

CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 MAY 2022 AT 4:30PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present:

Jill Lanning (Chair), Corrienne Peasgood, Andrea Blanchflower, Annie Cook, Nikki Gray, Evie Berg

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Ed Rose (Assistant Principal HE and Adult), Jodie Mitchell (Director of Governance and Legal), Andrew Barnes (Corporation Chair) – as an observer, Helen Richardson-Hulme (Assistant Principal, Student Services)

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies received for this meeting.

2. Declarations of Interests

Governors and Committee members are requested to make known any relevant pecuniary interests relating to any items on the agenda and it was noted that all declarations will be recorded.

There were no new declarations of interest given at the meeting.

3. Draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 after minor amendments were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

4. Draft confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

5. Matters Arising

C&S 4 Action 1 - ER to provide further analysis on the End of Semester survey results for the next Board meeting as part of the C&S committee summary report. *CP confirmed the results were presented and the figures will remain in the C&S reports going forward.*
ACTION COMPLETE

C&S 4 Action 2 - HRH to provide the Matrix Standard report to the next C&S Committee meeting on 10 May 2022. *Report provided under item 6.6.1 at this meeting.* ACTION COMPLETE

C&S 4 Action 3 - All committee members to reflect on the targets and provide feedback to the Principal by 21 March 2022 in readiness for the Board meeting. ACTION COMPLETE

C&S 4 Action 4 -- JM to add the adult curriculum scrutiny be moved to the next meeting on 10 May 2022 for discussion. ACTION COMPLETE

C&S 4 Action 5 - JW to review the Curriculum Planning for 22/23 and add additional information around provisions that may be stopped, progression data for all courses and

expand details about the adult provision. *Update to be provided at next C&S on 21 June 2022.* **ACTION ON-GOING**

AC joined meeting at 4:33pm.

Other Matters Arising

NG queried when T-Levels will be reviewed as part of the Curriculum Scrutiny. JL confirmed this would be on the agenda for the June C&S meeting.

ACTION 1: CJ to add T-Levels for Curriculum Scrutiny for June meeting agenda.

CP confirmed that the T-Level implementation internal audit will be taking place in June before the next C&S meeting. CP will provide NG with a verbal update prior to any Curriculum Scrutiny meetings taking place.

ACTION 2: CP to provide NG with an update on the results of the T-Level Implementation internal audit as part of NG's curriculum scrutiny, scheduled for discussion in June.

ABI queried who would be the contact for A-Levels now that Julia Bates has left? CP confirmed Dean Crosbie would be the contact and will make arrangements for Dean to contact ABI.

ACTION 3: CP to arrange for Dean Crosbie to contact ABI regarding A-Level Curriculum Scrutiny.

6. SECTION A

6.1. Easton English and Maths

Please see confidential minutes also.

- EAA
There were noticeable differences in numbers needing special arrangements for exams between Norwich and Easton cohorts. Of the 205 Easton students sitting their Maths exam, 50% have an exam access arrangement (EAA). Of the 193 students sitting their English exam, 60% have EAA. CCN cohort equivalents being 40% and 48% on EAA.

It was noted that at Easton the student groups are attending better than at Norwich and engaging well in both subjects although with the need for more support. CP stated no conclusions could be made until E&M results are received to compare across sites and with the national Cohort.

ABI raised a query regarding E&M still being inadequate in performance. CP confirmed to ABI that these qualifications have come out of inadequate rating

NG queried whether the EAA figures are higher than in previous years and CP confirmed that they were and that this caused a number of logistical challenges. She said that it is possible that CCN will not need the large space of the Norfolk showground for future exams because more students are sitting exams in smaller rooms at both Norwich and Easton sites now.

NG asked CP whether exam access arrangements (EAA) were automatically granted. CP confirmed they were not as each request is assessed by a L7 Assessor on individual need and goes through a strict authorisation process. JL asked if there was National data to the CCN numbers. CP thought not but that she would check out the experience of other colleges in this regard. .

