

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 17 November 2022 in Farm Lodge.

Present: Mr K Chambers (Chair), Dr P Graham, Ms J Hemphill, Mr M Higgins, Mr G McAllister, Ms A Morrow

In Attendance: Mrs C Brown, Ms H Hagan, Ms H Hampsey, Mr S Lavery, Dr L Monteith,
Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

60.1 Apologies/Welcome

The Chair welcomed Ms Amy Morrow to her first meeting of the Education Committee.

Apologies were noted for Mr Shevlin.

60.2 Declaration of Interests

None.

60.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022 were approved.

Proposed: Mr McAllister Seconded: Mr Higgins

60.4 Matters Arising

- Members heard that Mr Craig Fairless had now provided feedback on content and timeline for the proposed HE in FE advertising campaign, including the importance of focus on the August recruitment period.
- Mrs Brown advised that having engaged with sector HR managers, the College's Head of HR had reported little appetite for the introduction of a FE sector wide Intellectual Property (IP) policy. Whilst staff contracts covered this issue for the College, no cohesive policy for the full range of stakeholders, including non-teaching staff, currently existed.

Action: A draft NRC IP Policy would be developed.

Dr Graham's offer to help with the development of a policy was noted.

- Mrs Brown advised that training on complaints procedures and policy would take place in February 2023 as part of the staff CPD day.
- Dr Graham reported that, having attended the Shared Island event on 12 October, he would draft a paper for information and circulate to members. He would be happy to take any questions on the event.

60.5 Chair's Communications / Correspondence

Members heard that Ms Julie Hemphill had agreed to act as mentor for the student governor.

The SER/QIP Commissioning note was noted by Committee.

Members welcomed the offer of funding for skills competitions and related activity, which had now been accepted by the College. Members were advised that due to success in recent events, particularly WorldSkills, new areas of competition were now open to the College and that student preparation for future competitions had already commenced.

60.6 Quality & Academic Standards Committee Minutes

The minutes of 28 October 2022 were taken as read with key points included in the VP Report.

Members noted that due to revised departmental structure, this group replaces the previous Teaching & Learning Committee.

60.7 VP Teaching & Learning Report

Mrs Brown spoke to her report for the October – November 2022 period. She congratulated the students who recently had success in the WorldSkills event in Luxembourg and reported that results from this year's National finals would be announced on 25 November. Any successes would be publicised in the press.

Consideration was given to metrics on learner outcomes. Ms Hampsey reported that a new structure had been put in place for Essential Skills (ES) and outlined arrangements for upcoming training on a new policy and dashboard reporting system. She emphasised the importance of progression pathways and results achievement and advised that an action plan was being developed and would come to Committee in due course.

Committee heard that achievement rates for ES had dropped across the sector, particularly in numeracy. New practice papers due in December would present the opportunity to gather student feedback and assess exam-readiness.

60.8 SER/QIP

Members noted the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), which is currently a work in progress pending meeting with the DfE Quality Improvement Advisor on Monday 21 November.

Dr Monteith presented the Self Evaluation Report (SER). She took members through the summary presentation and detailed evidence collected during the preparation of the document. Members heard the rationale behind the College's self evaluation of the overall performance levels, which Mrs Brown confirmed was a proportionate assessment.

During a period of discussion, Dr Monteith advised that improvement work was currently ongoing within the various curriculum teams. It was expected that would further raise the overall performance levels over the next 9 months.

Mr Higgins sought clarification on the assessment and acceptance by all curriculum teams on the self evaluation. Dr Monteith referred to the different progress across the College and that staff were committed to making improvements to raise overall performance and stressed the assessment was a fair reflection of College performance.

Mr Laverty referred to lessons learned from the SER process and members noted the intention to replicate progress across other curriculum areas. Examples of good practice cited would be highlighted during a showcasing session as part of the CPD in February 2023.

The Chair was reassured with the very comprehensive process and thanked Dr Monteith and Ms Hagan for the clear presentation.

Dr Graham commended Dr Monteith and Ms Hagan on the honesty and rigour of the evidence provided and noted the incremental nature of improvement work.

Ms Hemphill observed that both staff and students, whilst experiencing the pressure of evaluation, had also been inspired by the development of data collection processes which had identified routes to improvement.

Members noted that this document would provide the roadmap for work over the next 2 years.

Action: Committee were assured that the SER/QIP process had been rigorously carried out and recommended it to the GB for approval and for signature of the Assurance Statement by the Chair.

The Chair congratulated all concerned for the extensive and thorough work carried out.

60.9 Statement of Assurance

Covered under the item above.

60.10 Any Other Business

Ms Morrow confirmed her interest in meeting with students to discuss barriers to ES and improving attendance/achievement, as part of the SER improvement process.

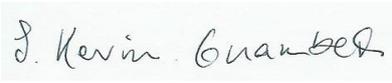
The Principal informed members on the Trainee and Apprenticeship Management System (TAMS), introduced by the Department in August 2022 to manage Work Based Learning, funding, compliance and student data. He reported that a number of FE Sector-wide issues and concerns identified with the scheme, had now been accepted by DfE.

Members heard that difficulties with the introduction of the system had placed strain on staff and advised that the Principals' Group were not prepared to proceed with Phase 2 of TAMS until issues had been addressed. A meeting of the Principals' Group would take place on 18 November to discuss this issue further and it would be included as a red risk on the Risk Register.

60.11 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on 1 March 2023.

The meeting concluded at 5.16pm.

Mr K Chambers 

Date 1 March 2023

(Chair)

Mrs K Wallace 

(Secretary)