

CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE



AGENDA NOTICE

Curriculum & Standards Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 13th June 2019

Time: 4.00pm

Venue: Principal's Office

Please note this meeting precedes Search Committee (6.30pm start)

- 3.1 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
- 3.2 Declarations of Interest**
- 3.3 Minutes of the last Curriculum & Standards Committee held 14th March 2019**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 3.3
- 3.4 Matters arising from the minutes**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 3.4
- 3.5 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19 April Monitoring Point**
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.5
- 3.6 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.6
- 3.7 English and Maths**
Report by the Principal
Presentation by Scott Peasey, Assistant Principal Appendix 3.7
- 3.8 Progress with Quality Improvement Plans**
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 3.8
- 3.9 Student Performance – Term 3**
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 3.9
- 3.10 Key National Measures – DfE Performance Tables**
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 3.10
- 3.11 Curriculum Offer 2019/20 (including implementation of curriculum changes)**
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 3.11
- 3.12 HE Destinations Report**
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 3.12
- 3.13 HE Student Recruitment Strategy (joint paper to F&GP)**
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.13
- 3.14 Update on the Implementation of T Levels (including action plan)**
Report by the Vice Principal Appendix 3.14
- 3.15 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy**
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.15
- 3.16 Minutes of the Equality & Diversity Committee**
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.16
- 3.17 Termly Safeguarding Report**
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.17
- 3.18 Any Other Business**
- 3.19 Date and time of the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting**
tbc

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Committee

Ms Jane Houzer – Chair
Mr N Crippa
Ms M Dibaj/Mr L Perry
Ms W Megeney
Mr R Rendel
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

Farnborough College of Technology

Curriculum & Standards Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 13th June 2019

Present:

Ms J Houzer – Chair of Committee
Mr N Crippa
Ms M Dibaj
Ms W Megeney
Ms V Barrett – Principal

In Attendance:

Mr L Magee -Vice Principal, Curriculum & Safeguarding
Mr S Peasey – Assistant Principal (for item 3.7 only)
Mr R Walker – Director of Quality
Mrs C Gillam – Clerk to the Corporation

Quorate: Yes

The meeting opened at 4.08pm

3.1/18.19 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Rendel, Mr Smith and Professor Earwicker.

3.2/18.19 Declarations of Interest

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

3.3/18.19 Minutes of the meeting held 14th March 2019

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

3.4/18.19 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee received the progress report on matters arising and noted that all actions items had been completed.

3.5/18.19 Annual Operating Statement 2018/19 April Monitoring Point

The Principal introduced the report noting that progress against the key performance targets was strong. Overall predicted achievement was above national average and retention and attendance KPIs were likewise very positive. The 'FCoT Way', designed to support teachers' leadership in the classroom, had been fully implemented across the College and was improving staff confidence. The Health and Wellbeing Board was growing in confidence and had generated a number of pragmatic suggestions during the year. The Principal reported that to further support empowering the Health and Wellbeing Board she would look to step away from chairing the Board next academic year. Actions from the Curriculum Review had largely been achieved and the Principal drew attention to how ESOL staff were engaging positively having been supported by the Director of Quality and a specialist consultant, and had made good progress with teaching and learning.

In HE the Director of Quality was working with Mr Peasey, the Assistant Principal with responsibility for HE, to review the College's TEF metrics to focus on improving the College's bronze validation and a TEF matrix was now in place and monitored by SMT.

With regards to finance and improving efficiencies in line with growth the College was maintaining its outstanding financial health and increasing its surplus which meant that the College could continue to invest in its facilities. Two of the challenges noted for the future were continuing to deliver growth year on year and identifying ways to invest the revenue from that growth in staff as well as in facilities. One Governor observed that at the recent student conference she had attended there had been requests for greater investment in facilities at the Aldershot site. The Principal replied that the Board would see provision for Aldershot in the forthcoming capital expenditure budget. Other areas of future focus for Aldershot were to explore creating a social study space, some outdoor space, and improved enrichment provision.

The Principal updated the Committee on positive partnerships with Hart and Rushmoor Councils, and with local aerospace employers including one which was considering funding some of the new Aerospace centre. Regarding marketing the Principal noted that the College was fortunate to have a very creative and responsive marketing team who were working hard to market the College to many different types of student. Governors enquired whether the College should reach out to its alumni base and the Principal noted that the same point had been raised in SMT and the Head of Marketing had started to look at this. Governors suggested focusing on holding bespoke alumni events such as an alumni evening to view the new facilities or alumni lectures. It was noted that there were a number of FCoT alumni in significant roles in the local area.

