

CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE



AGENDA NOTICE

Curriculum & Standards Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 14th March 2019

Time: 9.00am

Venue: Principal's Office

Please note this meeting follows Search Committee (8.00am start)

- 2.1 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
- 2.2 Declarations of Interest**
- 2.3 Minutes of the last Curriculum & Standards Committee held 14th November 2018**
 - Part 1 Appendix 2.3a
 - Part 2 Confidential – External Governors & SMT only Appendix 2.3b
- 2.4 Matters arising from the minutes**
 - Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 2.4
- 2.5 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19 December Monitoring Point**
 - Report by the Principal Appendix 2.5
- 2.6 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**
 - Report by the Principal Appendix 2.6
- 2.7 Student Performance – Term 2**
 - Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 2.7
- 2.8 Progress with Quality Improvement Plans**
 - Report by the Principal/Director of Quality Appendix 2.8
- 2.9 Mid Year Review**
 - Report by the Principal/Director of Quality Appendix 2.9
- 2.10 FE Destinations 2017/18**
 - Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 2.10
- 2.11 Student Survey Report – Induction 2018/19**
 - Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 2.11
- 2.12 Update on the Implementation of T Levels**
 - Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 2.12
- 2.13 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2018/19**
 - Report by the Principal Appendix 2.13
- 2.14 Termly Safeguarding Report**
 - Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 2.14
- 2.15 Any Other Business**
- 2.16 Date and time of the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting**

Thursday 13th June 2019 at 9.00am

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Committee
Ms Jane Houzer – Chair
Mr N Crippa
Ms M Dibaj/Mr L Perry
Ms W Megeney
Mr R Rendel
Mr I Graham/Mr A Smith
Ms V Barrett – Principal

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

Farnborough College of Technology

Curriculum & Standards Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 14th March 2019

Present:

Ms J Houzer – Chair of Committee
Mr N Crippa
Ms W Megeney
Mr R Rendel
Mr L Perry
Ms V Barrett – Principal (from mid item 2.14)

In Attendance:

Mr L Magee -Vice Principal, Curriculum & Safeguarding
Mrs C Gillam – Clerk to the Corporation

Quorate: Yes

The meeting opened at 9.22am

2.1/18.19 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Graham, Mr Smith and Professor Earwicker. It was noted that the Principal would join the meeting shortly.

2.2/18.19 Declarations of Interest

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

2.3/18.19 Minutes of the meeting held 14th November 2018

The Part 1 and confidential Part 2 minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

2.4/18.19 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee received the progress report on matters arising and noted that all the items marked as pending were complete. It was observed that the 'state of the nation' progress report had been replaced by a new mid-year review. Governors accepted this amendment but requested that if any items of note occurred between the SAR and the mid-year review that they be notified by email. It was also noted that a paper on HE growth strategy would come to both Curriculum & Standards Committee and the F&GP Committee in the summer.

The agenda item order was re-arranged as follows.

2.14/18.19 Termly Safeguarding Report

The Vice Principal drew attention to the range of training undertaken by staff, the introduction of a Fitness to Study policy and that a Positive Mental Health Policy was currently in development. A safeguarding survey had been completed by students in term 1 and results were very positive although it was noted that approximately 30% of the student population completed the survey. However, Governors felt that the low return rate was potentially positive as people tended to complete a survey if they were unhappy and wanted to raise issues.

Governors noted the 83% increase in counselling appointments compared to the same period last year and the increase in self harm and suicide ideation and sought to understand the reasons behind the increases. The Vice Principal replied that it was difficult to pinpoint but

certainly there was an increased profile for such matters in the news and social media. Governors noted that the same trends were reported in Higher Education institutions too and it was positive that the College had invested in resources to support students and absorb the huge increase in counselling appointments. They reflected that the College provided a good overall package of support for students. The Student Governor agreed and explained that there was good awareness amongst students of where to go for help and how to book appointments. The table showing concerns raised through My Concern exemplified how concerns peaked in September 2018 when students were more anxious at the start of term.
The Principal joined the meeting.

The Vice Principal noted that although schools had improved passing on information regarding students from September the College would request a separate safeguarding information return via email.

2.5/18.19 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19 December Monitoring Point

The Principal introduced the progress made against actions from the Transformation Strategy. Governors noted the sound progress made but asked whether retention and attendance were on target and the Principal explained that retention rates were but attendance was slightly lower than target at 87% rather than 90%. Most programme areas were above target but a few closely monitored areas were low. In addition lower attendance rates for Maths and English brought overall attendance down. Governors suggested that it would be helpful to include the target figures against the actual rates in the Operating Statement in future.

The Committee accepted the Annual Operating Statement 2018/19 December monitoring point.

