

QUEEN ELIZABETH SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum and Standards Committee held on Monday 10th June 2019

Present

Mr S Teague, Chair
Mr T Fisher, Principal
Mr S Heath
Mrs J Hillyard
Mr C Kipling
Mr C Wiper

Apologies

Mr D Warman

In attendance

Mrs T Amarawansa
Mr M Baker
Mr L Job
Mr I Waite
Mr S Dowson, Clerk

12/19 Introduction

The Chair thanked the staff for the comprehensive papers that had been provided for the meeting. The Chair explained that as A Level exams were currently underway, he intended to concentrate on the future and not to dwell too much on the past.

13/19 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

14/19 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17th January were **accepted** as a true record and **approved** for signing by the Chair.

15/19 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

16/19 Attendance and retention data 2018-2019

Mr Job was pleased to report that attendance had improved on the previous year and was currently significantly above the average for both Year 1 and Year 2 students as reported in the Six Dimensions data for sixth form colleges.

The Chair congratulated Mr Job and all staff for reversing the trend and asked what the change was attributable to.

Mr Job said it was undoubtedly the hard work and commitment of all the people involved including both teaching and pastoral staff.

17/19 April progress point – grade projections for second years

Mr Waite explained that the data was already 9 weeks old and second year students were now in the middle of their exams.

Projected L3VA was higher than last year. This is partly because there are no longer any applied A Levels, which last year pulled the results down.

In response to a question from governors, Mr Waite explained that subjects with low prior attainment were less likely to get high grades, but their Value Added could still be high.

18/19 Course support – course leader reports

Subjects in Course Support were considered in turn.

[confidential minutes have been removed]

19/19 Indicative student numbers for first year courses

Indications are that there may be approximately 50 fewer first year students enrolled next year.

Strenuous efforts are being made to retain first year students who sometimes decide to leave after disappointing mock exam results. Contact with students will be maintained through the summer holidays.

In response to a question about the overall College roll, Mr Fisher stated that this year's first year is larger than the second year and work is being done to retain more of them. As a consequence, the College roll for 2019/20 may be 20 not 50 down, as currently projected on first year numbers alone.

The Chair said that although predictions are for 50 fewer first year students, it is 50 fewer of what is historically the highest number of students ever.

20/19 Applied General Reform

Mr Job gave an overview of the DfE, 'Post 16 Qualifications Review'. The Sixth Form College Association has produced a consultation response and has argued for Level 3 Applied General qualifications to be maintained as they have a proven track record of helping students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to progress to university.

In the review it is suggested that T Levels will replace some Applied General qualifications. However, T Levels are untried and an unknown quantity. There are also concerns that there are not enough employers able to offer the amount of work experience needed.

The last registration for some of the College's Applied General qualifications will be August 2020. As such, subjects will switch from the current suite to the newly reformed qualifications from September 2020. We currently offer two subjects in the new suite so we will ensure that Course Leaders will work together to help with the introduction of the new specifications.

21/19 Subject quality review feedback

The Chair thanked Mrs Amarawansa for introducing the new subject review process and asked about its progress.

Mrs Amarawansa said the introduction had been very positive. The subjects involved this year had all volunteered to take part in the pilot year. Teachers had bought into the scheme, accepted it and had seen the value in it.

Mr Job said that in his view, Mrs Amarawansa had managed the introduction very wisely and it was important to maintain such a positive start.

The Chair said a huge amount could be learnt from the overall summary for each subject and it was good to read positive reports as well as concentrating on subjects in Course Support.

Mrs Amarawansa said that the final report to Governors would be more succinct.

22/19 Data 2018 updates

Mr Fisher explained that an error in data relating to students enrolled on Art courses in 2016 had adversely affected the published QAR rate for 2017/18. He explained the complexity of the issue, as detailed in the paper presented. Mr Fisher has taken the issue up with the ESFA and explained that the negative impact upon the College retention figure, which was actually above the national rate but appeared to be below as a consequence of the error, was his main concern.

When questioned by governors, Mr Fisher confirmed that there was no impact on funding as a result of the error.

Mr Fisher is continuing to pursue the matter with the ESFA.

23/19 Confidential matters

[removed]

All matters relating to Course Support are to remain confidential.

24/19 Date of next meeting

Thursday 12th September 2019