

Minutes of Academic Planning and Quality Committee Meeting

Monday 11 September 2018

Room C6, Richard Huish College, 5.30pm

Min No **Members Present:** Mary Tighe (Chair), Barbara Barratt (Vice-chair), Lee Ballard (Staff Governor) and Jonathan Langdon.

Also in attendance: John Abbott (Principal), Joe Bennett (Assistant Principal, English, Science and Mathematics), Colin Barnard (Assistant Principal – Student Support), Xanne Blythe (Clerk), Becky Flower (Assistant Principal, Humanities and Social Science), Saffron Lee (Assistant Principal, Business and Creative Industries), Martyn Owen (Deputy Principal - Curriculum and Quality), Ruth Walmsley (HR Director) and Liz Williams (Director of Marketing, Admissions and International).

Apologies: Ann Helsby, David Tomaney (Parent Governor) and Stephen Haydock.

APQ 1 **Declarations of Interest (agenda item 2)**

No declarations of interest were received.

APQ 2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (agenda item 3)**

RESOLVED: that the Academic Planning and Quality Committee minutes dated 25 June 2018 be agreed as an accurate record and be duly signed by the Chair.

APQ 3 **Matters Arising (agenda item 4)**

The revised matters arising schedule was noted.

APQ 4 **RHC Student Applications Summary 2018-19 (agenda item 5)**

A summary document updated Governors with the 16-19 UK applicants compared to the same time in the previous year, along with international applicants.

The College had currently enrolled more 16-19 students than last year despite a smaller demographic, this would provide a larger cohort in Year 2. Enrolments for Level 2 courses had increased significantly with an even spread from feeder schools, students' GCSE profiles were noted. In response to Governors' questions discussion ensued around the timetable capacity, teaching group sizes, transport issues, and growing numbers for maths and English resits. The meeting noted the important role of high quality realistic careers' information, advice and guidance provided to students, to allow them to make suitable and well informed educational and employment decisions.

The meeting noted that the international recruitment was slower this year, a trend that was widely reported by all other establishments within the College's network. Increased competition and alternative foundation courses was diluting the market significantly. There was one empty female room in Oak House and homestay was quieter this year. There were more European and UK boarders for 2018-19 providing a greater mix of students. New courses and new markets were being explored.

RESOLVED: that the Richard Huish College applications summary for 2018-19 be noted.

APQ Teaching, Learning and Assessment (agenda item 6)

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A report provided information and analysis in relation to teaching, learning and assessment across all subject areas of the College: A and AS Level, Vocational Level 2 and 3, GCSE, Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Higher Education.

(a) Team Development Observations

Observations were in place to enable teachers to be fully supported. Course Managers, in conjunction with their course team, provided a learning challenge which was a focus for the team's development of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the year. A table listed each course with their associated learning challenge and outcome. Governors asked for cohort sizes to be added to future documents to help identify potential issues.

In response to discussion, challenge and questions from Governors, the following key points were made:

- the addition of the recently opened Aspen Centre meant that Huish was now able to offer one of the most modern and well-equipped music suites and performance facilities in the country. The meeting noted the success of the music team despite the difficulties last year working in disparate non specialist accommodation for some sessions,
- the learning challenge to improve resilience and confidence in students to support improved mental well-being,
- the learning challenge for Economics with the creation of an additional booklet for the international cohort,
- the combined English Language and English Literature course content and student cohort was questioned in relation to the standalone courses,
- Core Maths was a larger cohort and a better option than statistics, and was in the students' best interests,
- Accountancy A Level was discussed alongside more recognised and more relevant alternatives,
- there was a higher proportion of new course managers for 2018-19 and levels of support would be applied rigorously, Governors asked for reassurance of this throughout the year. A new structure was in place with regular team meetings,
- two new French and German Assistants would be in place for 2018-19 for additional focus and oral support classes. In response to a Governor's query on the mechanism in place if the Course Manager had not detected an issue, attendance and monitoring of language oral classes were closely monitored, greater forensic detailed evidence would be required and there was an improved structure in place for Assistant Principals when working with Course Managers,
- German A Level could be reintroduced,
- support would be in place for Geology for the mathematical course content,
- Access to Higher Education would not be continued for 2018-19, as there was no impetus for students to remain on this course with universities' extended offers.

(b) Performance Management of Underperforming Courses

A table detailed the number of staff undergoing performance management, this was a supportive mechanism rather than a punitive measure. Teachers worked closely with the Assistant Principals and Deputy Principal or one of the professional mentors. Mentors were already in place with specific skill sets; they had excellent student outcomes and were seen as highly credible practitioners amongst staff. A discussion group was evolving, the group, chaired by a professional mentor would consider a range of practical ideas and techniques aimed at improving results. The group was aimed at teaching staff who wanted to discuss simple but effective ways of developing classroom management, assessment, and planning in a supportive environment. The meeting noted that this was a cost effective method of disseminating best practice.

A Governor challenged whether in certain instances the performance management had moved quickly enough to ensure that students' outcomes were not impacted. The Deputy Principal and APs informed the meeting that a greater package of monitoring was in place to act more quickly with objective measures to speed up the process. The Governor iterated the College's outstanding teaching, excellent support and progression to further study or employment for students, and explained that his questioning was aimed at the continuous and heightened achievement for students.