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

3.6/18.19 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks

The Committee thanked the Principal for updating them on progress with the highest rated curriculum risks by emailing the risk register to the Committee before the meeting. It was agreed that it was a positive step to use the risk register between meetings in this way.

Addressing Maths and English it was noted that both areas were now fully staffed and that an additional 0.5FTE English appointment would be made to enable the Head of Maths and English to reduce her teaching hours as she had been over teaching. The Committee would look in more detail at the predicted achievement for English and Maths in the following agenda item.

Good progress was being made in Engineering although achieving 100% staffing would always be a challenge as it was a difficult area to recruit to. Last year the Assistant Principal Mrs Nolan had resolved many issues in the faculty and then the Programme Manager for Motor Vehicle Mr Ryan had taken responsibility for Engineering earlier this academic year and resolved all outstanding parental complaints. No complaints had been received by the Principal's Office since. At Easter a new Head of Engineering had been recruited from Fareham College, Mr Hutton, and a skills assessment was underway to ensure that the faculty staffing had the appropriate skills match for 2019/20.

Mr Peasey joined the meeting.

3.7/18.19 English and Maths

The Committee welcomed Mr Peasey to give an update on progress with English and Maths. He informed the Committee that all the examinations had now taken place and initial feedback was positive although many students commented that the second Maths paper was quite challenging but this was also reported nationally.

Retention in Maths had remained high for both adults and learners aged 16-18 at 93.2%. Following the Easter mock exams staff had identified those learners close to the grade 4 boundary and set up intervention groups to target gaps in knowledge to help push them over the grade boundary. Extra revision classes were laid on including during the Easter holiday and May half term. Some students were taken out of their main classes to work with a Maths tutor on focus areas. This targeted bespoke provision was warmly received by students who described it as almost having one to one tuition. Results from the Easter mock exams suggested a high grade (9-4) achievement rate of 29% for Maths overall with 31% for learners aged 19+. This would be a considerable increase on last year's results when FCoT achieved a high grade achievement rate of 18% overall and would also be above the expected national average. The Director of Quality praised the purpose built learning environment created by the investment in new facilities for English and Maths and reported that students really appreciated the new facilities. The Principal noted that student engagement was much improved.

Turning to English Mr Peasey explained that 428 students started on GCSE English in 2018/19 with 375 taking the examinations in May/June (the remainder sat the examination in November) making it the single largest examination sitting in the College. Retention was excellent at 93.5% and the Governors praised Mr Peasey and the English and Maths staff for achieving such high retention rates in both subjects. Predicted high grade (9-4) achievement rates for English overall was 27% and for 19+ learners 32%. English achievement at FCoT had performed significantly above national averages for the past few years and above average performance was expected again this year.

Governors praised the positive expectations in both subjects which were underpinned by performance in the November resits and the Easter mock exams, and the personalised approach to teaching taken by staff. They noted the overwhelming anxiety many students have regarding these compulsory resits. It was disappointing that the Government did not focus on why so many learners were leaving school at 16 without a GCSE English or Maths qualification and seek to raise school attainment. However, one positive was that due to the Government policy of compulsory resits there had been a doubling of the numbers of young people at first failing but subsequently achieving English and Maths GCSE by the time they were 19. Colleges had a clear function to help learners to achieve these GCSEs. The Principal observed that there was a link between smaller class sizes and success and thus the College had invested in staff to achieve optimum class sizes of 16-17 students where possible.

The Committee thanked Mr Peasey for his leadership in English and Maths and through him thanked the teaching staff for all their hard work this year. Fingers were crossed for good results in August and the Committee asked to be notified when the results were known. Governors also requested that the table of achievement rates in the paper be amended to include actual numbers of learners as well as percentages and be recirculated.

Actions:

- Clerk to email updated copy of the agenda item paper to Committee members.
- Clerk to email Maths and English results to the Committee in August.

Mr Peasey left the meeting.

3.8/18.19 Progress with Quality Improvement Plans

The Director of Quality updated the Committee regarding progress on actions that arose from the College's SAR and the February 2018 Curriculum Review. English and Maths had been addressed under the previous item although he drew attention to the improved approach to teaching and learning in English and Maths. Across the College thematic observation weeks had been introduced and 90% of lessons were found to be good or better. Theory teaching in Motor Vehicle and Construction was now good. 80% of the actions identified following the

Curriculum Review had been completed. ProTarget (a data tool used College wide) was proving very useful in supporting more informed predictions. ProMonitor (a client management system) would be rolled out in September 2019 and this would show all marks, reports, comments etc in one place. Students would be able to access the system and view their data but also at teacher vision level (i.e. not accessible in student view) teachers would be able to flag if there were any concerns and RAG rate students. Governors praised the introduction of such a system. Finally the Director of Quality informed Governors that the student planner would be replaced by the Student Success Passport which would focus on employability skills and the T shaped curriculum.

