

## CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### AGENDA NOTICE

#### **Curriculum & Standards Committee Meeting**

**Date:** Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Time:** 4.00pm

**Venue:** Principal's Office

- 2.1 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
- 2.2 Declarations of Interest**
- 2.3 Minutes of the last Curriculum & Standards Committee held 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019**  
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 2.3
- 2.4 Matters arising from the minutes**  
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 2.4
- 2.5 Annual Operating Statement 2019/20 December Monitoring Point**  
Report by the Principal Appendix 2.5
- 2.6 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**  
Report by the Vice Principals Appendix 2.6
- 2.7 Progress with Quality Improvement Plans**  
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 2.7
- 2.8 English and Maths**  
Report by the Vice Principal Learner Services & General Education Appendix 2.8
- 2.9 Update on the implementation of T Levels**  
Report by the Vice Principal Technical & Vocational Education Appendix 2.9
- 2.10 HE Access and Participation Plan**  
Report by the Vice Principal Learner Services & General Education Appendix 2.10
- 2.11 Equality and Diversity Committee**  
Report by the Principal Appendix 2.11
- 2.12 Termly Safeguarding Report**  
Report by the Vice Principal Learner Services & General Education Appendix 2.12
- 2.13 Any Other Business**
- 2.14 Date and time of the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting**  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 4pm

#### DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Committee  
Ms Jane Houzer – Chair  
Mr N Crippa  
Ms E Marsh  
Ms W Megeney  
Mr R Rendel  
Mr A Smith  
Ms V Barrett – Principal

In attendance  
Mrs H Drewery – Vice Principal Technical & Vocational Education  
Mr L Magee - Vice Principal Learner Services & General Education  
Mr R Walker – Director of Quality  
Professor M Earwicker – Ex-officio member  
Ms C Gillam – Clerk to Corporation

## **Farnborough College of Technology**

### **Curriculum & Standards Committee**

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

#### Present:

Ms J Houzer - Chair  
Mr N Crippa  
Ms E Marsh  
Ms W Megeney  
Mr R Rendel  
Ms V Barrett – Principal

#### In Attendance:

Mrs H Drewery – Vice Principal Technical & Vocational Education  
Mr L Magee - Vice Principal Learner Services & General Education  
Ms C Gillam – Clerk to the Corporation

Quorate: Yes

*The meeting opened at 4.03pm*

#### **2.1/19.20 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**

---

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Smith and Mr Walker.

#### **2.2/19.20 Declarations of Interest**

---

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

#### **2.3/19.20 Minutes of the meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

---

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record subject to the correction of a typographical error on page 5.

#### **2.4/19.20 Matters arising from the minutes**

---

The Committee received the progress report on matters arising. Governors requested an update on the Industry Board event in December 2019 which was referred to in item 1.12 of the November minutes. The Vice Principal T&VE reported that the event had been a successful and well attended with 40 employers. So far the College had secured 144 out of the 165 industry placements it required and was now focusing on the remaining 21 which would have a particular focus on SEND learners.

#### **2.5/19.20 Annual Operating Statement 2019/20 December Monitoring Point**

---

The Principal drew attention to the summary of progress against the five Transformation Strategy goals on the cover of the paper. Under Goal 1 retention rates were very high for 16-18s at 96% and adults at 95%. Turning to goal 2 the ESFA had confirmed the College's outstanding financial health. For goal 3 improvements continued to be made to the College's estate and having successfully bid for T Level capital funds the College had submitted an Expression of Interest for a second round of capital funding. The Principal noted that there had been a number of snagging issues with the Emerging Technology Centre but feedback from students was that they enjoyed using the modern new facility. It had also been recently hired out at a weekend for a political party meeting with 400 attendees. Some asbestos issues had been identified in C block and these were being assessed. Governors suggested that there might be a Government fund to assist with the removal of asbestos from public buildings. The

Principal announced that she had asked Fusion to bring designs for the new C block (ARIC building) to the April Corporation Board meeting. Goal 4 and partnerships continued to be a key strength. The Principal noted that the College had bid to Hampshire County Council for an additional 20 high needs learners with a particular focus on moving them into employment. She also informed the Committee that she had had a useful meeting with the Principal of Farnborough VI Form regarding 69 students transferring from the VI Form to FCoT. In order to support growth in its main A Level provision the VI Form had decided to no longer offer Level 2 Media, Business and IT and so FCoT would transfer these students to its T Level transition programme. Finally, under goal 5 the Principal praised the College's marketing team for their work.

Governors asked why under goal 2 apprenticeships would not meet the budget target. The Principal explained that apprenticeships had already exceeded the Transformation Strategy target of £1.8m and were now moving beyond that. Almost £2.3m had been achieved last year and the budget for this year had been set at £2.5m which the Consultant Director of Finance had cautioned the Board was a challenging target. It was therefore in this context that apprenticeships should be measured. They had not shrunk and had probably reached the maximum market. Also, under goal 2 Governors enquired why two main teaching and learning platforms had been referred to whilst the text referenced three systems. The Principal explained that Pro-monitor, Office 365 Teams and Moodle all had their benefits, but Moodle was limited in its flexibility and would be phased out. Office 365 Teams could be a useful platform for Board and Committee virtual meetings, but it needed to be seen whether Governors who did not have College email addresses could obtain the necessary access.

