

BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COLLEGE
QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE (“the Committee”)
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 MARCH 2021, 5.00PM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Present: K Gilmour (in the Chair) Independent Member
H Broughton MBE Independent Member
H Knight Independent Member
L Wareing Co-opted Subject Specialist

Apologies: S Williams Independent Member

In attendance: K Coughlan, Director of Quality and Standards
C Dunn, Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement
H Fogg, Director of Higher Education
S Hughes, Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum
D Young, Company Secretary/Clerk to the Corporation

1. Chair and quorum

- i. K Gilmour took the chair and noted that due notice had been given to all Committee members and that a quorum was present. Accordingly, he declared the meeting duly convened and constituted.
- ii. The Chair welcomed the H Broughton to her first meeting since her appointment to the Committee.

2. Apologies for absence

The above apologies for absence received from S Williams were noted.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no opening declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 November 2020 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record.

The Committee noted the status of the action log.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising since the last Board meeting.

6. Quality and standards scorecard

- i. The Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum summarised the results of the circulated dashboard which showed steady progress overall against the quality metrics.
- ii. In response to the Committee's comments it was **RESOLVED** that the dashboard would be bolstered to record explicitly additional data regarding student progress.

Action: Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum

- iii. The Committee noted the content of the scorecard.

7 Quality of Education: Student Attendance Mid-Year Report

- i. The Director of Quality and Standards presented a paper which had been circulated with the agenda to provide the Committee with an overview of student attendance at the mid-year point and which covered background, current attendance and strategies to enhance attendance further.
- ii. The Committee discussed the report at length and in response to their questions, the Director of Quality and Standards, the Vice-Principal Quality and Curriculum and the Vice-Principal of Higher Education and Student Enhancement discussed what constituted attendance in the context of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions and the anticipated attendance when the college re-opened fully. The Committee noted the importance of the College's critical reflection on and evaluation of the full impact of the pandemic on learners over time.

8 Impact of Education: Student Retention – Mid-Year Report

- i. The Director of Quality and Standards presented a paper which had been circulated with the agenda to provide the Committee with an overview of student retention for FE and HE, and Apprenticeship overall achievement as at March 2021, noting that retention had continued to remain positive overall. She also underlined the significance of B&FC working with individual students to support them to remain on their programme in order to progress to their intended destination.
- ii. The Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum detailed B&FC's area of focus for the long term improvement of retention and therefore achievement rates, noting the positive results overall.
- iii. The Committee discussed the findings and the Director of Quality and Standards, Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum and Vice Principal Higher Education and

Student Enhancement responded to the questions raised including explaining the greater transparency achieved with the FE cohort approach adopted for the analysis and clarifying the references in the penultimate bullet point of the background section of the report regarding the monitoring of performance assessments.

9 Quality of Education: Apprenticeship – Mid-Year Report

- i. The Director of Quality and Standards presented the apprenticeship performance mid-year report for the Committee's information, which covered quality assurance; achievement forecast; and funding, standards and apprenticeship reforms, and she noted the positive results overall.
- ii. H Knight asked for information regarding the financial and other implications for B&FC regarding apprentices who were past their planned end date and the key focus of intensive intervention in the exam board session, as referenced in the report. The Director of Quality and Standards and the Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum provided the context and detail of the implications and the mitigations thereof.
- iii. In response to questions from L Wareing regarding the validation of delivery plans for Level 2 and 3 apprenticeship standards, the Committee noted the higher benchmark utilised by B&FC for this programme due to the importance thereof.
- iv. In response to a question from the Chair as to the levels of B&FC's confidence with the apprenticeship achievement levels, the Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum provided the context and detailed the recent history of apprenticeships, the nature of the offering and the anticipated trajectory for future levels of achievement. The Director of Quality and Standards also highlighted the value of the business development team and apprenticeship strategy group in focussing on quality and standards and to meet both current and future employment needs.

10 Impact of Education: FE Value Added (L3) and Distanced Travelled (L2) - Mid-Year Report

- i. The Director of Quality and Standards summarised the value added and distanced travelled mid-year report which the Committee debated at length.
- ii. Following a suggestion from H Broughton regarding the reporting of the curriculum areas, which were 10% above the national average (represented by 0 in published figures), the Director of Quality and Standards noted that the additional benchmarking data for other curriculum areas would be captured in future reports.