(c) Outcome of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Student Shadowing Experience

Members of the Senior Leadership team shadowed a number of students during term two, focusing on the students' experience and engagement in their teaching, learning and assessment within their Study Programme. The evidence from the shadowing was written up as one document and circulated through School Assistant Principals in School meetings and cascaded into Course Teams. The report provided both student, teacher and governor feedback. The Committee Vice-chair thanked the Deputy Principal for involving her in this process.

The student shadowing experience shadowed fewer students during 2017-18, this had enabled more time to be planned for Learning Walks. The Students' Shadowing programme would continue for another year from January to April 2019 and would be reviewed again in June 2019.

(d) Learning Walks

The plan for 2018-19 was to continue to develop planned focused Learning Walks and to cascade the information into teaching for the process to be more effective.

(e) College Curriculum 2016-18

A one page paper entitled 'College Curriculum 2016-18' was tabled at the meeting to contextualise the available data and performance at A Level. The paper detailed the value added achievement in outstanding, good or very good courses, as well as those identified courses contributing to a drop in A Level value-added achievement. The following key areas for further analysis and action were discussed, they had already been actioned as an outcome of the Course Manager meetings taking place as part of the Quality cycle during September to October 2018:

- Course Manager and Teacher specification understanding with the use of social media to access the most up-to-date revisions,
- teaching - questioning skills,
- learning - ability to develop students' own learning,
- course assessment - guidelines and detail,
- command words used by each course in examination questioning,
- external examination requirements for each written paper,
- analysis of each examination paper,
- the level of Maths required to access the subject questioning,
- the level of English/comprehension to access the subject questioning,
- students' study habits and structure, study monitoring and support.

Larger cohorts such as Sociology and Psychology were discussed and it was noted that the interventions that had been actioned should produce the required impact over 2018-19.

RESOLVED: that the Teaching, Learning and Assessment report be noted.

APQ Course Achievement Headlines 2017-18 (agenda item 7)

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A report provided course achievement data for A and AS Levels, Vocational Level 2 and 3, GCSE, Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Higher Education. Interventions were in place where needed for

identified focused improvements.

The following areas were highlighted during discussion:

- the causes for concern and the ALPs value added scores for 2016-17 compared to 2017-18,
- a number of appeals had been made to dispute marking, out of 119 students requesting a remark, 31 had been changed, there had been 10 grade increases and no decreases,
- the movement of grade boundaries by certain examination boards,
- Edexcel exam scripts were made available on an App,
- the issues around course specifications, particularly coursework moderation,
- the number of U grades and the work in place for improvements,
- the issues and complexities of the direct ALP comparison with other colleges due to the part introduction of linear courses, other colleges were using other measures. The Sixth Form College Association Six Dimensions data base would be made available later in the term for an additional benchmark and to contextualise the value added measure. The College had made the decision to use ALPs, however the meeting agreed to look at an additional measure for greater understanding,
- the College chose to retain students who were underperforming, as this was in the best interest for the student over the College's position in the national results tables,
- the Committee Vice-chair commended the excellent vocational courses' results for 2017-18.

RESOLVED: that the Course Achievement Headlines 2017-18 report be noted, with further Sixth Form College Association Six Dimensions data to be made available to contextualise the values added measure and for greater understanding.

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APQ University Uptake Data for 2017-18 (agenda item 8)

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The report provided information and analysis relating to student progression as well as contextual information about the current climate in relation to university application and offers. Data was not currently available to analyse until later in the term and therefore the paper was based on case studies.

University places were more unpredictable than ever, with unconditional offers being made (ostensibly to generate income) without regard for students' aptitude. However, on the basis of results, students with unconditional offers had seemed to have performed in-line with their counterparts. The College had spent some considerable time explaining to students the ramifications of accepting unconditional offers without finishing or acquiring good A Level results. Students found it hard to retain their motivation once in receipt of a university's unconditional offer.

Clearing had become a more complex event with more universities adjusting their grade requirements but without consistency. The College had provided an excellent advice and guidance service, which had positively impacted on students' future outcomes. This happened particularly on L3 and L2 results' days, but the careers and progression team had been available throughout the summer. Without this guidance, many students would not have been able to make the necessary calls to speak to universities and gain an offer that they were pleased with.

A further report with data would be submitted to the appropriate Committee meeting. The meeting noted that the newly appointed Student Liaison Officer had advanced data collation skills and would be play a key part in the report preparation.

RESOLVED: that the University Uptake Data report for 2017-18 be noted, with a further report to be made available at a future Committee meeting.

CBA

APQ AOB Items for Next Agenda (agenda item 9)

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22 October 2018 agenda

- Feedback from Safeguarding meeting focusing on 16-19 study programmes (AHE)
 - Feedback re updated KCSIÉ guidance (CBA)
 - Student Programme Questionnaire Feedback 2017-18
- With no further business the meeting concluded at 7.25 pm

Chair (Signature)..... Date:.....