3.9/18.19 Student Performance

The Vice Principal informed the Committee that FE retention rates as at 24th May 2019 stood at 93.9% compared with a figure of 92.2% for the end of the last academic year. ProTarget predictions showed that when English and Maths were excluded the College FE predicted achievement was 87.4% and when they are included it was 86.3%. Both figures were higher than last year's actual achievement figures and would also put the College above national averages. ProTarget was helping the College to be more accurate in its data forecasting as each tutor was inputting onto the system whether a learner was expected to pass or not. Attendance for the whole College was at 83.9% which was in keeping with recent years. Governors noted that attendance when broken down by programme area showed that Health and Social Care was at 78% and commented that it might be useful to also have predicted achievement broken down by programme area to see if there was a correlation between attendance and performance. The Principal commented that when SMT reviewed the data there did not appear to be a correlation between the two but she would check and send the Committee an update on predicted achievement in Health and Social Care. It was noted that the programme with the lowest attendance was Floristry but this was caused by a very small cohort and one absence had a significant impact on the figures. Floristry was an area with declining numbers but the College was looking at ways to promote it to particular groups. Governors praised the very high attendance in both FELS and Catering.

Action: Principal to update Committee on predicted achievement in Health and Social Care

3.10/18.19 Key National Measures – DfE Performance Tables

The Director of Quality drew attention to the key points from the 2017-18 data which was issued in March and confirmed the areas of focus which the College had already highlighted in the SAR. The Committee had already discussed the actions being taken in GCSE English and Maths. Business, Administration and Law as a subject area was the biggest issue with an achievement rate of 69.7% which was 16.4% below the national average for all learners and 20.3% below for adult learners. This was largely due to poor achievement in AAT which the Committee had discussed in previous meetings. The College was addressing this issue by moving the Level 2 AAT courses to blended (more online) delivery with Mindful Education in 2018/19. The first pilot cohort of learners to take the exams in 2018/19 had an achievement rate of 90% which was promising.

3.11/18.19 Curriculum Offer 2019/20

The Vice Principal reminded the Committee that as part of the College's Transformation Strategy the College had put in place a Property Strategy which focused on LEP priorities and responded to labour market intelligence. This had led to bids to develop an Emerging Technology Centre, a Medical Technology Centre and an Engineering Centre and thus the College's curriculum offer would continue to target subjects and courses which were in demand by employers and learners. The Committee received the list of new courses which had been added to the College portfolio from September 2019. The new one year BA (Hons) Top in Counselling was attracting a lot of interest. The new Level 3 Diploma in Electrical Installations

and Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Construction, both based at the Aldershot College, were part of the College's preparations for T Levels.

Governors enquired which courses had been withdrawn from the curriculum offer and the Principal replied that rather than delete a course the College would normally suspend it e.g. if take up was low then the course would not run but it would remain as a 'dormant' course in the portfolio.

3.12/18.19 HE Destinations

The Director of Quality discussed the key points from the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DHLE) survey for 2016-17. There was a time lag on the survey so students that completed in summer 2018 would be surveyed in August 2019 and the report available in 2020. The findings were positive with only 5.3% of HE leavers unemployed. 23% had progressed to further study which seemed a high percentage. The Committee recognised that the number of respondents was low but it was still pleasing to record that 92% of FCoT students leaving HE were either working or in further study.

3.13/18.19 HE Recruitment Strategy

The Principal introduced the F&GP paper which was also being presented here. She noted that HE was a key component of the Transformation Strategy and the College was working to evolve a sustainable HE portfolio and increase student participation. Its HE income ambition was £5m and is currently approximately £3m. The post 18 Augar Review would generate both opportunities and threats with universities likely to adapt to offer two year fast track degree such as the University of Surrey which had launched a two year degree with the first year free. FCoT's two year degree programmes were popular but a key strength of the College was catering for an inclusive student body with a variety of pathways to meet the needs of part-time and full-time students, school leavers and adults. The College would further develop its complementary relationship with the University of Surrey and would continue to develop flexible modes of delivery increasing its online capabilities. The College's HE work based learning programme currently represented only 1% of HE participants but the target was to grow to 35%. For example a new webpage was available for adults within the workplace with substantial work experience to advertise top up degrees as this was a potential growth market as were HNCs and HNDs which could be optimised with meaningful top ups.

