

## CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### AGENDA NOTICE

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

**Date:** Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**Time:** 5.00 – 6.45pm

**Venue:** Online

- 3.1 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**
- 3.2 Declarations of Interest**
- 3.3 Minutes of the last Curriculum & Standards Committee held 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023**  
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 3.3
- 3.4 Matters arising from the minutes**  
Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee Appendix 3.4
- Targets**
- 3.5 Annual Operating Statement 2022/23 June Monitoring Point**  
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.5
- Quality**
- 3.6 Annual Quality Assurance Report**  
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 3.6
- 3.7 Stakeholder Feedback**  
Report by the Director of Quality Appendix 3.7
- Curriculum**
- 3.8 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**  
Report by the Vice Principal HE & Curriculum Development Appendix 3.8
- 3.9 English and Maths**  
Report by the Vice Principal HE & Curriculum Development Appendix 3.9
- 3.10 Curriculum Report**  
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.10
- 3.11 Accountability Agreement**  
Report by the Principal Appendix 3.11
- Monitoring**
- 3.12 Attendance and Retention**  
Report by the AD Planning, Funding, Information Systems & Exams Appendix 3.12
- HE**
- 3.13 HE Report**  
Report by the Director of HE and Special Projects Appendix 3.13
- 3.14 B3 conditions monitoring report**  
Report by the Director of HE and Special Projects Appendix 3.14  
*(please note this paper will follow)*

## Safeguarding

### 3.15 Termly Safeguarding Report

Report by the Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence Appendix 3.15

### 3.16 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Report by the Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence Appendix 3.16

## Corporate Reports

### 3.17 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee minutes (including EDI data)

Report by the Principal Appendix 3.17

## STAFF AND STUDENT GOVERNOR TO LEAVE

### 3.18 Minutes of the last C&S Committee held 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (cont.)

Part 2 Confidential with restricted circulation Appendix 3.18

### 3.19 Apprenticeships Report

Verbal Report by the Director of Quality

### 3.20 Any Confidential Matters of Report

Verbal report by the Principal

### 3.21 Any Other Business

**1. Any items for discussion under AOB must be sent through in advance to the Clerk.**

2. To agree the 2/3 key items from the meeting for the Chair to report on at the July Board

### 3.22 Date and time of the next Curriculum & Standards Committee meeting

tbc

#### DISTRIBUTION LIST:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>In attendance</u>
Ms Jane Houzer – Chair	Mrs R Jenkins – Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence
Mrs G Christie	Mr G Gomes – AD Planning, Funding, Information Systems & Exams
Mr N Crippa	Mr I Graham – Vice Principal HE & Curriculum Development
Professor O Khan	Mr L Magee- Director of HE & Special Projects
Student Governors	Ms K Morris – Director of Quality
Mr J Sparkes	Dr F Oduneye – Ex-officio member
Ms K Yeomans	Ms C Gillam – Clerk to Corporation
Ms V Barrett – Principal	

**Farnborough College of Technology****Curriculum & Standards Committee**Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023Present:

Mrs G Christie – Chair (via video conference)  
Professor O Khan - (via video conference) – *from mid item 3.8*  
Mr J Sparkes - *to end of item 3.17*  
Ms K Yeomans (via video conference)  
Ms V Barrett – Principal

In Attendance:

Mr G Gomes – Associate Director of PFISE – *to end of item 3.17*  
Mr I Graham – Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE - *to end of item 3.17*  
Mrs R Jenkins – Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence - *to end of item 3.17*  
Mr L Magee – Director of HE & Special Projects (via video conference) – *to end of item 3.18*  
Ms K Morris – Director of Quality  
Ms C Gillam – Clerk to the Corporation

Quorate: Yes

*The meeting opened at 5.01pm*

**3.1/22.23 Opening of Meeting and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs Chapman, Mr Crippa, Ms Houzer, Dr Oduneye and the Student Governor. In the absence of Ms Houzer Mrs Christie agreed to Chair the meeting.

**3.2/22.23 Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

**3.3/22.23 Minutes of the meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

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

**3.4/22.23 Matters arising from the minutes**

The Committee received the progress report on matters arising and noted that all actions had either been completed or were addressed in the items on the agenda.

