

CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

AGENDA NOTICE

Curriculum & Standards Committee Meeting

Date: Thursday 10th March 2022

Time: 4.00pm

Venue: Online

- 2.1 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
- 2.2 Declarations of Interest**
- 2.3 Minutes of the last Curriculum & Standards Committee held 18th November 2021**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 2.3
- 2.4 Matters arising from the minutes**
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 2.4
- Targets**
- 2.5 Annual Operating Statement 2021/22 March Monitoring Point**
Report by the Principal Appendix 2.5
- Quality**
- 2.6 Pearson's Annual Monitoring and Performance Report (AMPR)**
Report by the Directors of Quality Appendix 2.6
- 2.7 Quality Improvement Plan**
Report by the Directors of Quality Appendix 2.7
- 2.8 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**
Report by the Directors of Quality Appendix 2.8
- FE**
- 2.9 FE Student Performance Report**
Report by the Vice Principal Teaching, Learning & Completion Appendix 2.9
- HE**
- 2.10 HE Report**
Report by the Principal Appendix 2.10
- Curriculum Development & Industry**
- 2.11 Curriculum Developments**
Report by the Vice Principal Curriculum Development & Industry Appendix 2.11
- Safeguarding**
- 2.12 Termly Safeguarding Report**
Report by the Vice Principal Teaching, Learning & Completion Appendix 2.12
- Corporate Reports**
- 2.13 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee minutes**
Report by the Principal Appendix 2.13
- 2.14 Any Other Business**
- 2.15 Date and time of the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting**
Thursday 16th June 2022 at 4pm

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Committee

Ms Jane Houzer – Chair
Mr A Burnham
Mr N Crippa
Professor O Khan
Mr A Smith
Ms V Barrett – Principal

In attendance

Mrs H Drewery – Vice Principal Curriculum Development & Industry
Placements (for item 2.11 only)
Mrs R Jenkins – Vice Principal Teaching, Learning & Completion

Ms K Morris – Director of Quality
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 10th March 2022

Present:

Ms J Houzer – Chair (via video conference)

Mr A Burnham - (via video conference)

Mr N Crippa - (via video conference)

Professor O Khan - (via video conference) – *from end item 2.1 to end of item 2.10*

Ms V Barrett – Principal (via video conference)

In Attendance:

Mrs S Chapman – Governor attending as observer (via video conference) – *from end item 2.1 to mid 2.8 item*

Mrs H Drewery – Vice Principal Curriculum, Development and Industry Placements (via video conference) – *from early item 2.10*

Mrs R Jenkins – Vice Principal Teaching, Learning & Completion (via video conference)

Ms K Morris – Director of Quality (via video conference)

Mr R Walker - Director of Quality (via video conference)

Ms C Gillam – Clerk to the Corporation (via video conference)

Quorate: Yes

The meeting opened at 4.02pm

2.1/21.22 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr Smith. It was noted that Mrs Chapman had been invited to join the Committee as a member and was keen to do so in the future when commitments allowed, but would initially attend meetings where possible as an observer. The FE Student Governor Mr Burnham was welcomed to his first meeting.

Mrs Chapman and Professor Khan joined the meeting.

2.2/21.22 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

2.3/21.22 Minutes of the meeting held 18th November 2021

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

2.4/21.22 Matters arising from the minutes

The Committee received the progress report on matters arising.

2.5/21.22 Annual Operating Statement 2021/22 March Monitoring Point

The Principal reported on Term 1 progress for the Annual Operating Statement 2021/22 noting that this captured key targets linked to the final year of the Transformation Strategy 2017-22. She explained that focus in the College had been upon preparing for the imminent Ofsted inspection and upon settling learners into College life after two years of mainly online learning. She reported that there were some behavioural issues and the College had rolled out '8 habits of highly successful learners' to promote the professional behaviours that were expected of learners. The Directors of Quality also led on pulling together a T-shaped professional framework to support best practice amongst new and existing teachers post lockdown. This is supporting teachers to be confident with their natural authority in the classroom. Regrettably,

some learners have had to be withdrawn due to persistent bad behaviour which included poor attendance, rudeness to staff and fellow students.