Action 4: CP to provide an update at the June C&S meeting about whether other organisations have noted an increase in EAA numbers.

ABI commented that the university had seen a reduction in requests for special arrangements with changes to different modes of assessment such as open book exams and on-line exams. She queried whether the standard exam is sustainable. JL commented that Ofqual are going to look at online exams but this would have a number of technical challenges.

CP proposed that the findings of the recent ALS internal audit are brought to the next C&S meeting to provide a clearer picture of where we are and what we are looking at, noting that this would need to be seen in the context of the recent SEND Green Paper. JL stated this profile of the student population has an impact on the curriculum offer moving forward.

ACTION 5: CP to provide the ALS internal audit to the C&S Committee in June for discussion.

JW noted that 38% of all 16 to 18 learning aims students have declared a learning disability or learning difficulty. He pointed out that while High Needs funding is a specific funded amount per student, Low-needs funding is linked to the proportion of pass rates for English and Maths.

This funding has been impacted during the last two years where pass rates for GSCE Maths and English were higher than pre-Covid.

ABn asked whether we need to source funding from other areas to provide this service. CP responded that this is an area for consideration as there is always a possibility that the High Needs budget might be cut and there are changes in funding proposed in the SEND Green Paper.

6.2. Quality Report 10/5

JW highlighted points for discussion from the Quality Report with Governors:

- Attendance rates for FE is at 88% below last year but still a good outcome given Covid.
- Retention is currently 89% for 16–18-year group. This is 2% points lower compared with our normal year of operation (based on end of year 2018/19 figures). JW stated this was in part due to learners taking up employment rather than returning to college, with the job market being buoyant.
- 19+ year group is still good compared with previous years but there is more work to do to maintain this outcome.

Apprenticeships (BEED)

Significant progress has been made in reducing apprentices who are Beyond the Expected End Dates (BEED) from approximately 450 to 300 with approximately another hundred only awaiting paperwork to complete their apprenticeship. JL requested JW to provide figures on apprentices' retention and BEED for the June meeting.

ACTION 6: JW to provide an updated report on Apprenticeship retention and BEED figures for June C&S meeting.

CP noted that the amalgamation of the Technical Education and Apprenticeships staff into one team, as part of the organisational restructure in September, is now providing staff flexibility.

Qualification Matters - T Level assessments

There have been a number of challenges with the communication and information from Awarding Organisations for T Level assessments which have impacted on the student experience. In particular, late, missing or inaccurate information has been provided about the method or content of the external assessment.

CP provided some examples of the difficulties for T Level assessments this year including the need to employ a surveying company to provide a survey of buildings before the students could undertake the survey for formal assessment purposes and extensive time needed to ensure that students' work could be uploaded onto the AO portal..

JL commented it was normal for the DfE to state that early cohorts of students taking a new qualification would not be disadvantaged and she hoped that this was the case for T Levels.

JW stated the lack of clarity and frequent changes in the AO guidance had been difficult for both teaching and exams staff who had done their best to minimise the effect on students. JW stated that the appropriate representation will be made to the AOs and others including the DfE concerning the difficulties encountered. JL advised that it might be useful to also feedback on these issues to the CEOs of the AOs who may be unaware of the challenges being placed on centres.

EB asked whether there is an update on revision resources for exams that can be accessed during the half term break for students with ALS. CP stated that a programme of both online and face to face support for exam stress and anxiety will be sent out Wednesday. For students who did not pass synoptics and assessment first time there will also be additional catchup sessions in place so they can retake assessments in June.

6.3. TLA Report

CP highlighted points for discussion from the TLA Report with Governors:

TLA Grid meetings were held 19 – 22 April.

CP explained that each meeting started with an overview of the context of the second half of the Spring term the period under review, which saw a sustained peak of COVID cases in staff and students with staff absences higher than the Omicron peak of early January. (Appendix 1)

All of the areas that went down a grade at this meeting were because of COVID or other staff absences and several areas which were expected to move up a grade did not do so, again due to COVID staff absence.