2.6/18.19 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks

The Principal explained that some of the money in the budget contingency had been used to support Engineering and English and Maths. Maths was now in the fortunate position of being over resourced. The November English and Maths resits had yielded good results, the new English and Maths centre was a fantastic environment, and taking a systematic approach to learning starting with a diagnostic assessment and then focusing on areas which required support was working extremely well. Assistant Principal Mr Peasey had proved to be an excellent appointment. Governors acknowledged that English and Maths were in a very different place to this time last year and they were optimistic regarding the summer's results. It appeared that a significant cultural shift had occurred and the College was seeing real progress.

Turning to Engineering it was recognised that much good work was occurring and that parents and students had been supportive of the College's efforts. However, it was still a work in progress and thus despite the mitigating actions taken was rated as amber in the risk register. Governors supported this approach noting that, as had been the case with Maths and English, change doesn't occur overnight and it was also a difficult area for staff recruitment. However, the Principal noted that the College was receiving support from TAG and local aerospace businesses and was looking to recruit older engineers and support their transition into teaching.

2.7/18.19 Student Performance Term 2

The Vice Principal explained that FE retention rates stood at 97.5% compared to 97.4% at this point last year. This meant that the College was on course for an achievement rate either similar to or marginally better than last year's 84.6%. When retention was broken down by programme area it was noted that Professional Studies showed the weakest retention but this was mostly down to the AAT courses where, as the Committee had noted in previous meetings, there had been staff recruitment and retention issues. The College's new venture with Mindful Education offering a blended approach which would hopefully stabilise this situation. Retention

overall for FE learners continuing into the second year of their programme was good at 94% and also indicated that the College was likely to improve its overall achievement this year. HE retention was excellent at 98.1% compared to a national rate of 93.6%. Governors particularly praised the 100% retention figures for the majority of HE courses.

Turning to attendance the whole College stood at 84.3%. Ofsted consider 85% to be good and 90% to be outstanding. Attendance on core aim courses was 87% so the overall figure was brought down by disappointing attendance on English (75.3%) and Maths (73.4%). It was noted that some attendance issues had arisen earlier in the year for English and Maths when learners were streamed into higher or foundation tier groups but attendance had since settled down. Governors discussed whether the College should consider making English and Maths attendance compulsory and remove learners from their main programme if they didn't comply. The Principal acknowledged that it was a difficult issue and one which SMT continued to revisit. Learners were told that attendance at classes and examinations was required. There was a disciplinary process in place and the College wrote to parents if learners didn't attend. But there were other factors at work such as anxiety and confidence issues arising from the national policy of making learners undertake repeated resits in subjects many of them struggled with. So the College looked to support students by bringing in inspirational speakers, celebrating success stories of student achievement and generally trying to foster a positive and empowering atmosphere. Finally looking at attendance by funding stream it was noted that apprentices were the best attendees at 87.5%.

The Principal concluded the discussion by placing on record her thanks to the new MiS Manager Mr Gomes who had generated the data for this report. The College had experienced significant improvement in the quality of its data reporting.

2.8/18.19 Progress with Quality Improvement Plans

The Principal noted the progress which had been made with the improvements arising from the College's Self Assessment Report (SAR). Governors praised the report and asked if a copy of 'TLA the FCoT Way' could be emailed to them as an aide memoire.

Action: Clerk to email copy of 'TLA the FCoT Way' to Committee members.

2.9/18.19 Mid-Year Review

The Principal apologised to the Committee for not having emailed the Mid-Year Review to them when it was compiled in January. The review set out progress with the significant issues with English and Maths identified in the SAR. In addition, as Ofsted are looking holistically at students and their T shaped skills (a broad range of personal and employability skills) in addition to their subject specialist skills, the review captured the breadth of enrichment and stretch programmes across the College by Programme Area. Governors praised the comprehensive nature of the T shaped skills noting the support provided by staff, the wide range of enrichment activities tailored to each Programme Area and sheer variety of the other opportunities for students' personal development. Governors asked that staff be commended for their work in this area. It was noted that the term T shaped skills offered potential for confusion with the new T Levels and a different term might be helpful in the future.

The review also highlighted the results of a DfE/Ofsted staff wellbeing survey undertaken by 70 staff before Christmas. This showed that staff satisfaction was in line with sampled colleges and the Principal explained further work had been carried out to understand and address, where possible, small levels of dissatisfaction.

Overall Governors praised the Mid-Year Review finding it a useful document to keep an eye on progress in problematic areas. The Committee did not want to burden the executive with excessive reporting and thus asked for a periodic email from the Principal either to report any exceptions which arose or even just to notify the Committee that there was nothing to report.