The College environment was continuing to be refreshed with external decoration to create an inspirational environment. Work continues on the 2022-32 Sustainable Transformations Strategy (STS) following feedback from the annual staff conference in December. Supporting Plans for STS are also being finalised, HE, Finance, IT... VR learning was being developed for Aircraft Maintenance Training and received encouraging feedback from a Gulfstream visit. Work was taking place to fully realise the potential of the Emerging Technologies Centre (ETC) as this had not been possible during successive lockdowns.

Governors asked if there was an update regarding the likely date of the Ofsted inspection. The Principal replied that there was no news but the College hoped that it would take place before the Easter break. Governors welcomed the report attached to the paper on the first Industry Committee meeting held since 2019 and praised the interesting feedback the College had received from employers. Governors enquired whether employers had expressed views regarding T Levels. The Principal explained that some of the employers already offered T Level placements so they understood and accepted the qualification. What was not helpful as T Levels were trying to become established nationally was the current debate about extending BTEC provision which creates uncertainty for learners. The Government should be explicit that there are three clear pathways: A Levels, T Levels and Apprenticeships. Governors asked if the requirement to pass GCSE English and maths for T Levels had been dropped and the Principal clarified that they were still part of the conditionality of funding but if learners did not pass them they would not fail their main study programme. Finally Governors questioned how the College supported the learners it had to exclude due to persistent bad behaviour. The Principal advised that the majority of excluded learners were from Surrey which unlike Hampshire has school Sixth Forms and all were given exit interviews. The Vice Principal Teaching, Learning & Completion (TLC) added that the College had developed a care package to support exiting learners which included an interview with a Careers Advisor and signposting to external emotional wellbeing support.

2.6/21.22 Pearson's Annual Monitoring and Performance Report (AMPR)

The Director of Quality (KM) introduced the annual report covering HNC/HND programmes. This was a small provision and the External Examiner process had highlighted areas for commendation and for improvement. The Committee received the report.

2.7/21.22 Quality Improvement Plan

The Director of Quality (RW) presented the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which arose from the College Self Assessment Report. He drew attention to the achievement of 25% high grades in both GCSE English and maths in the November 2021 resits which was above the 20% predicted. Careers education had been re-energised and was going well. ProMonitor and other integrated systems were being used effectively to improve the learner experience whilst streamlining workload.

Governors noted that the retention rate for A Levels was 86% in this report but in the following agenda item the risk register it was quoted as 68% and queried the disparity. The Director of Quality (RW) explained that the 86% stated in the QIP was from January but that this had fallen to 68% due to learner withdrawals. The Principal advised the College was reviewing and streamlining the A Level offer to have a more transparent link to career and industry pathways that supported engagement and progression. The Principal also noted that mental health issues had impacted attendance. Further that the College was trialling progress tutors in three areas (A Levels, Construction & Engineering, Health & Beauty) and it was hoped that this would help to address issues. For example, within A Level students where the personal tutor teaches only one subject amongst tutees, the progress tutor will be a common thread. The new progress

tutors would be a conduit to work with families and learners. Governors welcomed the steps being taken and noted that although it was a small cohort of learners the measures discussed should be set out in a plan. The Principal noted that the Vice Principal TLC had structured the actions into a plan.

2.8/21.22 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks

The Director of Quality (KM) presented the curriculum risks. The first risk concerned achievement data. It was noted that learners were being withdrawn later this year as the College had given learners 6 months to re-engage with learning post-lockdown and this impacted retention and projected achievement rates. To improve Functional Skills achievement learners are being given as many opportunities to sit the qualification as possible. The College was also closely watching the national picture with a view to reviewing its offer. Governors observed that Functional Skills retention was positive and the Director of Quality (KM) praised the work of the Programme Managers in monitoring attendance and also encouraging learners to engage with Functional Skills. The Principal noted that strategies employed to engage GCSE English and maths learners were working but it was much more difficult with these new Functional Skills qualifications. It was a nationwide problem with declining achievement rates. The College is therefore reviewing learner entitlement for Functional Skills and GCSE.

