
MINUTES OF THE THIRTY EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN MEETING ROOM 1, TOWER BUILDING, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS ON TUESDAY 08 NOVEMBER 2016 @16:00

PRESENT: Mr M O’Kane (Chair)
Mr P Canavan
Mr G Killeen
Mr S McGregor
Mr L Murphy (Principal & Chief Executive)
Mr B Quinn

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Kinnaird (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Information Services) until 17:25
Mrs D McElwee, Head of Department, Quality Enhancement
Mrs E Doherty (Governance Secretary)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

38.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr M Cooper & Mrs K Duffy.

38.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No conflict of interest declarations was made. There were no declarations of any other business.

38.3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 JUNE 2016

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper EC 38.3 Draft Education Committee Minutes of 7 June 2016

It was taken that the Minutes were read and were an accurate record of the meeting.

PROPOSED; Mr B Quinn

SECONDED; Mr S McGregor

38.3.1 MATTERS ARISING

37.7 AOB, The Secretary to arrange a meeting for the sub group to further the item on the ‘BEST’.

Action: The Chair indicated he would take this item under ‘Chair’s Business’, (38.4)

38.4 CHAIR’S BUSINESS

The Chair reported he would take this item later into the meeting.

38.5 MANAGEMENT REPORT – MR D KINNAIRD, VICE PRINCIPAL, CURRICULUM & INFORMATION SERVICES**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

PAPER EC 38.5	Management Report
Report 6	Essential Skills Change Fund Initiative Project
Report 7a	DfE Circular; Qualifications Required to Deliver Essential Skills in NI
Report 7b	DfE Circular; Qualifications Required to Teach in Institutions of Further Education
Report 10	Academic Standards Committee Draft Minutes, Oct 2016

The Vice Principal highlighted the following items within his report;

2015-2016 Outturn - The final outturn was 97.65%, which may result in a potential clawback of approximately £300K.

Quality Performance Adjustment (QPA) which relates to potential clawback from courses where success is less than 60% is estimated at £105K, however if GCE/GCSE are excluded, as they were last year, the figure will be reduced to approximately £32K. QPA for last year (2014-15) was £56K.

Quality Data Adjustment (QDA) 2015-16 – The Vice Principal reported that this is the first year of implementation of QDA. It is estimated that QDA will have zero clawback.

Outcomes - The Vice Principal discussed the datasets that may be used by the Department to present the outcomes for the Sector. He referred members to the 'All FLU' dataset (fig 3, page 3) showing the College maintaining its success rate of 84%. This analysis excludes outcomes in GCSE/GCE.

In the FE, FLU dataset, the College again maintained its 2014-15 success figure of 82% and in HE, FLU provision the success rate figure increased by 3% on 2014-15 figures.

The recent progress in GCSE success however was not maintained with both Mathematics and English falling short of previous year's success figures. While there were some operational issues in both areas, the College plans to initiate a project group in both areas, led by senior management, to review the existing curriculum and develop a strategy that both provides a curriculum continuum between Essential Skills and GCSE.

Concerns were noted on the disappointing results, discussion followed and it was suggested that students should be offered provision in the Maths Centre to support them in achieving a maths qualification. It was agreed to focus initially on students currently at the College and thereafter to focus on the wider issue to include improving success in GCSE English. It was agreed that the Principal correspond with post-primary Principals to invite them to a discussion on how to improve mathematics standards in the region.

AGREED ACTION;

The Principal to invite post primary Principals to a meeting to discuss how to improve mathematics standards in the region.

The Vice Principal was delighted to report it was another excellent year in relation to outcomes in FLU Essential Skills with the overall College success rate increasing by 1% over 2014-15 figures, which were sector leading. It is also encouraging to note the 4% increase in Essential Skills Numeracy from 75% to 79%.

2016/17 Enrolments - The College managed to achieve its HE, MASN target of 710 with an initial recruitment of 728. The recruitment within FE Provision fell considerably, down by approximately 270 on 2015-16 levels. This is largely due to a falling demography and challenges within the school sector that have been previously discussed through the Committee. The Vice Principal indicated it was difficult to give an estimate of end of year FLU; however, he would estimate delivery to be in the region of 91% of target FLU. This will result in a potential clawback in the region of £1.8 million.

Members discussed the concerns and the challenging times ahead. The Principal reported a dedicated recruitment team has been established to focus on marketing and building up of part-time enrolments.

OUTREACH PILOT – The Vice Principal referred to figure 6 (page 6) within his report which listed the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA) Enrolments 2015-16 Outreach Pilot Project. There were a total of 349 enrolments.

The service level agreement with Derry & Strabane District Council requires an achievement rate of 80% in order for accreditation fees to be refunded. This is a particularly high target for enrolments of this type but has been achieved in a significant majority of cases. There is no agreement in place as of yet with Causeway Coast & Glens District Council.