**3.5/22.23 Annual Operating Statement 2022/23 June Monitoring Point**

The Principal explained that national averages had been released for the first time since the pandemic and that FCoT was below national averages in a number of areas. The College was working to understand the data better and areas of focus including Sports and Public Services. The Director of Quality added that course reviews had revealed that retention rates were better in some areas. Attention was drawn to the burden of assessment and it was noted that over 20,000 examinations had been held and the majority of SMT had had to assist with invigilation. Examination overwhelm was an issue with some learners not arriving for exams. The Principal turned to the College's financial situation and noted that the biggest challenge was recruitment and because of labour shortages there was an increased use of agency staff and this would impact the budget. The AEB income was below budget as learners were choosing to go into employment rather than study.

### Governors' questions and comments

The Chair thanked the Principal for her summary and asked that Governors take time to digest the paper and raise any questions post meeting with the Principal.

### **3.6/22.23 Annual Quality Assurance Report**

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The Director of Quality presented the report noting it was the first time the report had been presented in this format. The report brought together teaching and learning quality assurance, internal and external sources of assurance, the underperforming courses report and the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Deep dive activity had taken place across 10 curriculum areas which were selected either due to underperformance, or new Programme Managers, or were areas where a deep dive had not taken place or had not been involved in the last Ofsted inspection. Additionally thematic reviews were conducted across tutorials in Education Pathways for Young People and Internal Schemes of Work. Assessment Verification Monitoring Group meetings had increased over the past two years and these also now included a separate English and Maths focus so that there was increased internal quality assurance scrutiny. External quality assurance was taking place across all provision in partnership with the 25 Awarding Organisations the College works with. Underperforming courses data for 2021/22 was noted and as the Principal had referred to in the previous item, national average data was now included for reference with the tables organised by subject specific areas. Overall FCoT achievement was 5% below national average. The national data had confirmed the list of underperforming courses which managers had already been tracking closely. Course review meetings had increased with the College monitoring closely so that there would be no end of year surprises. The report noted the courses with improved predicted achievement for 2022/23 and those for which the predicted achievement continues to be a cause for concern: L2 Motor Vehicle; L3 Foundation & Extended Diploma Sport; L2 & L3 Uniformed Protective Services; L2 HSC; L2 & L3 AAT; A Levels; Functional Skills English and Maths. Additionally, L2 Plumbing, Hairdressing and Certificate in Counselling had also been identified as presenting new cause for concern.

### Governors' questions and comments

The Chair noted the issues raised and that there was significant quality assurance work taking place to address concerns. She suggested that the Committee Governors not present in the meeting raise any questions with the Principal post meeting.

### **3.7/22.23 2021/22 Stakeholder Feedback**

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The Director of Quality presented the feedback to date from various stakeholders which was being brought together in one RAG rated report for the first time. The Induction & Safeguarding Survey had shown good progress against the areas where the College had targeted specific actions. The College was taking the 'trust but verify' approach and looking for the evidence to support the actions taken. Items rated as amber were in progress but not yet complete.

### Governors' questions and comments

Governors enquired as to the response rate to surveys. The Director of Quality noted that this was a challenge and they had seen a declining response rate especially from parents and carers. Moving parent/carer meetings online had not helped as responses were usually better when meetings took place in person. The College was letting learners know when surveys were running so that they could encourage their parents and carers to respond. The FE Learner Survey running this week had seen an improved response rate compared to last year, and was being promoted through tutorials.

The Principal noted that the Director of Quality's remit was larger than the previous Director of Quality Mr Walker's. The Ofsted inspection framework has changed and the Director of Quality

is now responsible for verifying classroom experience and learner voice. She welcomed this report as a summary of stakeholder assurance.

### **3.8/22.23 Monitoring of Curriculum Risks**

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The Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE presented the risks noting that there were 10 risks, 9 graded amber and 1 green. There had been three movements on the risk register compared to last term with C3 changing from a risk score of 16 to 12, C6 changing from 16 to 12 and C9 changing from 9 to 6. One new risk had been added, C10, which was regarding the OfS B3 condition regarding the College's performance through learner continuation and completion.