Mrs Chapman left the meeting.

Governors supported taking this approach noting that parents did not seem to think that the Functional Skills qualification was important. Governors also noted lack of engagement elsewhere with Professor Khan observing that at the University of Surrey students were keen to return to social activities but attendance at lectures was poor. Governors acknowledged that it was difficult for young people to re-engage with learning and that the pedagogy would need to evolve. A return to 'old style' lectures was not inviting to learners, who had become more engaged with gaming than with lectures whilst online, but hybrid classrooms and innovative use of technology might help. Professor Khan suggested that it would be beneficial for the University of Surrey and FCoT to share strategies to improve learner engagement.

Finally the Director of Quality (KM) drew attention to risks 11 and 12 regarding apprenticeships. Apprentice and employer satisfaction were much improved with an excellent response to coffee mornings for apprentices and the first Apprenticeship Forum held in February 2022. These events also enabled early identification of any issues so that concerns could be addressed before they escalated.

Action: The Principal and Professor Khan to discuss student engagement within the College and University to share any potential best practices.

2.9/21.22 FE Student Performance Report

The Vice Principal TLC presented the report highlighting that attendance was currently at 84.4% across College with ongoing impact from covid absences. Attendance for maths and English were below that of the main qualification. Retention was 94.5% across college with 16-18 at 93.7% and 19+ attendance at 97%.

GCSE November re-sits saw achievement of high grades of 25.9% for GCSE English and 26.8% for GCSE maths. Attendance was 91%. The re-sits proved to be a very positive experience and learners were delighted with their results. Governors congratulated the levels of achievement noting that to achieve over 25% in both subjects was excellent. Governors enquired what would happen to the remaining percentage that did not achieve a high grade. The Vice Principal TLC replied that they would re-sit again in the summer and there was high motivation to achieve a good GCSE grade as it was viewed by learners as an important achievement. Governors asked how successful the College was in predicting grades and the Principal noted that achievement of high grades was predicted at 20% so learners did better

than expected. In addition almost all learners achieved a GCSE grade which was excellent considering that for the past two years they had not sat examinations but had received results via CAG or TAG. The Vice Principal TLC advised that there were more learners studying Functional Skills than before and exams were being held more frequently. Catch-up funding was being used to work with learners in small groups and 121 sessions to bridge gaps in knowledge.

2.10/21.22 HE Report

The Principal presented the report prepared by the Vice Principal HE, Adult & Curriculum Enhancement (HEACE) noting progress against the Access and Participation Plan Action Plan. The majority of the targets were green, but two regarding increasing the number of students from the most deprived and lowest participation areas had not been met. This was, however, not unusual as these were difficult targets to meet. Professor Khan noted that the University of Surrey was also missing similar targets and suggested that the two institutions work together as part of the Higher Education Outreach Network to speak to schools jointly to present a wide spectrum of offer.

The Vice Principal CDIP joined the meeting.

The Principal informed the Committee that two Nepali Student Ambassadors had been appointed and an inaugural Nepali Community event had been held at the College which was well attended and very successful. The College had also been inspired by the University of Surrey's student peer mentoring model and appointed four peer mentors to help first year students settle in and help with social events for HE students.

Professor Khan enquired as to the College's response to recent Office for Students (OfS) consultations on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and minimum standards. He noted that if adopted, one of the proposals would mean that the University of Surrey's B3 condition would include FCoT learners as FCoT is a validating partner institution. There were minimum standards regarding continuation, progression and completion. The University did not have access to FCoT's data so it would be helpful to work with the Vice Principal HEACE to analyse FCoT's data as the College's minimum standards performance will be scrutinised through the University of Surrey. Professor Khan agreed to put the Vice Principal HEACE in touch with the Registrar and the Head of Teaching Performance at Surrey. The Director of Quality (RW) agreed that a collegiate approach would be very helpful and would also assist the College in aiming for a silver TEF award next time having achieved a bronze award in 2017. Governors supported this approach noting that the TEF submission was a resource intensive process and assistance from the University to better understand what was required would help the College to make a stronger case. The Principal noted that when the College achieved the bronze award two areas of concern raised by the OfS were declining student numbers and fluctuating student satisfaction levels. She reflected that student satisfaction levels had stabilised and numbers were growing. It was agreed that the Vice Principal HEACE should be invited by the University of Surrey to join their TEF governance panel.

