA 5 (Tim Poolan)
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Development of English and Mathematics and its impact (Angela O'Reilly, Head of Group – Service Industries or senior managers involved)

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 12 March 2014 at 4.00pm.