
MINUTES OF THE SIXTY FIFTH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 JUNE 2023, COMMENCING 1600 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT: Prof M Ó Néill, Committee Chair (until 1742)
Mr P Canavan
Mrs J McKeever, Acting Committee Chair (from 1742)
Mr L Murphy, Principle & Chief Executive
Mr P Thompson
Ms V Toland

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr C O’Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards
Mr M Peoples, Head of Technology Enhanced Learning and Support (TELS) (for item 65.0)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

65.0 PRESENTATION

The Committee Chair welcomed Mr M Peoples, Head of Technology Enhanced Learning and Support (TELS) to the meeting. With the aid of a Power Point presentation, Mr Peoples provided an overview of the digital work within the College. The key points included the core elements of the digital capability (staff), infrastructure and digital learning resources. Collaboration is an important aspect both internally and externally. The current issues for 2023/24 include artificial intelligence, technology to support micro credentials and sustainability. A question and answer session followed. The Committee Chair thanked Mr Peoples for his informative presentation.

Mr Peoples left the meeting at this juncture.

65.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Committee Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. An apology was received from Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services.

65.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no conflicts of interest declarations. There were no declarations of any other business.

65.3 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2023**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper EC 65.3 Draft Education Committee Minutes of the meeting held on
22 February 2023

The Draft Minutes were taken as read and agreed were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

PROPOSED, Mrs J McKeever

SECONDED, Mr P Canavan

65.3.1 MATTERS ARISING – 22 February 2023 Committee Meeting

- 64.5, Report 2** The HE Report 2022/23 progressed to the remaining Board members for approval on 24 February 2023. Approval was received.
- Report 3** The FE Sector Customer Complaints and Compliments Policy, February 2023 was approved at the Governing Body meeting held on 8 March 2023.

65.4 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS**Report 1 Chair to the Committee**

The Committee Chair acknowledged Mr P Canavan's last Committee meeting.

Mr Canavan's tenure as Governor is to complete shortly. The Committee Chair thanked Mr Canavan's work and commitment to the Committee and for his work in relation to his role as Governor with oversight of HE.

The position as chair of the Committee is now available. Prof M Ó Néill will be taking over the role as Temporary Governing Body Chair from Ms J McKeever. **The Governing Body Secretary will contact eligible members of the Committee to invite expressions of interest for this role.**

For planning purposes approval was sought and received from the Committee to allow the new Governors that will join the Board in July and August to serve as members of the Committee if required.

PROPOSED; Mr P Canavan

SECONDED; Mrs J McKeever

The Committee Chair then invited Dr C O'Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards to present the Education Committee Management Report.

65.5 MANAGEMENT REPORT – Dr C O'Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards.**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

PAPER EC 65.5 Management Report

Report 1 Curriculum Managers Effective Timetabling

Report 2 DfE MaSN Commissioning Memo

Report 3 Traineeship Presentation

Report 4 Royal Irish Academy HE Event

Report 5 Digital Strategy 2023/24

Report 6 Strabane Curriculum Plan

Report 7 Briefing Note – Quality Enhancement Unit

Report 8 Minutes of the Academic Standards Committee Meeting April 2023

The Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards brought members through the key elements of the Management Report. Performance against targets for the academic year 2022/23. The College achieved 98% of the part-time target, 90% of the full-time target and 92% of the Essential Skills target.

Full-time retention is currently at 86% and part-time retention is at 93% with the overall College retention rate at 91%. The target is 90%. The full-time attendance rate is currently at 83% and 87% for part-time learners.

In relation to the data, percentages of Unmarked Registers by Curriculum Area, the decline in e-register completion is a result of the impact of Action Short Of Strike (ASOS). The management of retention and student withdrawals has not been impacted to date.

Report 1 Curriculum Managers Effective Timetabling

Following a review of Timetabling Guidelines, a training session of effective timetabling was delivered to Curriculum Managers and relevant Support staff by the Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards. The aim of the session was to ensure a consistent approach and promote timetabling efficiencies to reduce staff excess hours or underutilisation of staff.

Report 2 DfE MaSN Commissioning Memo

An amended bid for 400 MaSN was submitted to the Department (DfE) on 3 May 2023. This was an uplift on 2022/23 to reflect the three new OU courses being offered in 2023/24. Ms V Toland, Governor and HE Curriculum Lead – Quality Enhancement was acknowledged for her work in the successful validation process for the OU courses.