Areas of note from the cross-college meeting are:

- A high level of exam and assessment anxiety in many areas. Videos and PowerPoint presentations are available so students can have advance information of how the exam will be operated e.g., size of venue, role of invigilator, in an attempt to ease this situation.
- Good use being made of peer mentoring between various levels of year groups of students, an example of this was with L1 ESOL providing support to L2 Entry ESOL.
- Staff mentoring, for Diploma in Education and Training trainees is an area for more development. This is required in the new ITE Framework but is also relevant for staff new to CCN.
- As staff have returned to face to face teaching, there is a need to rehearse with some the basic elements of good teaching such as the importance of planning. These have been included in the upcoming Staff Development Day.
- Excellent collaboration and team working was seen, often arising out of necessity because of staff absences but that can be taken forward into next year.
- Post Covid managers are getting out around their areas and having more informal discussions with students, doing corridor walks and getting invitations into classes which is resulting in issues being highlighted sooner rather than later and being quickly resolved.

How employer feedback, and more broadly other external feedback such as AO reports, informs the TLA grid decisions and Self-Assessment Review.

Flourish

CP reported that this is being launched across Norfolk tomorrow, 11 May. CP will be speaking at the launch and on Norfolk Radio on Thursday morning.

Two CMT TLA sessions have been led by Dean Crosbie, Director for Academic Progress on how we might use the Flourish framework as a college, and he is also getting staff feedback There is an agreement that the Flourish framework will replace our personal Development Framework and Every Child Matters Framework.

Development Day

Further to CCN and NES reintegrating, TLA Day has been renamed to 'Development Day' for all staff to be included. We are planning for c800 staff to attend the event on Wednesday 13th July at Easton College.

Leadership Support

Julia Bates' last day was on 29 April 2022, and we have secured some part-time interim support for the summer term from an experienced Norfolk Vice-Principal.

Ukraine Students and CCN Support

AC is part of Ukrainian Facebook group and shared with the committee the positive feedback CCN has received from families supporting Ukrainian refugees coming here, including signposting them to obtain free bus passes, in addition to how well we are delivering the courses provided.

CP thanked AC for sharing this positive news and acknowledged it had been a cross college effort of embracing this need and extended the thanks to all staff involved.

6.4. HE Report

ER highlighted points for discussion from the HE Report with Governors:

Application Data

Figures for course offers are down currently for next academic year with a higher level of uncertainty compared with last year. This includes the higher number of students who have yet to accept an offer then a decision has been taken to reduce the projected intake by 20 students.

This position could change as two Offer Events were held last week, one at Easton and one at Norfolk House and a further two Open Events are being held this week. Additional work is being done with the College's Business Development Officers to market key programmes to employers – specifically Higher Nationals, Early Years FdA and the Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship.

ABI asked ER what impact these late decisions have on course on offer and how it will be managed? ER responded that a decision has been made that one programme will be withdrawn next year due to low uptake, but other ones will go ahead with the numbers enrolled regardless. These will be allowed to run as the students are internally progressing students from FE provision and there is a commitment to support this progression.

Going forward ER acknowledged that there is still more work to be done on marketing and recruitment.

ACTION 7: ER to provide an update of course intake figures for C&S June meeting.

Validation

- Revalidations for both FdSc Health Studies/FdSc Mental Health Practice and BA(Hons) Public Sector Leadership have been successfully completed, resulting in them moving forward to approval stage.
- The two Health programmes were well received by the validation panel with 4 Conditions, 5 Recommendations and 4 Commendations. The Conditions were not far reaching and related to production of course documentation and increased involvement of sector experts and service users.

- A meeting with representatives from the local NHS Trusts is taking place in late May to confirm how the two FdScs can meet the requirements of a Higher Technical Qualification and to seek their support for an application.

