

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 19 May 2015 at the Farm Lodge Ballymena Campus, Northern Regional College.

Present Mr R Jay (Chairperson), Mr C Chan, Mrs J Eve, Mr A Kennedy, Mr M Murray and Professor T Scott (Principal).

In Attendance Dr C O'Mullan and Mr J Hunter

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

27.1 Apologies

An apology was received from Mr K Nelson.

27.2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

27.3 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of the Education Committee, held on 24 March 2015, were approved.

27.4 Matters Arising

27.4.1 Level 2 Pearson Examinations (minute 26.5.1)

It was noted that discussions were continuing with DEL regarding the disappointing results from the Level 2 Pearson examinations across the Sector. Staff are working to ensure that students maximise their potential in 2014/15. Consideration is being given to choosing other AOs for L2 2015/16.

27.5 Chairperson's Communications

The Chair had no communications to report.

27.6 Correspondence

The Committee noted a DEL Circular FE 02/15 dated 1 May 2015, which updates the criteria used to determine eligibility for free meals and refreshments in Further Education Colleges.

27.7 Balanced Scorecard

The Director of Curriculum provided an update regarding the Student Experience domain of the Balanced Scorecard as at 8 May 2015; she highlighted the following:

a) FLU Performance 2014/2015. Details were presented not only of the actual enrolments by provision as at 8 May 2015 but also the predicted end of year FLU. The Committee noted that the predicted end of year FLU (6,182 FLU) is 420 FLU below target (6,602 FLU).

b) Whole College Retention 2014/2015. The retention rate is on target at 92%.

Dr O'Mullan drew the Committee's attention to the proposed KPIs and Targets for quality related parameters, which have been identified for 2015/2016. The rationale for each target has been specified. This information will be dovetailed into the Whole College KPIs and

Targets within the Strategic Improvement Plan. Attention was drawn to the following proposed targets:

a) The total FLU target (6,077 FLU), which had been set by DEL. The FLU Curriculum Plan had been reviewed to align with this target. Dr O'Mullan stated that it was intended to monitor performance against FLU target by School as well as Whole College.

It was also intended to monitor student enrolments by School. Dr O'Mullan undertook to include enrolment targets.

ACTION; Dr O'Mullan to include enrolment targets in the draft KPI document

b) Apprentice/Trainees target, has been set at 675 Apprentices/Trainees and 106 partnerships within the WBL Plan 2015/16.

c) Entitlement Framework. The provisional target has been set at 2,000 students; subject to confirmation from the post primary schools.

d) Retention Rates. The Whole College In Year (DEL) Retention Rate has been proposed at 92%, which aligns with the Sector average and has been achieved by NRC in 2014/2015. The Whole Course (eti) Retention Rate has been ~~set~~ proposed at 85%, which is still an aspirational target as the College loses students over the duration of their courses due to offers of employment, cost of transport, family reasons etc.

e) Achievement Rates. The Whole College Achievement Rate has been proposed at 90%; the College achieved an 88% rate during 2013/2014.

f) Success Rates – to be calculated as Retention x Achievement.

g) Inspections. The target for 2014/2015 was to achieve a minimum Grade 3 or equivalent in all inspections or surveys; the target has been raised to the achievement of Grade 2 or equivalent for inspection and external evaluation.

It was noted that in 2015/16 monitoring of performance would be the responsibility of a revised team. Reporting to Education Committee would be by exception.

The Committee endorsed the proposed targets subject to inclusion of enrolment figures and subject to any adjustments resulting from the Strategic Improvement Plan.