A decision was made to withdraw a number of courses on offer for 2023/24 to streamline the College offer.

Report 3 Traineeship Presentation

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards delivered an information session on Traineeships to relevant Curriculum and Support staff. Five new curriculum areas are being introduced in 2023/24 as one year Traineeships. The College will be offering four of these.

In respect to the Advanced Technical Award Programmes, Level 3 for 2023/24 discussions are ongoing with Ulster and Queens Universities on how these qualifications will be recognised.

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards provided information on the new 'Step Up' programme. The objective is to target economic inactivity and widening access and participation.

The Director paused at this point to receive questions from Governors.

Report 4 Royal Irish Academy HE Event

Members noted the report.

Report 5 Digital Strategy 2023/24

Mr Peoples referred to this Report during his presentation item (ref 65.0).

Report 6 Strabane Curriculum Plan

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards brought members through the Draft document which provided detail on a review of the curriculum and course planning considered in the context of the vision and objectives of the Derry City & Strabane District Council, City Deal Strabane Town Centre Regeneration.

The Curriculum Plan 2023/24 – 2031/32, Curriculum Proposals were provided. A Schedule of Accommodation is currently a work in progress. Curriculum planning will be underpinned by the principles identified in the ‘Skills for a 10x Economy – Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland’ with courses focusing on the identified skill needs for Strabane and the three key pillars namely Inclusion, Innovation and Sustainability.

The Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards apprised Governors of the limitations of the existing resources in Strabane Campus which has been a contributing effect on the low levels of enrolments in the Campus. The challenge is to sustain and improve the enrolments in Strabane, to look at new programmes which will have minimal accommodation change and expenditure. There is a need to focus on identifying unique provision for the Strabane campus and the need to address limited HE provision in the Campus.

The construction of a new purpose-built campus and the introduction of the Sector agreed Youth Training Programme, will provide significant opportunities to expand the overall provision in Strabane. The provision of a new industry standard, well equipped campus in Strabane which is sustainable and high in quality that addresses the socio-economic needs of the area through an economical relevant skill based curriculum has the potential to address the skills deficit relevant to the region.

The College has ample evidence of collaborative arrangements in curriculum development and has received endorsements from external stakeholders to support the Curriculum Plan for the new campus in Strabane.

The Draft Outline Business Case is to be completed and submitted to Derry City & Strabane City Council in July 2023. The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards will be working with the external consultant to draft a holistic OBC for the new campus. A Board meeting will be conveyed to approve the Business Case prior to this date.

Prof M Ó Néill left the meeting at this juncture and Mrs J McKeever took over the role as Acting Committee Chair.

Members noted the recent curriculum events/competitions/awards with mention to the recent Tourism Cluster Event on 17 May 2023. Hospitality students won the Sector PBL Competitions held on 25 May 2023. The Staff Awards will be held on 21 June 2023. The Festival of Education Conference which was planned for 3 June 2023 has been rescheduled to 2 November 2023.

Report 7 Briefing Note – Quality Enhancement Unit

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards reported that the briefing note was for information purposes. The report detailed the quality and reporting of grades processes and procedures that would be deemed as normal practice across all academic departments with the College.

Report 8 Minutes of the Academic Standards Committee Meeting April 2023

Members noted the Minutes from the Academic Standards Committee meeting.

The Acting Committee Chair thanked Dr C O' Mullan.

65.6 CLIENT SERVICES – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Safeguarding Report

Report 2 Equality Update

Report 3 Internal Audit Review – Business Development & Employability

Report 3.1 Internal Audit Review – Business Development & Employability Update on Recommendations

Members noted the Safeguarding and Equality Reports.

Report 3 Internal Audit Review – Business Development & Employability

The review received a satisfactory assurance rating with one low and one medium priority management actions.

Report 3.1 This report provided an update on the two actions arising from the review. One item is partially complete and the remaining actions are ongoing with a completion date of September 2023.

65.7 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

65.8 SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2023/24**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS****Report 1 Schedule of Meetings 2023/24**

It was noted that not all the dates are confirmed – to align with DfE deadlines for Quality reports the November 2023 meeting may be rescheduled. Members will be notified accordingly.

65.9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

That being the end of business the Acting Committee Chair thanked everyone. The meeting ended at 1755.

Date of Next Meeting - 13 September 2023 later rescheduled to 19 September 2023.

Signed: _____



Mrs J McKeever, Acting Committee Chair

Date: 19 September 2023

APPROVED