

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE



THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2014

GATESHEAD COLLEGE

Report: Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18 June
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)
Tim Poolan
Samantha Pritchard (Clerk)
Andrew Robson

1. Welcome/Apologies

David Mitchell welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Nick Hurn, Ian Renwick and Ivan Jepson who planned to be an Observer at some of the meetings.

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 declarations of interest.

The Chair advised that the English and Maths Report (Item 7) would be taken after Matters Arising.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 14 May 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2014 were accepted as a correct record, once the following amendments were made to the "HE Access update" section of the minutes:

- 'that the College was changing the delivery model for Access to Higher Education;

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- 'If Access to HE learners progress to HE programmes their access fees are waived';
- 'This was going to replace all previous Access to HE provision in the College'; and
- 'Catherine Dennis, Teaching Staff Governor, asked if there was an age bracket for funding for this programme'.

3. Matters Arising

Ofsted Visit

Lead Inspector, Malcolm Fraser would be coming back to Gateshead College on 29 July 2014. He would be speaking to a group of Governors to look at progress made and where he could offer further support.

Deputy Principal Recruitment

Chris Toon, currently Deputy Principal at Knowsley College, would be joining Gateshead College as Deputy Principal: Curriculum and Quality on 1 September 2014. It was noted that Chris had previously worked at Derby College in the same role. Malcolm Fraser had complimented the College on securing his appointment.

Post-Inspection Action Plan

Andrew Robson would be giving an update on the Post-Inspection Action Plan later in the meeting.

4. College Performance Report

Andrew Robson (AR), Strategy Manager, Quality & Performance took the Committee through the College Performance Report.

Discussion and Challenge:

A Governor commented that for 19+, 90% of the areas were worse than 16-18. The Principal confirmed that this was primarily due to legacy provision, but also issues with long courses, provision not meeting adults' needs and complicated timetable arrangements.

Committee members discussed the issues that would arise in including Functional Skills data in overall success rates, and in particular concerns around the impact on Maths and on level 1 rates.

A Governor referred to the Attendance table included in the report and thought that the 4% improvements achieved were exceptional; two areas had improved by 4% and there was an average improvement of 2%. GF commented that for Teaching & Learning the learner experience had improved but acknowledged there had been a 6% fall in Attendance. She explained that there had been an issue relating to a member of staff's long-term sick leave.

The Chair referred to the legacy provision which showed a retention rate of 84% for 19+ and asked how that affected the Success Rates. AR replied that Predicted Success Rates for Long Level 3 (19+) at 74.6% were down on the previous year.

The Chair asked what success rates would look like without the legacy provision. AR confirmed that the majority of learners who have stayed at Gateshead College are expected to succeed (84.3%).

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report

5. Post-Inspection Action Plan

Andrew Robson (AR), Strategy Manager, Quality & Performance provided the Committee with a progress update against the Quality Improvement Plan and Post-Inspection Plan (QIP/PIAP).

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report

6. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report

Gillian Forrester (GF), Strategy Manager, Teaching, Learning and Assessment updated the Committee on developments and improvement since the last Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report, including the response to areas identified in the Ofsted Inspection report.

Discussion and Challenge:

Darren Heathcote, Support Staff Governor, praised the 100% Grade 1 for Teaching & Learning which had been achieved on 4 observations.

The Chair asked how he could be assured that the percentage of lessons being judged good or outstanding were a true improvement and not a result of standards being lowered to get better results. GF replied that to the contrary, the team of observers were very accurate with judgements and were sometimes considered to be unduly harsh. The individual who assists teachers with coaching is not the same individual as the one that carries out the reassessment.

GF said that HMI Malcolm Fraser had challenged the team to broaden its evidence base used during reviews to incorporate broader elements of learning.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report

7. English and Maths Report

Tim Poolan (TP), Strategy Manager, Curriculum, gave a verbal report on English and Maths.

Discussion and Challenge:

The Chair asked whether there were any incentives for young people to complete English and Maths. The Principal replied that there were a range of incentives around vouchers and they were also helping learners to understand that they needed these skills for future employment.

GF said that at the event she attended on Friday 13 June, they had covered how to tackle the real fear students had about Maths. Some of the traditional methods of teaching and learning do not work because of fear. TP said that some of the benchmarks were very low.

The Chair thought it was good to have some incentives to appeal to young people. TP said that they had asked a Focus Group what would make the students attend.

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GF said that the effort of the English and Maths Team needed to be recognised and their relentless hard work to deliver English and Maths boot camps.

A Governor commented on the findings reflecting the sector as a whole and said that he was horrified by the Maths results. He thought it was an opportunity for the College if they could motivate the students.

The Chair offered his thanks on behalf of the committee for the work of the staff in this regard, and in particular to Tim Poolan.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the verbal report

8. Any Other Business

Ofsted – Data Dashboard

Andrew Robson (AR), Strategy Manager, Quality & Performance reported to the Committee on the new Data Dashboard for further education and skills which has been released by Ofsted.

He referred to the “Relevance to Governors” section of the report and highlighted that this was a starting point for governors to access a high-level summary of performance data for individual colleges or training providers, and to generate questions about the quality and impact of their provision. He invited Governors and the Academic Standards Committee to consider how they can use the information going forward.

The Principal commented that the Data Dashboard was important and highly relevant however that Governors were already benefiting from very detailed reports which the Data Dashboard did not allow.

Quadrants

The Chair advised that the Board was restructuring itself to cover the four quadrants. He said that the Committee would need to consider the kind of report and the data which should be looked at.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.
[The date of the first meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee was later confirmed as Thursday 16 October 2014 at 4.30pm].