Action: Vice Principal HEACE to update the June C&S Committee on collegiate working with the University of Surrey with respect to requirements for minimum standards and the TEF submission.

Professor Khan left the meeting.

2.11/21.22 Curriculum Developments

The Vice Principal CDIP presented her report drawing attention to continuous growth in the College's 16-18 provision. T Levels in Science, Healthcare Science and Health commenced in September 2021 totalling 31 learners. In its second year of offering the Digital T Level has 33 learners and Childcare and Education has 22 learners. The total number of T Level learners in Year 1 is 83 and in Year 2 is 28. A Transition Programme at Level 2 has started in Engineering,

Construction and Business leading to new T Levels in these subjects starting September 2022. Application numbers for the new T Levels in the three Engineering pathways are healthy and these share a common core in the first year with specialism in the second year. Numbers in the three Construction pathways are also healthy. Applicant numbers for the new T Level in Business Management Administration are low at 4 but there are 44 applicants for the equivalent BTEC which the College also offers. From September 2022 a new Level 3 in Esports will be offered by the College. New apprenticeships in warehouse and logistics areas will be offered from September and the College is looking to tailor the Automation and Controls Engineering level 4 apprenticeship to fit the logistics and warehouse industry.

Governors noted the popularity of the Business BTEC over the T Level and enquired whether there as any cross-over of teaching between the two. The Vice Principal CDIP replied that there was not as the two qualifications have different assessment methodologies and one has far more guided hours. The Principal added that it was unlikely that the T Level in Business would run with only 4 learners. Governors welcomed the otherwise healthy growth and interest in T Levels. Mr Crippa praised the introduction of a Level 1 in ICT which enabled greater progression for SEND learners.

2.12/21.22 Termly Safeguarding Report

The Vice Principal TLC reported that the tutorial programme had provided information on a variety of topics in term 2 including knife crime. An online consent training course had also been completed across the College over 4 weeks and led to a certificate. Adaptations had been made for ESOL and SEND learners. To date there had been a 10% decrease in safeguarding concerns raised through 'My Concern' but a wide range of concerns continued to be tracked through the system (including positive covid cases) and staff were encouraged to use the platform. The College had seen an increase in transgender learners experiencing gender identity issues but the Counselling team had provided good support and the learners feel supported. The Vice Principal TLC reported on the numbers of learners on plans and that 14 learners were escalated to Children's Social Care. Sadly it was reported that a learner had taken their own life in February. Governors sent their condolences and were mindful how hard this would be for all involved.

Governors praised the College's excellent pastoral support and the inclusive environment that FCoT provides. It was noted that it was helpful to see on page 52 of the meeting pack the breakdown of mental health concerns reported by learners. The Committee gave thanks to the tireless work of the dedicated staff working in safeguarding and for the comprehensive reporting of issues to Governors.

2.13/21.22 Equality, Diversity& Inclusion Committee minutes

The Committee received the report with interest.

2.14/21.22 Any Other Business

None.

2.15/21.22 Date and Time of the next meeting

Thursday 16th June 2022 at 4pm.

The meeting closed at 5.20pm.

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

Signed:

Dated:

Summary of action points

Item	Action
2.8 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks	The Principal and Professor Khan to discuss student engagement within the College and University to share any potential best practices.
2.10 HE Report	Vice Principal HEACE to update the June C&S Committee on collegiate working with the University of Surrey with respect to requirements for minimum standards and the TEF submission.