Department for Education Consultations

The DfE is consulting on two separate areas which impact significantly on Higher Education delivery in the medium term; these have now closed. Both the areas were the Higher Education Reform and Lifelong Learning Entitlement. The latter concerned with ensuring mature students are allocated funding throughout their lifetime providing accessibility to Level 4/5 qualifications.

NSS Update

- The data collection window for the NSS has closed with the final response rates being 78%, so it was a good outcome.
- Only one programme, for which course level data would be available, failed to meet the threshold the overall response rate is 2.8% higher than in 2021.
- Details of results publication have been confirmed this week as 9:30am on Wednesday 6 July 2022.

6.5. Easton FE Improvement Board Report

CP provided an update to the committee following the FEIB:

Animal and Equine

The current changes in place are sustainable with the stabilisation of staff and the team are starting to prepare for the T Level for September 2023 intake.

The area requires a lot of technical expertise to ensure that the necessary regulatory requirements for the Animal and Equine centres are in place. There is work to do in this area but CP stressed that the minimum requirements were met but keeping up to date and making improvements needed to be looked at.

CP confirmed that Chris Sturdy would be staying on for another year to manage this area including the animal care centre and the equine yard and he has expertise in these areas.

Inclusive learning

An area when we merged that was good in respect of Ofsted standards, but we continue to improve and work is underway to align the curriculum with the provision at the other sites that provides clear progression paths for students, with no unnecessary replication. Work has been undertaken with staff to encourage higher expectations of students and ensure that the level of support provided to students is not limiting the development of their independence. Current rating is showing as Outstanding on the TLA grid, so a positive outcome.

Review of Improvements

Areas provided at Easton on merger were E&M, Land-Based, Animal and Equine, Construction, Inclusive Learning and Public Services and Sport. It was noted that there have been significant improvements across all areas and the Improvement Board would continue to monitor these for the rest of 2022. At the next meeting of the Board the focus would be on E&M and Sports & Public Services.

An area for improvement across campus continues to be course planning.

6.6. Information, Advice and Guidance Update

HRH presented the update and noted the following:

Overview of Matrix Assessment

- Verbal feedback received is that the college continues to meet the Matrix Standard and the Assessor felt that Flourish provided holistic benefits for the students adding that the work of the IAG team and its wider services could support this strategy. The feedback noted that our Quality Assurance for IAG was an additional strength.

Areas for Development & Recommendations

These included that CCN should consider applying for Cross College Accreditation next time.

- Positive feedback was also received on our engagement with Employers, noting that the college is providing impartial advice and guidance to our apprentices in relation to their career development and NextSteps, delivering a positive experience for students.

Other IAG Services - International Students & Student Visa Group

- There was also a lot of positive feedback received from both students and non-students on the level of support CCN has been providing to create a positive experience for our international students.
- HRH stated the Student Visa Group is working with the Home Office to obtain the different Visas needed. 2 applications have been received for the new term and CCN are helping in starting the process with their Visa applications. Most of the work has been focused on EU settled status applications impacted by Post Brexit changes.
- The International Advisor received feedback from the Nasref Group today, stating that they will be offering a new monthly session led by a clinical psychiatrist to support refugees/asylum seekers within the Norwich community. Demand is likely to be high for this service. There are other initiatives that Alison is looking at in addition that she can put CCN in touch with to assist the needs of the students.
- HRH stated that in terms of finance/bursary they have been taking stock of what funds the service has currently. HRH stated there is only a small pot of money left in the hardship fund of £146.00 but that there may still be a need to help students in these remaining weeks of term and there is a need to consider what advice students would need to be given if there are no funds remaining.
- JL thanked Helen for the excellent work and asked for congratulations to be passed on to the team for the good Matrix Report.

6.6.1 Matrix Standard Feedback Report

A copy of the Matrix Standard feedback report was provided to governors for information.

