

CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

AGENDA NOTICE

Curriculum & Standards Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday 14th November 2018

Time: 9.00am

Venue: Corporate Board Room

- 1.1 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
- 1.2 Declarations of Interest**
Action: Declare any interests
- 1.3 Minutes of the last Curriculum & Standards Committee held 14th June 2018**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 1.3
Action: Review and approve
- 1.4 Matters arising from the minutes**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 1.4
Action: Note progress on actions
- 1.5 Review Committee Terms of Reference and Committee Effectiveness**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 1.5
Action: Review and approve Terms of Reference, briefly discuss effectiveness of Committee
- 1.6 Annual Operating Statement 2017/18 July Monitoring Point**
Report by the Principal Appendix 1.6
Action: Receive final progress update
- 1.7 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19**
Report by the Principal Appendix 1.7
Action: Consider and make recommendations
- 1.8 FE Self Assessment Report 2017/18 – First Draft**
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 1.8
Action: Review and recommend approval to Board
- 1.9 HE Annual Review Reports 2017/18 – First Draft**
Reports by the Director of Quality/Vice Principal Appendix 1.9
Action: Note and comment on any issues arising
- 1.10 Student Recruitment Numbers**
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 1.10
Action: Discuss
- 1.11 English and Maths**
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 1.11
Action: Note and comment on any issues arising
- 1.12 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**
Report by the Principal Appendix 1.12
Action: Discuss
- 1.13 Student Retention 2018/19**
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 1.13
Action: Discuss
- 1.14 Student Voice**
Report by the Principal/Vice Principal Appendix 1.14
Action: Discuss

1.15 Implementation of T Levels
Report by the Principal/Vice Principal Appendix 1.15
Action: Receive for information

1.16 Complaints Analysis 2017/18
Report by the Principal Appendix 1.16
Action: Note and comment on any issues arising

1.17 Staff Development Report 2017/18
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 1.17
Action: Note and comment on any issues arising

SAFEGUARDING

1.18 Termly Safeguarding Report
Report by Vice Principal Appendix 1.18
Action: Note and comment on any issues arising

1.19 Safeguarding Policy
Report by Vice Principal Appendix 1.19
Action: Review and recommend approval to Board

1.20 Child Protection Policy & Procedures
Report by Vice Principal Appendix 1.20
Action: Review and recommend approval to Board

1.21 Any Other Business

1.22 Date and time of the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting
Thursday 14th March 2019 at 9am

(Staff and Student Governors to leave)

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

1.23 Confidential Item (restricted to External Governors)
Verbal Report by Assistant Principal & External Consultant

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Committee
Ms Jane Houzer – Chair
Mr N Crippa
Student Governors
Ms W Megeney
Mr R Rendel
Mr I Graham/Mr A Smith
Ms V Barrett – Principal

In attendance
Mr L Magee- Vice Principal
Mr R Walker – Director of Quality
Professor M Earwicker – Ex-officio member
Mrs C Gillam – Clerk to Corporation

Mrs D Nolan – Assistant Principal (item 1.23 only)
Ms K Morris – External Consultant (item 1.23 only)

Farnborough College of Technology

Curriculum & Standards Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 14th November 2018

Present:

Ms J Houzer – Chair of Committee
Mr N Crippa
Ms W Megeney
Mr R Rendel
Mr A Smith (not for item 1.23)
Ms V Barrett – Principal

In Attendance:

Mr L Magee -Vice Principal, Curriculum & Safeguarding
Mr R Walker – Director of Quality
Mrs D Nolan – Assistant Principal (for item 1.23 only)
Ms K Morris – Consultant (for item 1.23 only)
Mrs C Gillam – Clerk to the Corporation

Quorate: Yes

The meeting opened at 9.07am

1.1/18.19 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Professor Earwicker.

1.2/18.19 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interests were noted in relation to the agenda items.

1.3/18.19 Minutes of the meeting held 14th June 2018

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

1.4/18.19 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee received the progress report on matters arising and noted that all the items marked as pending were now completed.

1.5/18.19 Review Committee Terms of Reference and Committee Effectiveness

The Committee reviewed its Terms of Reference and considered the Committee's effectiveness. No actions were identified to improve effectiveness. The following amendments were agreed to the Terms of Reference:

- Item 2xii to replace 'equal opportunities' with 'equality, diversity and inclusion'
- New item xvii to state a requirement to review the Terms of Reference annually

The Committee checked its compliance with the amended Terms of Reference and was satisfied.

Action: Committee Chair to recommend ToR amendments to the Board.

