

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

Governing Body – Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27th November, 4pm, Lisburn Campus

Item No	Item
1.	<p>Chair's Business</p> <p>a) Attendance and Apologies</p> <p>Present: Mr K Webb (Principal/CEO), Prof A Woodside, Mr D Sagar (Chair of the Governing Body), Mrs C King, Mr S Pollard, Mr A Corbett, Ms S Corbett, Miss R Heaney, Mrs B Larkin</p> <p>Apologies: Ms H Reid, Mrs K Scott</p> <p>In Attendance: Dr Michael Malone (Director of Curriculum and Information Services), Heather McKee (Director of Strategic Planning, Quality and Support), Heather Miller (Head of Quality Excellence and Development), Claire Henderson (Head of Quality Excellence and Development), Greer Henderson (Quality Improvement Mentor), William Greer (Chief Training and Contracts officer), Claire Williamson (Secretary to the Governing Body), Annie Hamilton (Boardroom Apprentice), Christine Goodwin (Governor)</p> <p>In the Chair: Mr Deep Sagar</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending this resumed meeting from 15th November. He asked if any member had any conflicts of interests to declare related to the agenda. Mr Pollard declared conflicts in relation to 3(d) and 4 (d) and left the room for those items. The chair thanked Mr Pollard and Ms Goodwin for sending comments on the papers since the last meeting.</p> <p>b) Minutes from meeting held on 15th November 2017</p> <p>The Chair invited members to review the minutes from the previous meeting. The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposer: Steve Pollard Seconder: Alan Woodside</p>
2.	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>a) Action Points from previous meetings</p> <p>The Chair advised that actions were on the agenda, complete or planned for future meetings, he asked the Principal to provide an update on the action point 4c which was a suggestion that management consider a mechanism to identify students at risk when they enter the College. The Director of Strategic Planning, Quality and Support advised members that there are several mechanisms in place that aim to do this which are more preventative measures. The Principal advised that before students come to the College information is shared from schools and other information is obtained through interviews, learning support and the careers service to detail if any additional support is required. The committee noted the action points status.</p> <p>b) International Choices</p>

Claire Henderson, Head of Quality Excellence and Development presented a paper detailing the international partnerships the College have built up. The committee commended the College on the impressive work that has been done in this area and requested if they could see some categorisation of the partnerships in terms of geography or commercial partnerships as well as indicating the top three priorities.

Action Point: The Committee requested if some categorisation of the partnerships could be presented at the next meeting, by geography or commercial partnerships as well as the top three priorities.

3. Items for Approval

a) Higher Education (HE) Structures and Audit

Heather Miller, Head of Quality Excellence and Development, addressed the committee and presented a paper detailing the new landscape of the Higher Education Quality Assessment, she reminded the committee this paper had been previously been presented at the meeting in September also. The committee noted the information contained within the report and enquired if there any headlines they should focus on in this area. The Head of QE&D advised members that the Governing Body (GB) as a whole must be happy to sign off on this audit and to nominate a lead governor who is well informed about QA to allow them to meet inspectors as part of the audit. The committee were advised the role of the GB in this process is about oversight and the GB should own the process

b) **Annual Quality Assessment Review**

The Head of QE&D asked the committee to review and recommend the Annual Quality Assessment Review to the GB for approval. She highlighted the key areas in HE that are being worked on as areas for development:

1. To maintain the retention and success rate on full-time HE programmes as ‘very good’ or ‘better’ and on part-time programmes to maintain one-year programmes as ‘very good’ and raise multiple year programmes to very good.
2. To review current QA structures and processes to ensure they remain robust and appropriate and reflect the DfE HE Quality Assurance Model.
3. To extend and embed student engagement to fully engage students within review processes.
4. To respond to staff requests for CPD to support the delivery of HE.

Ms. Goodwin enquired why eight people out of nine had submitted appeals in computing. The Head of QE&D explained that computing remains an area of risk; each awarding body has a different set of regulations and changes to the Deputy Head of School post holder led to the processes not being implemented tightly or quick enough. A review has been undertaken in this area of risk; training has been given to staff, there are regular team meetings and a refocus on complaints, it is integrated as part of IMPMS meetings and the Head of QE&D proactively meets with the Coordinator. This will continue to be measured.

Decision: The committee recommended the Annual Quality Assessment Review to the Governing Body for approval. Proposer: Steve Pollard; Seconder: Barbara Larkin.

c) HE Review Board Minutes

Members were presented with the HE Board Minutes for review and the Head of QE&D confirmed two meetings are held per semester. The committee noted the paper.

d) HE Courses 2018/19

The Director of Curriculum and Information Services asked members to note that the College is broadening the area of offer but there are some issues this year with University of Ulster and offers for foundation degrees as the UU have changed their entry requirements. There are also concerns that UCAS points will also be increased.