*Professor Khan joined the meeting.*

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors noted that the three movements in the risk register had been downwards showing that mitigating actions were effective. The Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE agreed that these risks had reduced, but the register was a snapshot in time and therefore could change in the future. The Principal agreed that mitigating actions were currently working and the College was making progress. Professor Khan thanked the College for including the B3 conditions as a new risk and noted that the University of Surrey had met with FCoT to discuss B3 conditions this week and that the College had reflected upon the points raised by the University and he believed that the risk would be quickly addressed by FCoT.

### **3.9/22.23 English and Maths**

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The Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE informed Governors that predicted achievement for GCSE English was in line with the November re-sit with predictions for an increase in high grade passes. Predicted achievement for Functional Skills English L1 is 60% which would be 13% higher than last year and 4% above the national benchmark. Predicted achievement for Functional Skills Maths L1 is 59% which would be 16% higher than last year and 22% above the national benchmark. The overall predicted achievement for GCSE Maths was 91% which would be 1% higher than last year and a predicted high pass achievement of 36% would be in line with the previous year. The paper detailed the various strategies which had been in place throughout the year to improve progress and achievement for learners including new line management of the Head of Maths of English. The Principal added that the 91% GCSE Maths predicted achievement was secured from the November re-sit and there would be opportunities to improve at this sitting so she hoped to see this figure rise higher.

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors noted that English and Maths were heading in the right direction and that they could see the plans in place to keep the College on that upwards trajectory. The Principal noted that the College was not yet seeing the excellent results it had experienced in these subject areas during the pandemic, and the Director of Quality added that lecturers were reporting gaps in learning for their English and Maths learners.

### **3.10/22.23 Curriculum Report**

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The Principal introduced the report which had been commissioned from the company Lightcast to give greater insight into the curriculum planning. Lightcast has expertise in gathering labour market intelligence for both the public and private sector and the report showed the methodology used. Areas highlighted as being among the most regionally oversupplied courses were: counselling and psychology; bricklaying and carpentry; sport; media, music and performing arts; art and design. Yet the Principal advised that the situation was not as straightforward as that and so the Programme Managers were adding detail to their curriculum plans such as for example in counselling there were lots of small micro businesses and not in fact an oversupply. The regionally undersupplied course areas were: aeronautical engineering;

professional studies; catering; teacher training; early years and health and social care; ICT/digital. The report noted that there are common skills, specialised skills and software skills which are highly sought after by employers and which cut across all sectors. There is also a growing employer demand for green skills with aeronautical engineering seeing the sharpest growth in green skills demand over the last three years, as well as occupations linked to motor vehicle, business and travel and tourism. While the top green skills vary from sector to sector, skills relating to protecting the environment, awareness of achieving Net Zero, ESG standards and electric vehicles were amongst those most in demand. The report gave detail for Engineering as an example and showed the supply-demand ratio where below 1.0 represented an undersupply. The Farnborough local area was shown to be above the ratio of 1.0 which was good. There was also an occupational overview, recent recruitment activity, top advertised job titles, top recruiting employers and top skills in demand. The top employers list had thrown up some surprises such as Thames Water and the NHS but these were queried and verified, which illustrated the value of this data. The Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE was leading curriculum areas to develop their curriculum plans and consider FCoT's expectations regarding the 'T-Shaped Professional' and an example of the T shape was shared for Art & Design. The Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE explained that sitting within the overall curriculum plan was the Lightcast information, the College's own labour market intelligence and its own specific curriculum plan for each programme area, resulting in each programme area having its own curriculum plan. The T shape is a shortcut for a complete learner with breadth and depth in skills. Common skills that cut across form the top bar of the T shape and give breadth e.g. critical thinking. The trunk of the T shape were the specialist skills particular to that industry. The terms used mirror those from the Lightcast report and the result is a current, relevant, contemporary curriculum.

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors praised the level of analysis in the curriculum report and noted that in their own experience green skills were becoming more and more desirable. The Principal advised that the T shaped skills would now form the 'intent' aspect of the curriculum, as defined by the Ofsted framework, and would be visibly publicised around College with signage to promote. The biggest requirement from employers was common soft skills. Governors noted that the curriculum report had informed the production of the Accountability Agreement (AA).