1.6/18.19 Annual Operating Statement 2017/18 July Monitoring Point

The Committee praised the inclusion of a RAG rated summary showing end of year progress against the five enabling goals of the Transformation Strategy. Financial health continues to be outstanding, work continues to improve the estate, partnerships are growing with schools

and HE provision is growing, and the Marketing team are producing exceptional work to achieve excellent visibility for the College. The only area of concern was within goal 1 to maintain the College's excellence trajectory where performance in 16-18 GCSE Maths was inadequate in 2018. The Principal explained that most of the College's students achieved outstanding results and performance when compared to other FE colleges was above national average. Yet GCSE Maths for 16-18 students continued to present a significant challenge with lower than national average pass rates and low value added scores. The Committee agreed and noted that it would return to this discussion in later agenda items. Governors asked if the issues experienced in Engineering in 2017/18 had impacted upon achievement and were pleased to learn that achievement had been good and pass rates were good. A report on Engineering would be presented under item 1.23.

The Committee accepted the Annual Operating Statement 2017/18 July monitoring point and noted that the volume of green RAG rated items was a testament to the excellent work of the College's staff and management.

1.7/18.19 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19

The Committee received the Annual Operating Statement for 2018/19 which showed key performance targets by SMT member to support the College's five enabling goals. The Committee discussed the critical importance of monitoring progress in GCSE Maths and suggested that the Principal email a monthly Maths progress report to the Committee. The Principal agreed and suggested that a monthly report on AAT should also be included as results had declined as reported in the FE Self Assessment Report. The Committee observed that although performance in GCSE English had improved it was important not to be complacent and that it would be assist the Committee's monitoring to have a separate 'state of the nation' update item at every Committee meeting. Whilst it had been useful thus far to have a standing agenda item on English and Maths for the Committee it was important to recognise the different challenges presented in achieving success in the different subjects. The Committee reflected that whilst results in Engineering had been good here it was important too not to be complacent and that monitoring this curriculum area via a similar regular update to the Committee would be helpful. Thus it was agreed state of the nation update items would be presented at the March and June Committee meetings to cover English, Engineering, Maths and AAT (the latter two in addition to the monthly email reports to Committee).

Action:

- Principal to email a monthly Maths and AAT progress reports to the Committee
- Clerk to schedule a state of the nation agenda item for March and June 2019 to include progress reports on English, Maths, Engineering and AAT

The Committee considered the table of performance indicators included with the Annual Operating Statement and questioned why many of the performance indicators for 2017/18 were lower than for the preceding two years. The Principal explained that historically the College had offered a number of short qualifications which had been removed from the 2017/18 figures. This meant that the tables were not comparing like with like but did mean that Governors had a more realistic overview of the College's performance in 2017/18. The key was to compare the College's performance to the national averages and in particular the GFE averages. Once the GFE college rankings for this year were available the table would be updated and the Principal would remove the short courses from the 2015/16 and 2016/17 data to enable a better comparison. It was noted that there had been a cultural shift within Ofsted to look less at such performance indicators and focus more upon the learner's day to day experience. That said, there was still a place for performance indicators and measuring the College against its GFE peers was important as one tool for Governors to assess the College's overall performance but it needed to be seen within a wider perspective.

Action: Principal to revise performance indicators table to remove historical short course data.

The agenda item order was re-arranged as follows.

1.19/18.19 Safeguarding Policy

The Vice Principal informed the Committee that the policy had been refreshed and followed guidance from Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board. Governors suggested including on page 4 "This policy also applies to vulnerable adults" and amending the wording of the bullet list on page 17 to starting with the present participle throughout which the Vice Principal agreed. Governors also discussed the photograph and image consent statements on page 24 but concluded that no amendment was required here.

Action: Committee Chair to recommend to the Corporation Board approval of the Safeguarding Policy with the amendments agreed by the Committee.

1.20/18.19 Child Protection Policy & Procedures

The Committee noted that there were no substantive changes to this policy and approved it without amendment.

Action: Committee Chair to recommend to the Corporation Board approval of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

1.8/18.19 FE Self Assessment Report 2017/18 – First Draft

The Committee Chair commended the first draft of the SAR. It reflected the rigour and honesty of the College's self improvement and followed on from the findings of the Curriculum Review earlier in the year. She was pleased that amidst all the evidence of outstanding performance the College had chosen to grade its GCSE Maths attainment and progress as inadequate as this was a just assessment of the performance there. Using the term 'inadequate' should not be viewed with fear but instead taken as a call to rapid improvement and exemplified the rigorous and transparent approach that FCoT had to take as an outstanding college.