27.8 Curriculum Planning and Quality Improvement

The Committee received two papers:

a) Curriculum Planning. The Director of Curriculum and the Curriculum Management Team have concluded their review of the curriculum portfolio and the outcome of their discussions and the impact on modeling the FLU Plan for 2015/2016 are as follows:

i) New Courses. Several new Full-Time FE and Part-Time HE courses have been proposed for 2015.2016, which will contribute to rebalancing the curriculum provision in line with strategic priorities and will be delivered within the agreed staff headcount. It was noted that most of these were STEM related courses.

ii) Outcomes of Curriculum Review. Seven FE Full-Time courses have been identified for withdrawal. In all cases the average class size was not sustainable and performance trends were satisfactory or below standard. As a result the final projected FLU is aligned with the overall DEL targets with a proposed contingency variance of plus 91.16 FLU. Staff concerned had been made aware of and had been consulted regarding the vulnerability of these courses.

iii) FE Full-Time Provision. As a result of the NRC Bilateral confirmation that no additional MaSN places will be available for NRC, the Director of Curriculum and the CMT have reallocated the existing College MaSN to the planned HE provision for 2015/2016. It has been decided to withdraw the HND Advanced Practice in Work with Children and Families at the Ballymena Campus. This provision is available at Newtownabbey and the Ballymena based course will now be offered on a Part-Time basis.

iv) Other Developments. NRC is participating in a number of sector curriculum development pilots such as: Level 2 FE Youth Training Pilot; Level 3 AppsNI Pilot; Higher Level Apprenticeships; and Essential Skills Change Funding.

b) Quality Improvement. The College is awaiting notice of the planned **eti** Follow-Up Visit for Work Based Learning. The Inspection Team made mention in its last report of the need to improve the overall outcomes in WBL and to improve the overall quality of the provision in wood occupations and trowel occupations. The Head of Faculty and Heads of School have maintained robust monitoring of the Carpentry and Joinery and Brickwork Quality Improvement Action Plans. The CMT has ensured that actions relating to WBL in the WCSE and QIP and the **eti** Action Plans have been addressed. A more detailed plan for WBL development in the context of the new YTP and L3 Apprenticeship Framework has been produced. Governors expressed concern that **eti** had still to provide a date for the Follow-Up Visit.

ACTION: The Principal to contact eti concerning a date for the Follow-Up Visit

27.9 Student Council

The Committee received a Report regarding Student Council activity; the following issues were noted:

a) National Union of Student Unions of Students' Ireland (NUSUSI). This year's conference took place at the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick on 31 March/1 April 2015. It was attended by five NRC students; one of the students, Colleen Menham, spoke on behalf of the NRC Students' Council.

b) National Union of Students' Conference. For the first time two delegates, Colleen Menham and Sean McNamee, from the College attended the NUS Conference at Liverpool from 21-23 April 2015. Both delegates have been selected by NUS to represent the National Society of Apprentices at a conference in Norway in June 2015. Colleen Menham has been voted onto the NUS FE Committee

c) Barclays' Prepare for Work Programme. Fifteen students participated in the Programme designed to help FE College students improve their chances of securing and maintaining employment.

d) Additional Activities. The report included a detailed listing of events and activities since the last meeting.

The Chair expressed his pleasure regarding the national and international involvement of the Students' Council

27.10 Annual Report Education Committee

Members received a copy of the Education Committee Annual Report, which provides a summary of the activities of the Education Committee during the academic year 2014/2015.

It was noted that it would be necessary to update the Report to reflect discussion at the current meeting. **It was agreed that the Secretary should forward the revised Report to the Governing Body as an Appendix to the minutes.**

27.11 Any Other Notified Business

There was no other notified business.

27.12 Next Meeting

The Chairperson reminded members that this was the last meeting of the Education Committee during the academic year 2014/2015. He thanked members for their attendance and input during the year. He mentioned in particular the input from Mr Chan, the Student President, and wished him well in his future studies.

