

BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COLLEGE

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2019, 5.00PM

IN ROOM 204 ON THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE CAMPUS

Present: A Parmley (in the Chair) Independent Member
H Knight Independent Member
L Wareing Co-opted Subject Specialist

In attendance: P Howard, PDH Advisory Limited (Clerk to the Corporation)
K Coughlan, Director of Quality and Standards
H Fogg, Director of Higher Education
B Robinson, Principal and Chief Executive

1. Chair and quorum

A Parmley took the chair and noted that due notice had been given to all committee members and that a quorum was present. Accordingly, she declared the meeting duly convened and constituted.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from N Farley.

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 11 December 2018 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record.

5. Dashboard

A dashboard showing progress against a number of quality metrics was provided to the meeting and the Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum noted that this version included narrative information on where the relevant metrics are presented to the committee as an aide-memoire. A discussion was held on the attendance target and the Principal and Chief Executive noted that the attendance of B&FC students is above the sector average, and briefed the committee on how tutors and other members of staff support students to catch up if they have been absent from college.

The Director of Quality and Standards noted the importance of internal progress measures within B&FC and confirmed that these are scrutinised on a regular basis, with the aim that no student should be more than one unit behind where they should be at any given point in time. In response to a question from H Knight, the Principal and Chief Executive noted that there is general correlation between poor levels of attendance and lower levels of attainment.

In response to a question from N Farley, the Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum reminded the committee how the dashboard considered by the committee relates to the higher-level dashboard presented to the Corporation Board at each meeting.

With regard to learning, teaching and assessment observations, the Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that staff are not provided with advance notice of the visits and therefore the committee could take some assurance around the authenticity of the data. The Director of Quality and Standards also reminded the committee that cross-departmental observations serve to ensure common standards and to facilitate the sharing of best practice.

The Committee noted the content of the dashboard.

6. Mid-year quality reports

(a) Student attendance

The Director of Quality and Standards presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to provide a summary of student attendance to date this year. Confirmation was provided that attendance levels were in line with the sector average. In response to a question from A Parmley, the Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that a range of financial support mechanisms are available for eligible students, including bursaries and hardship funding. She also noted that everyone in college is entitled to free breakfast and that a number of students receive free bus travel and free school meals.

A Parmley commented on the usefulness of appendix 1 to the report and, in response to a question from H Knight, the Principal and Chief Executive summarised the work that is done with parents to support student retention.

(b) Student retention

The Director of Quality and Standards presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to inform the committee of the further education and higher education retention rates and to provide comparative data in relation to previous years. Particular note was made of the fact that cohort retention monitoring arrangements are in place for higher education students which differs from the majority of higher education providers.

The Principal and Chief Executive provided a summary of the Flying Start programme that is in place within the organisation and confirmed that the scheme was sufficiently flexible to allow it to be delivered at different times to suit the various student groups.

The committee noted that further work on HE retention data is being undertaken and it was agreed that this would be presented to the committee once available.

ACTION: Director of Higher Education

(c) Apprenticeships

The Director of Quality and Standards presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to provide an update on apprenticeships, and the committee noted in particular the performance monitoring arrangements that are in place.

(d) Value added (Level 3) and distance travelled (Level 2)

The Director of Quality and Standards presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to provide the committee with information about the college's value added and distance travelled performance. The committee noted the importance of these measures and highlighted the college's performance in comparison with peers.

(e) Learning, teaching and assessment observations

The Director of Quality and Standards presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to inform the committee of the findings from lesson observations and the broader feedback regarding learning, teaching and assessment as a result of observations undertaken during 2018/19. In response to a question from H Knight, the Director of Quality and Standards explained the term "learning walk" and how it is implemented at B&FC.

(f) Student satisfaction

The Director of Quality and Standards presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise the outputs of student satisfaction surveys that had been undertaken. The committee noted the remarks in the first paragraph on page two of the report and the Principal and Chief Executive provided a summary of work that had been undertaken to address these.

In response to a question from H Knight, the Principal and Chief Executive advised that B&FC only receives a small number of complaints per year and, of these, very few relate to assessment.

7. English and mathematics update

The Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to summarise a number of English- and mathematics-related metrics.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

8. Schedule of committee meetings

The committee received the schedule of committee meetings for 2019-21.

9. Date, time and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee will be held on 14 May 2019, 5.00pm on the University Centre Campus.