Action: Principal to periodically email the Committee with progress updates on the College's improvement plans.

2.10/18.19 FE Destinations 2017/18

The Vice Principal presented the results of the destinations survey which focused on learners aged 16-19 who completed their studies in 2017/18. The percentage in education had risen from 61.6% 2 years previously to 72% and reflected a trend for many students to progress to other courses within the College. The percentage in paid work had decreased from 24.7% in 2015/16 to 17.8% and there were also fewer students taking up apprenticeships (4.7%). The national situation with apprenticeships was clouded by funding issues and issues with some advanced prior learning no longer being counted towards an apprenticeship. It was noted that progression into HE was 7% down on the previous year which did not reflect the national trend but could possibly be because professional courses were reported under FE and there was an increase in students continuing in FE. The Committee Chair noted that the Committee would need to receive at its next meeting the results of the DLHE survey which would enable the Committee to monitor HE destinations. The interplay between progress into FE and HE was of interest.

Action: HE Destinations report to come to the June C&S Committee meeting.

2.12/18.19 Update on the implementation of T Levels

The Vice Principal reminded Governors that the College would be piloting two of the three new T level pathways in 2020 – Digital, and Childcare and Education. The T Levels include 45-60 days work placement and the College had received funding to build capacity thus enabling the post of a Work Place Co-ordinator to become full-time. The College was targeting at least 76 extended work placements for level 3 year 1 students across all subjects (not just the T Level subject areas). So far approximately 40 work placements had been agreed and the College was working with a work experience finding company 'Learning to Work' to help learners who were struggling to find extended placements. Work placement students will receive £50 a week contribution towards their costs plus a £50 bonus if they complete all 8 weeks. This financing was enabled by the T Level bursary provided by the Government. The Committee thanked the Vice Principal for his update and requested at the next meeting a copy of the T Level action plan so that they could monitor readiness for implementation.

Action: Vice Principal to include action plan in June 2019 T Level Update.

2.13/18.19 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2018/19

The Clerk also circulated under this item a copy of the Equality & Diversity Committee minutes. Discussing the data analysis of different groups Governors noted that 16-18 students receiving the bursary had an excellent achievement rate of 92% with 100% retention, also achievement rates for students with EHCPs were better than for those without. It was pleasing to see that the number of LLDD students had significantly increased and that their performance was sound. As such learners required greater staff assistance Governors commended the staff working in these areas for their support for LLDD learners. It was noted that overall percentages of male and female students had seesawed over the years and the Committee sought to understand the possible reasons. Was it reflective of the courses offered by the College, or the attraction of apprenticeships over FE? Governors enquired whether the ethnicity profile of the College was representative of the wider community and the Principal noted that it was and for BAME was in fact higher than the wider Hampshire population. The Committee was pleased to receive the minutes of the Equality & Diversity Committee and asked for them to be included as a standing agenda item going forward. The Principal noted that in future a C&S Committee Governor might wish to attend the meetings of that E&D Committee.

The Committee enquired whether the College had experienced any concerns regarding the issue of gender self-identification in relation to use of toilet facilities. The Principal replied that no issues had been raised. The College was re-designating its disabled toilets as gender neutral/mixed gender toilets. The Student Governor noted that at a recent student forum students had been inquisitive about the issue but were satisfied with the response of the Assistant Principal regarding the re-designation of the disabled toilets.

Action: Clerk to schedule Equality & Diversity Committee minutes as a standing agenda item.

2.15/18.19 Any Other Business

The Principal informed the Committee that the College had received a letter from the Office for Students (OfS) raising two issues. The first concerned External Governors' maximum term of office and was being addressed via Search Committee and an amendment to the College's Standing Orders. The second concerned the destination of HE students and thus would be addressed via analysis of the DLHE survey at the next C&S Committee meeting in June.

It was noted that Search Committee had proposed that C&S Committee members consider a scheduling change to their next meeting to incorporate a change to the start time of Search Committee. It was proposed that C&S meet first from 4-6pm with Search Committee to follow at 6.30pm with their meeting. C&S Committee agreed to this schedule change.

2.16/18.19 Date and Time of the next meeting

Thursday 14th March 2019 at **4pm**.

The meeting closed at 11.10am.

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

Signed:

Dated:

Summary of action points

Item	Action
2.9 Mid Year Review	Principal to periodically email the Committee with progress updates on the College's improvement plans.
2.10 FE Destinations	HE Destinations report to come to the June C&S Committee meeting.
2.12 T Level Update	Vice Principal to include action plan in June 2019 T Level Update.
2.13 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2018/19	Clerk to schedule Equality & Diversity Committee minutes as a standing agenda item.