6.7. Residential Report

HRH presented an update and noted the following:

- students are still enjoying their experience of semi-independent living. Various clubs still running that were started earlier in the year. The Environmental group came together recently to do weeding around the residences. There is a sense of residential community between students and the residential manager and it is working positively.
- HRH stated that residential admissions Panel Meetings have been running for the last month to 6 weeks, looking at residential accommodation options for new students. It is a rigorous process students go through to find the best option for them taking up semi-independent living.

JL asked, as Ofsted inspection is now more than 12 months ago, whether HRH able to sign off the action plans as being met at the next meeting. HRH said she could bring an updated report to the next meeting in June.

ACTION 8: HRH to provide and update from the Residential Panel Meeting concerning residential plan sign off to the June C&S meeting

6.8. NTTC report

ER presented the update for NTTC:

Performance data

There has been a number of withdrawals that are indicative of Covid and early impacts of cost-of-living crisis. Other withdrawals are due to students facing challenges outside of their training and wanting to pause their studies with the intention to return next year.

There are a number of 'assessment only' students. In answer to a query from governors, ER explained that these trainees are school based and delivery is by in-work assessment, observations made over a period of time and building a portfolio. Schools see this as a Fastrack option for individuals to get Qualifying Teacher Status who have worked in the school for several years as maybe an instructor or Teaching Assistant.

Looking forward to next year, applications for Primary schools are very positive with a similar number to this year or even slightly higher, split between the school direct route and PGTA college training. The numbers of applications for teacher training to Secondary schools is down currently due to changes in bursary funding.

Workforce Review

CCN met the February deadline for the submission of our bid to continue to offer teacher training as part of the Workforce Review. There has not been any announcement when the outcomes of the first submission which should become available in May so are imminent.

The second window for the bid is now open until 27 June 2022. If we are successful, we will have a series of benchmarks set by the DfE, to meet the new criteria for

Teacher Training from September 2024. If not, then we have feedback on our submission and an opportunity to re-submit again in June.

External moderators from University of Sheffield have confirmed CCN's assessment decisions to date. . End point assessment organisation for PGTA is in place using a training association based in Essex. They might not be offering this service next year, so we may need to find another appropriate provider to deliver the training.

Mentoring

This is an area that continues to be monitored closely to ensure that the right input is being provided with mentors within settings and as well as the right level of support the trainees need. This forms a key aspect of the curriculum under the new ITE Framework.

6.9. Governor Curriculum Scrutiny

Adult Education

JL asked for a verbal update from ER on the development of Adult Provision

ER updated on the progress made during the year which included and ensure that the same high expectations and policies apply to adult students as to 16-19 group. This includes the level of support and challenge which have been put in place so adult students can be stretched to achieve to their maximum capabilities. –

Access provision is under some pressure with numbers being reduced the last few years, partly due to the rise in Foundation Years in universities across the area and the country. Work is on-going to develop the ESOL provision including collaborative working with New City College London where there are 5000 plus ESOL students. The other large area of provision is with Adult Essential Skills in GCSE, E&M, Biology and Psychology as well as Functional Skills in E&M. Level 2 in Functional Skills is being introduced next year allowing quicker progression from L1 to L2 in year rather than waiting a year if they achieve earlier in their programme. In addition, there is a more condensed delivery to help students to progress through these levels more rapidly.

Adult Vocational

Work has been done with the IAG team to assess possible demand in this area. This has resulted in interest from employers for the Higher Development Award (HDA). These are specifically aimed at NHS Trusts who can pull together a programme for Level 1, 2 and 3 staff.

Evening Staff Recruitment Events

These events were held to build up staff capacity to deliver the technical qualifications from September. This has resulted in 2 carpenters, 2 bricklayers and 2 electricians being recruited and undergoing the interview process. A similar event is being held next year to recruit more Leadership and Management staff. JL thanked ER for his input.