Governors queried the absence of artificial intelligence (AI) from the report and suggested that as FCoT has a history of leading in new technology, it would be fitting to consider what it could do to provide AI skills. Professor Khan advised that only 1 or 2 universities worldwide have claimed that their curriculum is informed by AI. No FE college has made such a claim and this could be an opportunity for FCoT to be the first. The Principal replied that the AA had mapped LSIP, Local Employer and Government requirements and in the Government's skills requirements quantum computing and AI were listed. Professor Khan advised that quantum computing was difficult because it was so expensive, but AI was possible. FCoT could incorporate the current AI landscape into all curriculum areas e.g. considering what would the utilisation of AI be in Art & Design. The Principal welcomed this suggestion noting that she had been asked to submit an LSIP bid for £100k revenue spending to improve the curriculum and she would now lead with AI for this bid.

### **3.11/22.23 Accountability Agreement**

The Principal explained that this was the final version of the AA document which had been submitted to the Board on 26<sup>th</sup> May and approved, and it would be uploaded to the College website in September and until then it should be treated as confidential. She thanked the Associate Director of Marketing & Learner Services and the Associate Director of Planning, Funding, Information Systems & Exams (AD PFISE) for their assistance in proof reading the document before its final submission to the ESFA.

### Governors' questions and comments

Governors praised the AA document and the work from Lightcast that had helped to inform it. Governors described the AA as being an implementation plan for the Sustainable Transformations Strategy.

### **3.12/22.23 Attendance and Retention**

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The AD PFISE presented the report setting out the learner attendance and retention position by E & D groups and by funding stream. The overall retention figure for FE was 91%, the same for HE, adults at 94% and apprenticeships at 84%, giving an overall College retention figure of 92%. Attendance was 85% for FE, 79% for HE, 82% for adults and 89% for apprenticeships, giving an overall College attendance figure of 85%. It was noted that the lowest attendance rate was for English and Maths, but that this was improving. Attendance and retention rates were given by learning disability with category 8 (social and emotional difficulties), 9 (mental health difficulty) and 13 (dyscalculia) flagged as the lowest rates. Attendance and retention rates by ethnicity were given and the AD PFISE noted that for the vast majority rates had improved by 1-3%. The Principal added that as requested by the Committee at the last meeting, this report had been given an EDI focus. She added that attendance and retention rates flagged in red were rag rated by FCoT as the College's expectation is for 100% attendance.

### Governors' questions and comments

Governors enquired whether there would be an aspiration to focus upon a particular ethnic group's attendance and retention and the Principal advised that the Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence reviews the data weekly with her team plus the EDI Committee also receives the same data. It was noted that attendance and retention issues were often linked to mental health issues. The AD PFISE added that additional detail regarding specific learners and classes were sent to managers weekly for action. The Principal advised that Attendance and Progress Tutors also monitor at risk learners.

Professor Khan described the attendance data as admirable and said that 79% attendance for HE was to be praised. He noted that there was an issue with white working class males not attending University and enquired whether this was the same for FCoT in both FE and HE? The AD PFISE said that in some FE vocational areas there was a pattern of females having better attendance but it was not a widespread problem. The Principal agreed that the Director of Quality should look at white working class males in the next EDIMS report and monitor their performance.

**Action:** Director of Quality to include monitoring of white working class males in next EDIMS report.

### **3.13/22.23 HE Report**

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#### TEF

The Director of HE & Special Projects advised the Committee that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission was currently being considered but that a judgement was not expected until July or August and so would likely arrive after the next Board meeting.

#### HE Student numbers and withdrawals

The Director of HE & Special Projects advised the Committee that this year 600 students were enrolled on HE programmes. Drop out rates were worked out by HESA based on 'prescribed' student numbers and at the HESA return point 20 such students had left and as of May 2023 37 prescribed students had left. 6 withdrawals were from a BAME background which represents 30% of this category and was a concern. Overall the retention of prescribed students or the continuation rate was 91% nationally and FCoT's rate was 83.2% for 2022/23 which was a slight increase on the previous year. With the new focus on the B3 standards the College would

be ensuring it compared well to the sector average going forward. Actions in place to manage improving continuation and completion rates included holding interim board of examiners, training staff regarding the necessity of withdrawing students as appropriate and having a 6 week probation period to confirm that learners were engaging.

#### Access and Participation Plan (APP)

The Director of HE & Special Projects drew attention to the in-year update which was broadly positive.