Action Point: The Chair asked that the total number of HE courses and an assessment with student numbers forecast per course be provided.

e) Draft Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plans 2017-18 for Further Education and Work Based Learning

The Head of Quality Excellence & Development, Ms Miller addressed the committee and requested Members to review the assurance documentation for Whole College Self Evaluation, 2016-2017 and Whole College Improvement Plan, 2017-2018 and comment on the key areas for reflection. A brief discussion took place and the following points were highlighted:

- The Head of QE&D advised members that the document was similar to the previous years but had now a specific focus on work based learning, she advised an executive summary had been provided to highlight the areas identified for improvement across the College. The Chief Training and Contracts Officer highlighted that the main improvement in Work Based Learning was the content of vocational courses and the retention rates had considerably improved from the previous year.
- In response to a question specifically about the construction department (around reports of the number of Causes for Concerns) the Director of C&IS advised that this department has a vast array of courses and biggest range of disciplines, from level 1 through to HE. The Principal confirmed there are no specific concerns about this department. Within this school students additionally to those studying FE each have a designated training support officer who deals with any issue the student may have. The rise in reports of CfCs can be attributed to training support officers more systematically recording any CfCs that are identified no matter how minor.
- The committee noted that the self-evaluation aspect of the report reads positively and queried the language used, members asked if this is too self-congratulatory. The Head of QE&D advised the committee that this document follows a set framework, length, language and presentation as directed by ETI to the College.
- Mr Pollard highlighted that the work carried out by the Training Organisation is excellent as they do work with students with educational issues and deliver difficult courses.
- The Chair noted in the QIP report with regard to student feedback there did not seem to be enough information of case conferences, complaints or quotes. The Head of QE&D responded that they have been

looked at carefully but unfortunately due to the space constraints of the framework there simply is no room to include them.

Key Decision: The committee agreed to recommend the Draft Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plans 2017-18 for Further Education and Work Based Learning to the Governing Body for approval. **Proposer:** Rachael Heaney; **Seconder:** Deep Sagar

f) Prospectus 2018/19

The Director of Strategic Planning Quality and Support presented the Prospectus 2018/19 and advised that due to a decline in enrolment numbers this year the College have produced this document earlier than normal. The College are focusing on online enrolments and highlighting the support that is available within the College for students. Earlier open days have been scheduled for November and January. The Chair welcomed this approach and enquired if the software team could develop an interactive application on the website for students when looking at courses. The Principal confirmed an app is in development and will be available when it is complete. The committee noted the prospectus.

4. Items for Information

a) Curriculum Hubs

The Director of C&IS advised the committee that DfE have identified 5 curriculum Hubs and SERC have been appointed construction hub, this is a work in progress and updates will be provided to the committee when they are available.

Action Point: The committee requested a short report on curriculum hubs mid-2018 to provide an update on development.

b) Applications and Enrolments

The Director of CI&S provided a brief update on application and enrolments, he advised that enrolments are down across the sector in both HE and FE and steps have been taken by the College to address this. The committee briefly discussed the impact 6th form retention in schools is having on enrolments and the subject's schools have introduced.

Action Point: The committee asked for data showing enrolments v applications for a sample of courses to understand the conversion rates and that a seminar be held with Kim Scott's help to better understand schools' strategy.

c) 14-19-year-olds Strategy Working Group update

The Principal advised the committee that the Department of Education had objected to the presence of FE Colleges on the 14-19 Working Group, the Principals of the six Colleges have agreed to write to the Director of FE, Beverly Harrison, to convey their disappointment in this decision.

Decision: The committee will recommend to the GB to write to the Director of FE regarding the decision to remove FE representation from the 14-19-year-olds Strategy Working Group.

d) Student Progression to HE and Overview of CPD 2016/17 to support learners

The committee noted the reports provided and confirmed they were pleased to see progress being made in the progression of students. The Principal highlighted that future issues may arise as DfE's view is that foundation degrees must be done through University of Ulster or Queen's University, however UU are changing their policies indicating that a foundation degree should not be the underpinning for HLAs. The Principal advised the management team of the College believe that this should be an open market and foundation degrees should be sourced to ensure they are both suitable for students and industry. The committee noted these concerns and highlighted that the colleges as NDPBs cannot deliver on the agreed Programme for Government if they are unable to source suitable foundation degrees. Professor Woodside advised that he has liaised with Paul Walsh, Downpatrick Campus Manager, to look at opportunities in transport which could link into business studies degrees.

5. Any other business

No other business was discussed.

Date and time of next meeting:

21st February 2018, 5pm, Lisburn Campus

The meeting concluded at 17.07pm

Abbreviations used:

CEO: Chief Executive

HE: Higher Education

QE&D: Quality Excellence and Development

GB: Governing Body

QA: Quality Assurance

DfE: Department for the Economy

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

UU: University of Ulster

UCAS: University and Colleges Admissions Service

C&IS: Curriculum and Information Services

FE: Further Education

CfC: Cause for Concern

ETI: Education and Training Inspectorate

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

HLA: Higher Level Apprenticeship