R Jay, Chair

Date

JA Hunter, Secretary

Appendix 1

ANNUAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE 2014/2015

TITLE	Northern Regional College																																																
INTRODUCTION	The purpose of the Report is to provide a summary of the activities of the Education Committee during the academic year 2014/2015																																																
MEMBERSHIP	<p>The membership of the Education was as follows: Mr R Jay (Chair), Mr K Nelson (Vice-Chair), Mr C Chan, Mrs J Eve, Mr A Kennedy, Mr M Murray and Professor T Scott</p> <p>Dr C O'Mullan (Director of Curriculum) attended all meetings.</p>																																																
MEETINGS	<p>The Committee met on 5 occasions during 2014/2015:</p> <p>21 October 2014 9 December 2014 10 February 2015 24 March 2015 19 May 2015</p> <p>Attendance at meetings was as follows:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>21Oct14</th> <th>9Dec14</th> <th>10Feb15</th> <th>24Mar15</th> <th>19May15</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mr Jay</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mr Nelson</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mr Chan</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mrs Eve</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mr Kennedy</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mr Murray</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prof Scott</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		21Oct14	9Dec14	10Feb15	24Mar15	19May15	Mr Jay						Mr Nelson						Mr Chan						Mrs Eve						Mr Kennedy						Mr Murray						Prof Scott					
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	The Terms of Reference of the Committee were reviewed, revised and forwarded to the Governing Body for approval.																																																
ETI VISITS	The Committee received details of the following ETI inspections throughout the year: ETI Final Follow-Up Inspection, relating to the Whole College Inspection 6-9 October 2014 and noted that the overall quality of education and training had been graded 'good'; the ETI Follow-Up Inspection of Work Based Learning noting that the Team had found the College to be making 'satisfactory' progress; and the CPD Scrutiny visit for Continuous Professional Development for which the College received a 'good' grading. ETI has also indicated that it has confidence in the College's self-evaluation and quality improvement process.																																																
BALANCED SCORECARD	The Committee considered the Student Experience Domain of the Balanced and monitored Key Performance Indicators throughout the academic year. At its final meeting of the academic year it has been asked to consider and approve KPIs and targets for the Domain for 2015/2016																																																

HEALTH CHECKS	The Committee considered the appropriate sections of two DEL Health Checks on 9 December 2014 and 24 March 2015. It reported its findings to the Governing Body.
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & CURRICULUM	The Committee received reports on Quality Improvement at each meeting. It gave consideration to and approved the Whole College Self Evaluation Review and Whole College Quality Improvement Plan at its meeting on 9 December 2014 for submission to DEL. It gave consideration, at its meetings on 24 March 2015 and 19 May 2015, to documents setting out the curriculum strategy for 2015 – 2018 and identifying the type of provision at the College by level and campus.
FLU BID	The Committee has monitored FLU performance at all meeting throughout the year. At its meeting on 21 October 2014 it noted details of admissions by type of provision compared to the predicted enrolments relating to the curriculum plan for 2014/2015. It received updates on FLU performance at subsequent meetings on 9 December 2014 and 10 February 2015; FLU performance was noted to be below target with the main contributory factor being under-recruitment in full-time FE. On 24 March it was noted that the predicted year out-turn was 419 FLU below target.
CORRESPONDENCE	The Committee considered relevant educational correspondence from DEL and other sources throughout the year. Correspondence was received in relation to: the CDP process and timetable; definition of full-time students; and criteria for eligibility for free meals.
STUDENT COUNCIL	The Committee received reports from the Student Council at its meetings on December 2014, February 2015, March 2015 and May 2015 providing details of student events and activities. Reports were presented by the Student President.
SAFEGUARDING AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE	The Committee received the Annual Report for Customer Service and Communication at its meeting on 21 October 2014, which provided details of the administration of ear-marked funds, safeguarding and student discipline
FEES POLICY & REGULATIONS	The Committee (21 October 2014) considered the revised Fees Policy and Regulations 2015/2016 and agreed that they be approved and submitted to the Governing Body
PRESENTATIONS	The Committee received a presentation on admissions and marketing activities from the Director of Planning and Customer Relations on 24 March 2015