*Addendum: Teams was successfully used for virtual attendance at both the March Audit and F&GP meetings.*

The Student Governor commented that one of her lecturers had praised the interactive aspects of Office 365. The Vice Principal T&VE informed the Committee that in the next week she would be offering daily training to staff on Office 365 Teams so that lecturers could expand their online teaching provision during the coronavirus outbreak for students who needed to self-isolate. Finally, under the title of goal 2 Governors asked whether in the fourth year of the Transformation Strategy it was still possible to diversify income streams. The Principal replied that yes it was, and there would be more detail regarding this in the term 2 update which would be included in the next report. For example, Hampshire has high numbers of home schooled students and the College had launched a revision service which was proving very popular with these students. The College was continuing to develop its non-grant funding via its online college provision which was popular amongst adult students looking to retrain. The College was also in discussion with Churchill, a construction company, regarding setting up new scaffolding courses at the Aldershot College under Churchill's branding and sponsorship which would be new full cost courses meeting a training need in the area.

The Committee then discussed the figures given under goal 1 for GCSE English and maths performance. The Principal explained that the College had entered its full cohort and achieved 7 more high grades in GCSE maths than at the same time last year. The key target was to improve the number of high grade passes, even with a larger entry. Greater flexibility to the funding condition rules meant that the College could direct students with a 1 or 2 in GCSE maths to Functional Skills as a more appropriate qualification. The Committee also discussed what action was being taken with the 4% of students who had attendance rates below 50%. The Vice Principal LS&GE explained that some students had mental health issues, some were subject to disciplinary procedures and some were being allowed to work from home.

The Committee accepted the Annual Operating Statement 2019/20 December monitoring point.

## **2.6/19.20 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**

---

The Committee noted that the suggestion made at the November meeting to differentiate between the scores for English and maths had not been actioned. It was recommended that SMT consider reducing the risk score for English which would reflect the greater challenge presented by maths.

**Action:** Consultant Director of Finance to consider reducing the score on the risk register for English.

## **2.7/19.20 Progress with Quality Improvement Plan**

---

The Principal presented the mid-year update on progress with the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Governors noted that the update column did not always pick up on the expected outcome and success criteria. The Principal agreed to add some further explanatory comment to the column but noted that it was because sometimes there was no significant differential between groups of students. For QIP reference 4.3 it was suggested that the national average figure be included in the outcome and success criteria column. Governors also enquired under that item what the issues were which were raised by the 20% of employers who were recorded in the survey as not satisfied. The Principal agreed that the Head of Industry-Led Development and Apprenticeships would be invited to the next meeting to present the findings of that survey as it had yielded some interesting outcomes. Finally, the Committee were pleased to see under item 1.3 an attendance rate of 100% in Engineering and noted the turnaround in this subject area. The Principal praised the Head of Engineering, Mr Hutton, for his hands-on management of the subject area.

### **Actions:**

- Principal to include some further detail in the update column for English and maths to refer to the success criteria.
- Clerk to include on the summer agenda a presentation from the Head of Industry-Led Development and Apprenticeships on the employer satisfaction survey.

## **2.8/19.20 English and Maths**

---

The Vice Principal LS & GE introduced the report noting that enrolments for GCSE English and maths were stable but there was a reduction in enrolments for Functional maths. Retention figures for GCSE English and maths were exactly the same at 93.8%. Attendance was a concern at 67.3% for GCSE maths and 68.6% for GCSE English. Governors asked whether enrolments for Functional maths would increase and the Vice Principal LS & GE said that with changes to the conditionality of funding rules it was now possible to move some students with the lowest GCSE grades from the GCSE course to Functional Skills. The GCSE maths high grade resit figure was 6.6% overall but when students were removed who were not within conditionality of funding (i.e. with Qualifications on Entry below grade 3) the figure rose to 8.2%. For GCSE English it was 8.1% overall and 9.5% with conditionality of funding students removed. The Head of English and Maths was being mentored by a Further Education Quality Consultant to support the implementation of improvements, but it was noted that staffing had been complicated by several staff being on maternity leave. However, the College had recently made two excellent appointments to provide cover. Governors enquired whether parents had access to the ProMonitor system and the Vice Principal LS & GE replied that it would be introduced once the system had been well established. Governors asked how decisions were made regarding the choice of Functional Skills over GCSE and noted that cases were discussed individually with teachers and managers using realistic careers advice and BKSB diagnostic assessments. Finally, Governors asked for detail at the next meeting on the adult GCSE English cohort and it was agreed that this could be supplied from the College's equality and diversity data.