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors noted that the OfS has announced it will be calling for submissions for the 2025/26 Access and Participation Plan in the next academic year but that there would be two submission dates – either February/March or summer 2024, and asked what approach FCoT would be taking. The Director of HE & Special Projects noted that the Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE would be taking over from him next year and was aware of the requirement, but a submission date had not yet been discussed. The Principal added that the College was keen to avoid unrealistic targets if possible as the current targets had proved hard to achieve in a Hampshire college. Professor Khan advised that the majority of institutions would be likely to submit in summer 2024 and thus there might be less scrutiny from the OfS if FCoT submitted at that time. The Principal agreed that this was good advice and that whilst the College would start the process of drafting its submission early it would aim for the later submission date.

### **3.15/22.23 Termly Safeguarding Report**

The Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence introduced the report noting that it had been a busy term 3. She highlighted the tutorial programme which had covered a variety of safeguarding topics including a presentation from a guest speaker on domestic violence which had been uncompromisingly honest and worthwhile. A Health and Wellbeing Fair had been held which was well attended. Feedback from staff on the new combined Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy had been positive with staff reporting it was easy to use and a one stop reference document.

Weeks 1-32 had seen a 25% decrease in the number of safeguarding concerns raised compared to last year but the Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence advised that those concerns raised were still quite significant and mental health issues remained the main cause. There had been a 17% decrease in requests for counselling and tables showing attendance at College counselling by programme area and by gender were noted. Females continue to engage more with College counselling but the College plans to work on male mental health by promoting Men's Health Week and raising awareness of various health issues. The number of learners on plans was noted and it was reported that learners' behaviour and attitudes were positive and that introducing the turnstiles had improved lanyard usage. Finally, it was reported that the College has 8 Looked After Children and that all their Personal Education Plans have been completed and all have achieved their qualifications.

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors praised the report and in particular the promotion of male mental health issues.

### **3.16/22.23 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**

The Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence presented the new combined policy and noted that all front line staff were required to confirm that they had read it.

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors recommended the policy to the Board for approval.

**Action:** Committee Chair to recommend approval of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy to the Board for approval.

### **3.17/22.23 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee minutes**

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The Principal explained that the Committee focuses upon monitoring learner participation across the College and their achievement and progression, and EDI across the staff body. One action from the last Curriculum & Standards Committee was for this Committee to look at the risk register through an EDI lens which it did. The key risk which stood out was T Levels and their lack of inclusion for learners who are not academic. The EDI Committee agreed to write to the Secretary of State regarding this point and explain that the T Level qualification risks excluding those learners who would do well if they took a BTEC qualification instead.

#### Governors' questions and comments

Governors praised the findings of the EDI Committee having reviewed the risk register and wholeheartedly supported their action to write to the Government regarding T Levels.

#### Additional item

The Principal concluded this part of the meeting by formally thanking the Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence who was leaving to pursue new avenues, and the Director of HE & Special Projects who was retiring, for their extensive and outstanding work for the College over their years of service. She hoped to retain the services of both in a consultative capacity, but this would be their last Curriculum & Standards Committee.

*The Staff Governor, the Vice Principal Safeguarding, Pastoral & Performance Excellence, the AD PFISE and the Vice Principal Curriculum Development & HE left the meeting.*

### **3.18/22.23 Minutes of the last meeting - confidential**

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

### **3.14/22.23 B3 conditions monitoring report**

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This item was recorded as a confidential minute.  
*The Director of HE & Special Projects left the meeting.*

### **3.19/22.23 Apprenticeship Report**

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This item was recorded as a confidential minute.

### **3.20/22.23 Any Confidential Matters of Report**

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This item was recorded as a confidential minute.

### **3.21/22.23 Any Other Business**

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The Committee agreed the key items to report to the Board were the two confidential items regarding the B3 conditions and the Apprenticeship Report.

### **3.22/22.23 Date and Time of the next meeting**

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This would be confirmed at the July Board meeting.

*The meeting closed at 6.36pm.*

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

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

**Summary of action points**

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<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
3.12 Attendance and Retention	Director of Quality to include monitoring of white working class males in next EDIMS report.
3.16 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy	Committee Chair to recommend approval of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy to the Board for approval.