Governors discussed the costs associated with two year degrees noting that the College charges the same fees (£8k) per year for a two year degree programme as for a three year degree. The cost to the College of delivering a two year degree was much higher than for a three year as the same number of teaching hours have to be delivered in a much shorter window for a smaller total fee. The Augar Review recommended a fee cut to £7,500 for three year degrees and suggested fast track two year degrees could charge £11k thus effectively equalising the overall cost of both – a three year degree would cost £22.5K and a two year degree £22k. Governors acknowledged that HE provision in an FE College was very different with the College not offering the traditional facilities of a University or funding academic research and thus perhaps it was appropriate to keep the two year degree fee at its present rate. This would however be a situation which would need to be kept under review in the post Augar HE landscape. Meanwhile the College would focus on cost effective delivery such as common modules. The HE Student Governor commented that a two year degree course was a substantial time commitment and thus did not appeal to all students. There would still be a market for the three year degree model.

The Committee thanked the Principal for the strategy discussion.

3.14/18.19 Update on the implementation of T Levels

The Vice Principal reminded the Committee that the College had been chosen as one of fifty allowed to deliver T Levels in the first phase starting September 2020. Only three subjects could be delivered in that first phase and the College would be offering Education & Childcare and Digital. The College would not be offering Construction as a pathway as it had very little Level 3 Construction but the new courses identified in agenda item 3.11 would help to address this and enable the College to prepare for the Construction T Level in September 2021. The College had received £190k for capacity building for work placements which would be a key challenge for T Level implementation. The funding would enable the College to develop its network of work placement employees as T Levels require 45-60 days of work placement (a minimum of 315 hours) over the two years although this can now be split between two employers. The College currently has 76 extended placements underway with a target of 152 next year and had set up Industry Committees to help bring new employers on board to support the extended placements.

Governors enquired what action the College was taking to recruit students to the new qualification. The Vice Principal explained that there were dedicated webpages, pages in the 2019/20 prospectus and leaflets had been distributed to 700 Year 9 students who had visited the College for the Interactive Fair in April. The Government would also be launching a national campaign to raise awareness. Governors asked if there was a danger that students would not enrol for T Levels but the Principal explained that the College would not be providing a competing offer such as a BTEC so for example the only Level 3 Digital provision would be the T Level. The Principal said the T Levels were excellent qualifications which offered good pathways for students and relevant and up to date content. Each T Level led to very specific career pathways so for example Digital could lead to coding, tech support or cloud services. The inclusion of soft skills also made the T Levels an excellent precursor to HE and improved learners' employability overall. T Levels could be mix and matched with A Levels.

Governors thanked the Vice Principal for the detailed report and action plan.

3.15/18.19 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Principal noted that the policy had been updated but with no substantive changes. The Committee approved the policy subject to the insertion of a hyphen in section 4 page 3.

Action: Committee Chair to recommend approval of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to the Board.

3.16/18.19 Equality and Diversity Committee

The Principal discussed the minutes of the February meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee. One outcome was to encourage diverse applications including LGBT+ for the Student Governor posts in 2019/20. One way to encourage a diversity of representation might also be to encourage that Student Governor appointments were only held for one year to maximise the number of students who could hold the post. The Committee discussed the correct term for LGBT and agreed that LGBT+ was inclusive to all and discussed trends in retention and achievement data. They noted that students who receive free school meals achieved 0.5% lower than those who were not eligible and agreed to explore what other forms of support the College could provide to these learners. The Principal informed the group that she would be looking at how best to support children of service personnel who also as a group tend to under achieve from age 14+.

Governors discussed the College's transgender policy and how to support those transitioning whilst recognizing tensions regarding for example toilets and safe spaces. The College's starting point would be to redesignate disabled toilets as gender neutral toilets.

3.17/18.19 Termly Safeguarding Report

The Vice Principal outlined the safeguarding training which had taken place in term 2 and booked for term 3. For example all staff within the Bookworms Nursery would receive Paediatric Mental Health First Aid training. The number of counselling appointments continue to rise and were up 190% in comparison to the same period last year. Governors noted the types of safeguarding issues raised through the MyConcern system and thanked the Vice Principal for making the categorisation of types of safeguarding issue much clearer. Brief details of a significant incident requiring police involvement were discussed which had resulted in a learner being excluded.

3.18/18.19 Any Other Business

Committee members reflected that the new timing of the meeting had worked well, and they would like it retained for 2019/20.

3.16/18.19 Date and Time of the next meeting

To be confirmed at the July Corporation Board.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.

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

Signed:

Dated:

Summary of action points

Item	Action
3.7 English and Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to email updated copy of the agenda item paper to Committee members. • Clerk to email Maths and English results to the Committee in August.
3.9 Student Performance	Principal to update Committee on predicted achievement in Health and Social Care
3.15 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	Committee Chair to recommend approval of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to the Board.