Action: Director of Quality and Standards

- iii. Following a question from L Wareing around the categorisation of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF), the Director of Quality and Standards provided details of the introduction of the eligible qualifications held within the RQF and

DfE's approval of B&FC to deliver qualifications and its migration to eligible RQF qualifications for all FE courses. The Committee noted the additional rigour, robustness and challenge required in relation to the technical and vocational curriculum content to enable it to reflect more closely the skills and knowledge expected of the sector.

11 Quality of Education - Learning, Teaching and Assessment Observations, Mid-year report

- i. The Committee considered the learning, teaching and assessment observations mid-year report, as presented by the Director of Quality and Standards.
- ii. The Committee scrutinised the results in the report. In response to a question from H Knight, the Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum provided the context for the decrease in graded observations and increase in learner walks. In response to feedback from H Broughton, it was **RESOLVED** that future reports would include additional data on the outcomes of the graded observations and learner walks to the extent this was relevant and meaningful given the nature of the data.

Action: Director of Quality and Standards

- iii. In response to a question from L Wareing on the potential to deliver more learner walks in the future, the Director of Quality and Standards summarised the value of the learner walks as a holistic approach and informative ongoing experience in terms of the digital learning environment and value of observations which were a snapshot in time.

12 Impact of Education: Student Feedback and Satisfaction - Mid-Year Report

- i. The Director of Quality and Standards introduced the student feedback and satisfaction mid-year report, which the Committee considered.
- ii. The Director of Quality and Standards highlighted the consistently high results and noted that student feedback, in various forms including QA meetings, continued to be integral to strategies to continuously enhance student experience and to identify and address key areas of focus and priority. She also emphasised that quality was central to B&FC's engagement with students.
- iii. The Committee discussed the report in-depth noting the positive results. In response to a question from H Knight regarding the provision of some examples of any negative comments for additional insight, given the impressive results overall, the Director of Quality and Standards provided additional information.
- iv. The Committee discussed the response rate which was considered comparably positive from the perspective of the sector. The Vice Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement provided context for the reported response rate and the

value of the qualitative data which was also helpful to understand the student experience.

13 Impact of Education - English and Mathematics Curriculum 2020/21 Update

The Vice-Principal of Quality and Curriculum summarised the key points from the English and Mathematics Curriculum 2020/21 Update report which the Committee considered and noted.

14 Curriculum Implementation - Office for Students Access and Participation Plans for 2019-20 and 2020-21 to 2024-25 - progress update

- i. The Director of Higher Education presented the circulated report which the Committee considered and discussed at length.
- ii. In response to a question from the Committee on the Access and Participation Plan (APP), the Vice Principal of Higher Education and Student Enhancement summarised the reasoning for the timing and extent of available data provided. She also confirmed the requisite review and approval processes and the responsibility of the Accounting Officer.
- iii. The Committee noted it was satisfied with this process and that an update, including the outputs from the previous HEAB, would be shared with the Committee at a subsequent meeting.

Action: Director of Higher Education

15. Curriculum Implementation - Review of B&FC's ongoing compliance with consumer law and OfS condition of registration C1 during the current phase of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

- i. The Director of Higher Education presented the report which had been circulated with the agenda to provide the Committee with assurance of learning teaching and assessment with regard to B&FC's ongoing compliance with consumer law and OfS condition of registration C1 during the current phase of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- ii. The Committee scrutinised the report and was assured by the College's reviews, activity, rigorous processes undertaken and the review outcomes and findings in the report.
- iii. The Committee received the report and noted the content.

16. Committee terms of reference

- i. The Company Secretary summarised the proposed changes to the terms of reference and Committee meeting reporting templates.
- ii. The Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement provided information on the interplay between the Committee and HEAB in response to a question from L Wareing regarding the respective remits of the two bodies.

17. Schedule of meetings 2021/22 and 2022/23

The Committee noted its meeting dates for the 2021/22 financial year, and the provisional meeting dates for the 2022/23 financial year. The Committee asked that outlook calendar invitations for the provisional meeting dates be sent to the Committee which was agreed.

ACTION: Clerk to the Corporation

18. Date, time and venue of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 11 May 2021 at 5.00pm, via teleconference.