**Action:** Vice Principal LS & GE to include detail on the adult GCSE English cohort using EDI data in the next report to the Committee.

## **2.9/19.20 Update on the implementation of T Levels**

---

The Vice Principal T&VE announced that the College had received the specifications for both the Digital T Level and the Childcare and Education T Level, and draft assessment materials were being released this month. Lots of training had taken place with staff on the content and assessment of the new qualifications. The content in the Digital: Digital Production, Design and Development pathway had proved narrower than anticipated with a high content of programming. This impacted both staff training and finding appropriate work placement companies, but both were being addressed. Governors asked if there were a minimum number of enrolments to proceed with the courses and the Vice Principal T&VE said that currently Digital had 22 applications, 76 for Childcare and 11 for Education (the teaching assistant route). 11 was a viable number for Education and was expected to grow and there would also be benefits in having smaller class sizes. It was also possible that students might switch between programmes. FCoT was one of a small number of colleges offering a transition year (pre-T Level) from September 2020 in Digital, Childcare and Science and it was anticipated that at least one if not two groups would run for each of these programmes. Governors asked how arrangements were progressing for the extended work placements and it was noted that childcare and education providers were very enthusiastic. The College would only place students with good or outstanding providers. Digital would be the main area of focus now as the pathway has more of a software engineering emphasis. The College had established a work placement team using funding from the Capacity and Delivery Fund. The College would offer new T Levels in Health and Science from September 2021 as well as Construction. The Health and Science pathways were particularly exciting as they covered a wide range from pharmacy to metrology.

## **2.10/19.20 HE Access and Participation Plan**

---

The Vice Principal LS & GE explained that in order to charge HE tuition fees above the fee cap the College was required to produce an Access and Participation Plan (APP) for approval by the Office for Students (OfS). The Committee noted that APPs were designed with large universities in mind rather than FE colleges. The College was also required to invest at least 15% of the money raised above the fee cap in attempting to reduce the gaps in participation to maximise fair access to HE. For FCoT this was a sum of at least £58,222 to be spent on widening participation. The Vice Principal LS & GE noted that figures for non-completions had improved as had figures for non-continuation and attainment figures were fairly level. The UCF was located in Hampshire which is 95% white but 11.2% of FCoT's HE students were from a BAME background which showed positive over-recruitment from the catchment area. 2018/19 had showed a significant improvement in the retention of BAME learners. Turning to mature students FCoT had reversed the national picture with mature students outnumbering the young and non-continuation was better for mature students than for the HE population as a whole. For disabled students it was noted that the UCF provided good support with small group sizes making it much easier to support learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, achievement of good degrees for disabled learners was lower than for learners overall and showed an increasing gap. This would be an area for improvement. Governors noted the four targets in the APP observing that three of the four were access targets. Target 3 regarding BAME students was clarified as improving access to the area's Nepalese community. It appeared that in the investment summary chart on page 16 the College had invested more than the 15% required by the OfS. Governors thanked the Vice Principal LS & GE for an excellent report.

## **2.11/19.20 Equality and Diversity Committee**

---

The Committee received the minutes with thanks.

## **2.12/19.20 Termly Safeguarding Report**

---

Governors were concerned to note the continued increase in suicidal ideation and attempts to take life. National benchmarks were not available although it was suggested that the Samaritans might be able to provide data, but it was observed that it did appear to be a national trend. The College's lead counsellor would be asked to give a presentation to the summer Board meeting. The HE Student Governor reported that the College's mental health facilities were excellent and well utilised by students and there was reduced stigma regarding discussing mental health issues. It was perhaps a reflection of FCoT's provision that students were accessing services in College that they could not obtain elsewhere.

### **2.13/19.20 Any Other Business**

The Principal advised the Committee that she would be briefing the Board at the April meeting on the College's actions regarding the coronavirus. For now teaching and learning were continuing but plans were in hand to move online as and when required. The Principal met with SMT regularly to discuss the emergency and the responses required. The College's business continuity plan was in effect and testing of systems such as HR and payroll via remote working was proceeding well. Sanitation stations had been provided throughout the College and students were reminded of the importance of hand washing and sanitising.

The Committee noted that this would be Ms Megeney's last meeting and thanked her for her contribution to the Committee and her committed engagement in meetings.

### **2.14/19.20 Date and Time of the next meeting**

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 4pm

*The meeting closed at 6.10pm.*

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

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

### **Summary of action points**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
2.6 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks	Consultant Director of Finance to consider reducing the score on the risk register for English.
2.7 Progress with Quality Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal to include some further detail in the update column for English and maths to refer to the success criteria.</li> <li>Clerk to include on the summer agenda a presentation from the Head of Industry-Led Development and Apprenticeships on the employer satisfaction survey.</li> </ul>
2.8 English and Maths	Vice Principal LS & GE to include detail on the adult GCSE English cohort using EDI data in the next report to the Committee.