AC noted the following:

- The profile of what is on offer for adult learners needs to be enhanced. AC stated It is not easy navigating CCN website to find what courses are available and potential future courses. AC acknowledged there is a five-year plan in place with the curriculum and staff issues but felt changes to the web site would help provide easier access for potential students.
- Vocational perspective –AC acknowledged that the linking with big employers, NHS and Social Care locally was important but added the skills agenda for other large employers was equally as important to include.
- JW responded acknowledging AC comments and is aware of the reorganisation needed on the website. Work is on-going to align the adult and HE courses. A booklet on courses just for adults has been promoted at the recent open days. JW aware there is more to be done in this respect.

ABI commented about what courses are being promoted in line with the recent audit. Is a holistic approach being taken in offering Adult & HE courses going forward? CP responded stating that this issue is discussed at Marketing Priorities meetings.

Higher Education

JL had discussed this area with NB as the Link Governor and relayed his comments as follows:

- NB stated the importance of end of term evaluations and suggested that concentrating on planning will lead to better satisfaction ratings on organisation and management.
- NB commented on CCNs marketing position in relation to our competitors and noted that the number of applications are reduced. He thought that there is the need for a clearer strategic offer and vision for HE and higher technical offer at CCN as opposed to other providers including UEA. There will be ongoing discussion between NB and ER concerning these issues.
- NB and JL had discussed the changing regulatory environment with the OfS and the increasing responsibilities placed on the UEA which will need close working. CP responded stating that both the consultation responses and assessment of the market position will determine future processes.

A-Levels

This area of curriculum scrutiny relates to what is needed to move A level provision from the current Good to Outstanding. The area has looked at how the two sites could work together to increase the TLA grade. The interim Head at Paston has now been appointed permanently so both Heads can start working more closely together on this.

6.10. Curriculum Planning for 22/23 - HE Internal Audit Report

CP presented the papers to Governors and noted the following:

The objective of this audit was to review the frameworks in place to recruit and retain HE students and how student satisfaction is optimised.

This report has been considered at Audit committee who had discussed the report at length. It had been agreed that the scope of the audit had been too wide for the time allocated for the audit by Scrutton. It had been agreed that, in future, the scope of each audit would be reviewed by the Chairs of the relevant committee to ensure that it is sufficiently focussed.

CP presented the report being the first one shared at C&S but confirmed there will be future ones relating to the committee's work such as ALS and T-Level implementation.

JL thanked CP for her report.

ABI also thanked CP for her report and for confirming that future Audit briefs will be clearer. ABI asked what the response timeframe was from this current internal Audit and whether an update is given at the next C&S meeting? CP stated progress on action points will be addressed in a future Audit Committee meeting. CP also confirmed that the follow-up and action points would be in the Annual Audit Report at Board.

7. SECTION B

7.1 Student Union

CP provided the following update:

The Disabilities Officer has taken on another role and Student Liaison Officer has taken up a maternity Cover Supervisor post at Paston. A potential UEA student was unable to take up the disabilities position as was hoped, so no Student Union member of staff currently. Some of the activities that students engage in such as the catering tender has resulted in excellent input and has encourage some to consider standing for Students Union posts.

EB asked whether there was any way of improving cross working across the sites, particularly Easton where students may not be as aware of activities as the Norwich students She also offered her support if needed.

JW commented that 2 hearing impaired students at Easton have put on a deaf awareness display that is currently housed in Jubilee reception. It is promoting careers for hearing impaired students and will be moved to Paston and Norwich sites for displaying as well. This is a good example of how activities like these can be moved from campus to campus.

7.2 Term 2 Complaints & Appeals Report

JL stated this report is for information only unless anything is noted CP provided information about the one complaint that is currently open but which is expected to be closed soon.

8. SECTION C

No items were discussed under this section.

9. Other Urgent Business

No items were discussed under this section.

10. Confidentiality

Please see confidential minutes for items for items 6.1.

11. Confidential Items

No items were discussed under this section.

12. Date of next meeting

The next Curriculum and Standards Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday 21 June 2022.

The meeting was closed at 7.06pm.

Signed Date
(Chair of Meeting)