The Principal drew the Committee's attention to the value added score for level 3 vocational learners highlighted on the table on page 7. The College was awaiting some further work on this score and there was a possibility that it might drop to 'good'. It was agreed that if the score dropped it would be helpful to provide further context i.e. was it good veering to outstanding or good veering to requiring improvement? The Committee looked in detail at the tables in the appendices and discussed where percentages had fallen. For example in the learner satisfaction table on page 39 a number of rows were RAG rated as red but this reflected some minor shifts in numbers between years and the percentages for 2017/18 were mostly very high and pleasing – anything above 85% was a very good outcome. It was agreed that it would be helpful to supplement the tables with short explanatory notes such as that given on page 42. The Committee did note that there appeared to be a downwards trend in some of the tables but it was important to focus on the College's performance being above the national average.

Governors suggested that perhaps more could be included in the report to focus upon the student experience such as the investment in improving the estate and improvements to classrooms in particular, and in provision of counselling services, first aid and mental health support.

The Committee discussed at length the difficulties inherent in raising attainment and progress in GCSE Maths. The Staff Governor spoke to his personal experience in teaching Maths observing that students did not see GCSE Maths as a priority for their future and questioned its relevance. Whilst there was good engagement with students who attended lessons attendance was problematic for those who did not see yet another GCSE Maths resit as a priority. It was a battle to win hearts and minds and to convince students that obtaining a good result in GCSE Maths was a necessary shorthand to signal their future employability as a numerate employee to a future employer. The Committee noted that the College had tried integrating the teaching of English and Maths through students' core course subject and that had not been successful and now had drawn the teaching out as a separate programme. But it was incumbent upon the whole of the College, not just those teaching GCSE, to promote the

necessity and value of these qualifications. It was also suggested that the College needed push harder the message regarding attendance with students and parents. Attendance was seen as compulsory and at parents evenings the message would be that attendance in Maths/English should be as high as that in the student's main qualification. The Vice Principal advised the Committee that there was a strong leadership team in English and Maths and a sense of real momentum. The Principal explained that there were shared schemes of work, that main teaching would be completed by Easter and then the focus would turn to individualised revision. 2018 results were marred by an over reliance on playing it safe with the new GCSE qualification and entering too many students for the Foundation Tier and this would not be repeated in 2019. The Director of Quality observed that the College was seeing incremental change and this reflected a broader cultural shift which was required nationally for parents and students to accept the importance of these qualifications. He noted that the UK was the only European country where students could choose to drop the study of English and Maths at 16. The Principal concluded the discussion by stating that the College aspired to be in line with national averages for GCSE English and Maths attainment in 2019 and that submitting more students for the winter resits and for the Higher Tier should facilitate that. The College had also introduced a number of bite sized qualifications, essentially what a student would need to know in their career such as measurements and shapes, which were running alongside GCSE study and which were proving useful in building students' confidence and demonstrating the value of acquiring of practical knowledge.

The Chair concluded that the Committee was content to recommend approval of the SAR document to the Board subject to explanatory commentary being added to the tables in the appendices and a greater focus upon the student experience.

Action: Committee Chair to recommend approval of the amended SAR to the Board.

1.9/18.19 HE Annual Review Reports 2017/18

The Director of Quality introduced the Annual Review Report for the University of Surrey and the Programme Monitoring Report for the University of Greenwich. He reported that student recruitment for the University of Surrey accredited HE courses was growing modestly but steadily. Student progression was good and higher than national averages and student achievement rates were good. Positive comments had been received from the External Examiners in particular commending the high quality of feedback provided to students. Student feedback as provided through the 2018 National Student Survey (NSS) was discussed with the Committee although it was noted that only 73 students had participated in this year's survey. The Committee noted that NSS results had tended to vary from year to year and it would be good to see greater consistency. Despite the External Examiners' praise the NSS survey revealed decreased satisfaction with assessment and feedback and the Committee suggested that HE teaching staff needed to be clear about the feedback students would receive and that verbal feedback could be given if it wasn't always possible to give written feedback. One of the strengths of having a relatively small HE cohort was that there could be greater contact between lecturers and students than in a traditional University setting. Governors were pleased to note that satisfaction with the quality of teaching had remained consistently above the national average. Governors discussed on page 11 the section of the report addressing students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties and noted that 47 out of about 300 students was a fairly high percentage. Governors asked who in the Senior Management Team had responsibility for HE and the Principal advised that it was the Assistant Principal Mr Peasey, although HE was embedded in the framework of the College i.e. marketing, safeguarding etc. The Principal also reminded the Committee that there was an action arising from the F&GP Committee in the summer to bring a paper to both committees regarding the HE growth strategy and building to a sustainable critical mass. This paper would come to both committees in spring 2019.

The Director of Quality presented the University of Greenwich report to the Committee observing that although numbers were small progression and achievement were very high. 100% of the year two students achieved a good or outstanding final grade.