YOUTH TRAINING & APPRENTICESHIPS

The Vice Principal reported on the new pilot areas for 2016/17, Level 2, Youth Training now include Business, Light Vehicle Body Repair, Motor Vehicle and Wood Occupations. Dental Nursing has been included for Level 3 Apprenticeships.

The College has received notification from the ETI announcing they will carry out an evaluation of the second phase of the Youth Training and Apprenticeship pilot programmes. This will take place early 2017.

The Department has advised that the current APPNI and TFS contracts will be procured for a further two years.

HIGHER LEVEL APPRENTICESHIPS

The Vice Principal referred to the last Committee meeting when an Action Plan (37.5) (4) was included, listing the key areas for improvement for the HLA evaluation which took place in February 2016. The Plan covered the review of timetable for HLAs in Engineering, since then the students were consulted and the students expressed their wishes not to have any change implemented to their timetable. Therefore, this recommendation was not actioned. The Action Plan also covered maths skills, the Vice Principal confirmed the Maths Centre now offers support to students who require extra help.

Enrolments on the HLA for 2016/17 were 41 against a target of 50.

ETI ESSENTIAL SKILLS CHANGE FUND INITIATIVE – Report 6

The College has been requested by DfE to continue this pilot for another year. Challenges remain in engaging schools to support this initiative. Currently there is one school participating. Members considered it still worthwhile to continue as students did benefit in the previous year.

AGREED ACTION

The Vice Principal to gather data on the qualification status and previous schools attended of recent students enrolling in the College and make available to Governors for further discussion.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS STAFF – Report 7a & 7b

The Vice Principal indicated that this issue was raised at the Governing Body meeting in June 2016 (51.7) and passed to the Committee for reporting on. The Vice Principal provided some background detail on the matter. He added the College is viewing Essential Skills and GCSE as being a curriculum continuum with Essential Skills supporting achievement in GCSE. Heads of Department are reporting no concerns in relation to allocation of hours.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER SER PROCESS

It was reported that the College has met all of the conditions set against staff and senior management in the application for Institutional re-approval for the delivery of Ulster awards.

MATHS CENTRE UPDATE

The Vice Principal reported a full update will be provided at the next Committee meeting.

DRAFT ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES – report 10

It was noted that the Terms of Reference of the Academic Standards Committee have been amended. It was agreed that the Committee would focus on HE issues only. FE issues will be managed through a separate forum. Members noted the Report.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for his report.

38.6 COLLEGE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

PAPER EC 38.6 Whole College QIP Operational Plan 2015-16

The Principal referred to the report which was an update on the CDP Strategic aims for year two of the three-year plan. Members got the opportunity to ask questions.

38.7 WHOLE COLLEGE SER 2015-16**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

PAPER EC 38.7 Whole College SER 2015-16

The Chair thanked Mrs McElwee for attending the meeting to brief members on the Report. Mrs McElwee indicated that the Report was in three parts, Further Education, Higher Education and Work Based Learning. The final document is due with the Department on 18 November 2016. Highlights from the Executive Summary included; management restructuring which was completed by September 2016; a new Quality Enhancement Unit; a new Teaching & Learning Development Academy including the appointment of two Learning and Teaching Champions; significant development of the College estate; introduction of Higher Level Apprenticeships (HLAS's), introduction of Foundation Degrees in Health & Social Care and Information Technologies with Queens University; partnership for joint delivery of HE provision with Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT); expansion of engagement with the Erasmus programme; peer mentoring pilot.

Members got the opportunity to ask Mrs McElwee questions on the document.

The Chair thanked Mrs McElwee for her report.

The Vice Principal left the meeting at this juncture.

38.8 REVISED OPERATING MODEL FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT 2016-17**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

PAPER EC 38.8	DfE – Revised Operating Model for Quality Assessment, Arrangements from 2016-17
PAPER EC 38.8.1	Correspondence from DfE – Assurance statements on the New Operating Model for Quality Assessment

A new annual assurance is required for Higher Education to confirm that Governors have had oversight, seen evidence and confirm that the College is provided HE at the appropriate standard. This report will be available to Governing Body Members at their November meeting.

The Chair indicated he would now take item 38.4, Chair's Business.

38.4 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**➤ TABLED TO MEMBERS**

PAPER 'Measuring the Best'

The Chair reported that the sub group had a recent meeting to discuss 'Measuring the Best'. A paper was tabled with a summary on the outcomes. Members discussed the paper and agreed further discussion was warranted on the item.

38.9 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received.

38.10 AOB

There was no other business to discuss.

That being the end of business the Chair thanked everyone and brought the meeting to a close at 6.15.pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 7 February 2017

SIGNED; _____ CHAIR
MR M O'KANE

DATE; 07 FEBRUARY 2017