

## **Northern Regional College**

### **Education Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 14 March 2018 at Farm Lodge, Ballymena, commencing at 4.05pm.

**Present:** Ms A Dynes, Mrs J Eve, Mr R Jay (Chair), Dr K McCambridge, Mr K Nelson and Prof T Scott

**In Attendance:** Mr A Ballantyne, Mr S Brankin, Mr D Hewitt, Mr M Higgins, Dr L Firth, Mr S Lavery, Mr M Murray, Mr S Price and Mr V Taggart

Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

#### **37.1 Apologies and Welcome**

An apology was received for Ms Linden.

The Chair congratulated Dr McCambridge on the recent birth of her daughter and welcomed her to the meeting. Ms Dynes was also welcomed to her first meeting of the Education Committee.

#### **37.2 Declaration of Interests**

None.

#### **37.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2018 were approved.

#### **37.4 Matters Arising**

A presentation on Internationalisation had been deferred to the next meeting on 2 May 2018. All other matters had been completed.

It was noted that there has been no feedback from DfE following the submission by the College in respect of the Hub for Business. Feedback has been sought from DfE on the proposal.

#### **37.5 Chair's Communication**

The Chair made reference to the conference on Priorities for skills and apprenticeships in NI which would take place in Belfast on 3 May 2018.

**ACTION:** Any member interested in attending this conference to notify the Secretary.

Prof Scott entered the meeting at 4.10pm.

#### **37.6 Correspondence**

Committee noted two items of correspondence which had been received from DfE:

- i) Letter from Mr Trevor Cooper in relation to future arrangements for Quality Assessment in Higher Education in NI.
- ii) Request from Mr Kieran Mannion for information in relation to the CDP process. Also

noted was the College's response to this letter.

### **37.7 College Development Plan**

Mr Taggart updated Committee on the curriculum planning process for the academic year 2018/19 and summarised the changes (going forward) to reporting of information, as required by the new Education Report Card template. This information would be used to estimate the financial allocation for the College.

With no increase in the Department's allocation for the coming year, the need for increased efficiencies was noted. Existing opportunities in extending Access, STEAM and part-time HE provision would continue to be developed.

Committee endorsed the direction of travel as outlined and the Chairman congratulated the SLT on the work carried out on the increasingly complicated reporting process.

### **37.8 Minutes from Teaching and Learning Committee**

Committee noted the minutes of the Teaching and Learning Committee held on 26 January 2018, which would be available on the website once ratified.

### **37.9 KPI Reporting Schedule**

Committee noted the amendment to the report on KPI 1 which had resulted in a slight improvement to student numbers. Mr Taggart highlighted the key changes to the December – February 2017 period and the positive trend in maintaining student numbers over this period.

**ACTION:** Mr Nelson would provide details on the student placement at Ledcom to inform a case study.

Mr Taggart summarised key information relating to KP1 2 and reported that no issues had been raised from a 2-day HLA inspection by the Quality Improvement team from the Department. Formal feedback to follow.

Committee noted that the Department was content with the evidence being provided.

### **37.10 Higher Education Update and Review**

i) Dr Firth presented an update on preparations for the QRV, the inspection for which would take place at end April/beginning of May. Committee received an overview of the draft self-evaluation document (SED) along with a video presentation, which together would form the College's submission for mid-April.

Committee acknowledged the work undertaken and were content with the progress of the submission to date.

**ACTION:** Members' individual comments to be with Dr Firth by 16 March 2018.

ii) Mr Ballantyne provided an overview of planned HE provision for the 3-year period 2018 – 2021, and outlined the detailed information required by the Department and the approach used to collate the return. He highlighted the support and high levels of teaching offered to students and collaborative course partners.

Committee noted the high level overview of the 3-year plan.

iii) Department Heads each presented their curriculum plans for HE highlighting the new

developments and actions taken arising from SER feedback:

- Science and Service Industries – Mr Ballantyne. The increased reporting requirements for collaborative university courses was highlighted.
- Care and Access – Mr Lavery. The new level 6 collaboration with Letterkenny Institute of Technology commencing September 2018, was welcomed. Opportunities for expanding the franchise with other universities were being looked at.
- Engineering and Built Environment – Mr Murray. Committee noted the potential for a 3D printer project in medical engineering, currently being considered. Interest in Artificial Intelligence (AI) provision was noted along with the associated difficulties attracting specialists in this field.
- Business, Computing and Creative Industries – Mr Price highlighted the ongoing BA business course and the new HLA in computing.
- Governors sought assurance in relation to access to learning and financial supports for HE students. Dr Firth outlined the approach used including: communication channels via student reps; presentations; posters and the website.

**ACTION:** Dr Firth would arrange for the finance officer in Student Services to make information on tax deductible expenses/fees available to all students.

#### 37.11 Any Other Business

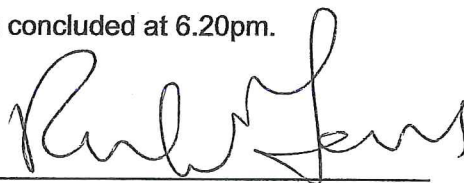
None.

#### 37.12 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Education Committee would be held on Wednesday 2 May 2018 in Farm Lodge, Ballymena to commence at 4.00pm.

The meeting concluded at 6.20pm.


Mr R Jay

  
(Chair)

Date

2/5/2018.  
2 May 2018

Mrs K Wallace

  
(Secretary)