1.10/18.19 HE & FE Student Recruitment Numbers

The Vice Principal set out the position for student recruitment as at November 2018. Overall the College had seen steady growth with enrolments for 16-18 and FE adults slightly up on last year and in line with the allocation. HE enrolment was above the target figure (191 students compared to a target of 179) and apprenticeship recruitment was in line with the allocation. The Committee noted the data showing numbers for all categories compared with the previous year and the Principal advised that she would include in her Principal's Report to the Corporation the target numbers alongside the actual numbers. The Committee briefly discussed the recent announcements regarding a Government review of HE tuition fees and observed that if tuition fees were to be reduced nationally it might impact the popularity of the College's two year degree offering and was thus a risk to monitor.

1.11/18.19 English and Maths

After the Committee's detailed discussion of GCSE Maths during consideration of the SAR under agenda item 1.8 the Committee was pleased to receive the report on English and Maths noting in particular the number of students sitting November resits and the excellent achievement rates achieved in Functional Skills compared to national averages. Governors noted that staff recruitment remained a challenge, particularly in Maths, and that a rolling advert would be maintained for Maths teachers.

1.12/18.19 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks

The Committee received the report on the highest rated curriculum risks from the risk register and noted that they were happy with the controls and mitigation. Many of the highest rated items had already been discussed at length in the meeting so far.

1.13/18.19 Student Retention

The Vice Principal explained that it was early in the year to report on retention rates for new students and the attrition rate for new students was in line with previous years at 4.4%. Retention of second year students on study programmes was at 93%.

1.14/18.19 Student Voice

The Vice Principal presented a paper setting out how student views were captured by the College. He explained that the College would be holding a new style Student Voice College Conference on 31st May which would be attended by Senior Managers. It was hoped that the Chair of C&S Committee or an alternate could also attend. Governors noted the 'You said, we did' paper which arose from last year's conference and asked what support the College gave to help organise work experience. The Principal clarified that the College organises work placements but to develop students' employability skills students are encouraged to be actively involved in organising their placements. The College engages with a company that helps students find work placements and has a dedicated tutorial slot to support students seeking placements. The College will receive money from the T Level Development Fund to help build capacity to support work placements for T Levels which are a substantial element of the new qualification.

1.15/18.19 Update on the implementation of T Levels

The Committee praised the quality of this report which set out the readiness of the College to deliver two of the first three pathways which roll out in September 2020: Digital, and Childcare and Education. The College is one of only 52 outstanding colleges which have been chosen to introduce the first pathways. The Committee asked if the College was content it could progress

appropriately to the schedule set out in the report and the Vice Principal replied that it was, and that the College had been visited by the DfE last week who were impressed with the College's readiness. The Committee agreed that as the launch date moved closer the Committee would need to focus more on the qualification but until then an update paper in the spring term would only be necessary.

1.16/18.19 Complaints Analysis 2017/18

The Committee noted the content of the Complaints Analysis for last year and praised the transparency of the reporting.

1.17/18.19 Staff Development Report 2017/18

The Committee received the report and noted its contents.

1.18/18.19 Termly Safeguarding Report

Governors queried the number of categories under the 'My Concern' system (for example many of them could be grouped together as mental health issues) and asked if it was possible to tighten up the categorisation? Also some of the categories (such as bereavement/death) were more emotional support than safeguarding issues and this report should only be reporting on safeguarding matters. It was agreed that it would be better to use the core categories and titles from the Safeguarding Policy in the 'My Concern' system.

1.21/18.19 Any Other Business

The Committee Chair informed the Committee that she had accepted a temporary post overseas for 10 months and whilst she would seek to attend as many meetings as possible, and join meetings remotely if she could not attend in person, it might be necessary for another member to Chair a future meeting in her absence.

1.22/18.19 Date and Time of the next meeting

Thursday 14th March 2019 at 9am.

Mr Smith left the meeting. Mrs Nolan and Ms Morris joined the meeting.

1.23/18.19 Confidential item

This item was recorded as a confidential minute.

The meeting closed at 12.03pm.

Minutes agreed as being a true and accurate record by the Chair.

Signed:

Dated:

Summary of action points

Item	Action
1.5 Review ToR	Committee Chair to recommend ToR amendments to the Board
1.7 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal to email a monthly Maths and AAT progress reports to the Committee • Clerk to schedule a state of the nation agenda item for March and June 2019 to include progress reports on English, Maths, Engineering and AAT • Principal to revise performance indicators table to remove historical short course data
1.19 Safeguarding Policy	Committee Chair to recommend to the Corporation Board approval of the Safeguarding Policy with the amendments agreed by the Committee
1.20 Child Protection Policy	Committee Chair to recommend to the Corporation Board approval of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
1.8 FE SAR	Committee Chair to recommend approval of the amended SAR to the Board