

CURRICULUM & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 MAY 2021 AT 4.00 PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present:

Jill Lanning (Chair), Corrienne Peasgood, Andrea Blanchflower, Emily Staley, Aron Whiles, Philip Richardson

Attendees:

Jerry White (Deputy Principal), Helen Richardson-Hulme (Assistant Principal, Student Services), Julia Bates (Vice Principal, FE, Curriculum and Quality), Sue Millions (Administrator), Clare Johnson (Clerk to the Corporation)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Nikki Gray.

2. Declarations of Interest

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.

Jerry White informed governors that he has been appointed as a member of the North Norfolk District Council's UK Community Renewal Fund Strategic Stakeholder Board.

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

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 March 2021 (Paper 02)

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021, were amended slightly, and agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the first available opportunity.

4. Unconfirmed Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 March 2021 (Paper 03)

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021, were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the first available opportunity.

5. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes (Paper 04)

Action 8 (C&S 01): *Principal and Jerry White to review CCN's Risk Register following tonight's C&S Committee Meeting. The Principal advised that a complete review of the Risk Register will come to CCN Board in the New Year following the merger with Easton and the Risk Management will also be considered by the Audit and Risk Committee. The Principal agreed that the Risk Register will be revisited and brought back to a future C&S Committee. The COVID 19 Risk Register has been reviewed at the recent Audit and Risk Committee Meeting and will updated again ready for Board approval on 23 March 2021. The Risk Register items that relate to the curriculum will be brought back to the next C&S Committee Meeting for feedback and review. Please see agenda item 6.6. Action completed.*

Action 1 (C&S 04): *The approach to gathering satisfaction data to be reviewed at the next C&S Committee Meeting taking place on 11 May 2021. It was agreed that a fuller summary*

will be prepared by Jerry White, as part of the Quality Report, and discussed at the next meeting being held on 22 June 2021. **Action on-going.**

Action 2 (C&S 04): *The Principal to send an email to governors, with dates and times, to invite them to attend the TLA Grid Meetings.* Action completed.

Action 3 (C&S 04): *Philip Richardson to be appointed to the Curriculum and Standards Committee as of today's date.* Action completed.

Action 4 (C&S 04): *It was agreed that a verbal update on Easton will be provided at each Curriculum and Standards Committee Meeting, as a separate item, going forward.* Action completed.

6. SECTION A – papers for discussion and action

6.1 Quality Report

(Paper 05)

The Quality Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points were discussed and explained:

- Jerry White noted that retention for adult students has declined sharply, due to the high numbers of withdrawals being recorded on the return to face to face learning. The reasons for withdrawal are varied, but many relate to the students' feelings that they did not want to, or were not able to, engage productively via online means and therefore do not feel they can continue with their studies. The implications for these withdrawals are financial for the College, as it reduces the Adult Education Budget earnings for the year. The Principal informed governors that the financial implications can be managed and will be seen within the emerging financial picture. Governors asked if any of these students would re-engage in September and it is hoped that the outcome will be positive. It was agreed that this is a small fallout considering the circumstances.
- Apprenticeship provision has been impacted on by the combination of social distancing requirements within classes and workshops and the full closure of sites for all but essential examinations in Lockdown 3. The College is now working positively to prioritise the practical learning to allow Apprentices to start to catch up, to prepare students for EPAs, where these have been delayed, and to plan for extended summer learning in some programmes to try to address skills gaps. It was noted that staff have been consulted and, only where staff are keen to support the learning and catch-up of students, will practical learning continue up until the end of July. Governors were informed that functional skills in apprenticeships is not a challenge, beyond the norm.
- The SMT have completed an exercise to review the multiple sources of evidence they have available to assess student, apprenticeship, and employer satisfaction. This exercise has led to some good sharing of innovative practice between areas and the identification of some actions for further consideration for the remaining part of the year.
- The attention of governors was brought to the update on facts and figures of student numbers, which was part of the Quality Report, previously circulated. It was agreed that this is an excellent aide memoire for everyone to see the headline figures at CCN, and in Norfolk, and it was agreed that it is a helpful inclusion, giving the balance of all Norfolk colleges, for information and guidance.

The full content of the report was noted.

6.1.1 Student and Employer Update

It was agreed under agenda item 5 (Action 1 C&S 04) that a fuller summary will be prepared by Jerry White, as part of the Quality Report, and discussed at the next meeting being held on 22 June 2021, on the approach to gathering satisfaction data.

6.2 TLA Report

(Paper 06)

The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update, was discussed at the meeting and the following key points for discussion and explanation were highlighted:

- Julia Bates informed governors that after the Easter break, students returned for 100% face to face delivery, with very few exceptions. HE students went back to blended learning with most students onsite for 50% of their sessions.
- It was noted that tutorial supervisor network meetings have taken place, helping to replicate staffrooms where staff used to catch-up on student progress etc., and alleviate their isolated working caused by the pandemic. Tutorial supervisors have been working with the teacher development team to help create resources for personal development sessions in collaboration with Police Liaison - Safer Schools team and St John's Ambulance, adding value to contribute to students Personal Development programmes. The teacher development team have been working with Norwich Opportunity Area legacy group on a project which is looking at the 'Impact of remote learning support during lockdown'.
- A full update was provided to governors on the qualification arrangements in lieu of examinations and it was highlighted that qualification arrangements continue with Pre-Awards Boards for each area. It was noted that this forum has provided an opportunity to identify missing student evidence and to take intervention to support Heads of Area and staff to address this. This environment has also provided the opportunity to identify individual students who require individual solutions. There are a handful of students (currently around 11) who have been identified as potentially needing to complete the year again.
- Julia Bates informed governors that she is disappointed that a significant number of Adult English and Maths and ESOL students have left learning because of the challenges they have had this year, directly attributable to the pandemic, mental health, family circumstances and getting behind with work are some issues noted. It was agreed that this has become a national problem.
- In response to a query about the likely different starting points of students in September, Julia Bates informed governors that she and her team are realistic about what can be achieved and are encouraging a cross level working so that the curriculum should be seen as a three year programme that students need to move through and it is hoped that students will be able to catch up on lost learning and given a chance to accelerate progress to achieve by the end of year three.
- It was confirmed that some of the TLA Grid meetings held recently were attended by both Andrea Blanchflower and Philip Richardson and both agreed that it was a very useful exercise to hear from each department and it was agreed that they would be happy to drop in again, via Microsoft Teams. Corrienne Peasgood informed governors that the next meetings are scheduled to take place in the first week of June, for this half term, and the second meeting will be scheduled in the first week of July. It was confirmed that these meetings will continue via Microsoft Teams to enable a cross college participation and invitations will be issued to all governors. It was agreed that governor participation show staff that governors appreciate the importance of these meetings.

The full content of the TLA Report was noted.

6.3 IAG Update

(Paper 07)

The IAG Update Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points for discussion and explanation were highlighted:

- The paper informs governors of information, advice and guidance and careers education matters provided through centralised services and relating to students throughout the year.
- Helen Richardson-Hulme informed governors that the Advice & Guidance team have created a Student and Parent / Carer Careers Newsletter which will be sent out each term to current students. The newsletter will have relevant and up to date information as well as links to referral websites, term dates, contact details and upcoming events.
- A Year 11 student and teacher mail out is also taking place this month. It has updates on the interview process, how to apply for a bursary and travel information. On request by secondary schools, it also has all the key contacts for the Student Services departments including telephone and email addresses to make contact easier during the next few weeks and months. The team are also starting to see a few vulnerable students face to face, where required.
- The diverse range of spring and summer events and up and coming activities were noted.

The full content of the IAG Update was noted.

6.4 Residential Report

(Paper 08)

The Residential Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points for discussion and explanation were highlighted:

- Helen Richardson-Hulme informed governors that the new Residential Admissions Panel meetings are now taking place fortnightly and two have been held to date. It was agreed that the meetings have proved to be a helpful process of linking residential and course applications and looking at the young person's application from a holistic perspective. It was confirmed that this is a pilot and it is also useful to receive parental input.
- The latest Student Voice meeting was held on 15 April 2021. Students requested tennis as an evening activity, and this is being arranged with assistance of the Tennis Centre staff to maintain a Covid safe activity. Students have been involved in the Captain Tom's 100, collectively walking 100 miles. Norfolk County Council has also granted permission for students to fish in the Easton lake.
- Helen Richardson-Hulme highlighted that in each future report, she will provide an update for Governors on how Easton are meeting the National Minimum Standards. A few standards will be selected for each report and they will be RAG rated so Governors can see where the college is prioritising their actions and interventions. It was noted that five standards are included in this report and the one amber RAG rated element, "Bespoke arrangements need to be written and explained on website" has now been rated as green. The Chair thanked Helen Richardson-Hulme for the update, and it was agreed that it is a good insight and reference point for governors.

The full content of the Residential Report was noted.

6.5 HE Report

(Papers 09-10)

The HE Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting. The following key points for discussion and explanation were noted and the headlines from the report were as follows:

NSS Rollout update – the National Student Survey closed at the end of April and full details of response rates by course were highlighted in the report, previously circulated. It was noted that the overall response rate is stronger this year, being 25% higher than in 2020 and nearly 10% above the national average response in the same year. The full analysis of results will be discussed by the C&S Committee when received in the summer term.

Application update – Jerry White informed governors that applications have slowed over the past two months following the first of the UCAS deadlines. The current position is still strong in comparison to 2020 and HE staff continue to work with applicants to encourage conversion. Work has also started with marketing to explore opportunities for targeted approaches to specific courses to ensure that everyone makes the most of clearing and the potential opportunities provided when Level 3 results are released in the Summer. The full application data was appended to the previously circulated report. The question was asked if the college has an issue with those courses, which to date, have no applications, and it was noted that the FdSc in Mental Health Practice and Health Studies, and the Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship, are directly filled by NHS and NCC respectively.

Validation and Revalidation Schedule – since the last C&S report three programmes have moved through their Stage 2 Validation events – Animal Science, Wildlife and Conservation, Additional Needs and Disabilities. In addition, the BA (Hons) Pre-Join Policing moved through the College of Policing internal QSA event in preparation for the validation. This was a successful event with the panel commending the close collaboration between the College and the local Constabulary. It was noted that The College of Policing had a representative on the UEA Validation event on 11 May and the Stage 2 validation was confirmed earlier today.

Office for Students Update – Jerry White informed governors that the College's Monitoring update on progress against the 2019 Access and Participation Plan was returned for the OfS deadline of 16 April. It is anticipated that the OfS will now contact the college with clarification questions. It was noted that the completion of the Monitoring return was complicated by the movement in data following the merger with Easton as well as the OfS' ongoing vagaries regarding the inclusion of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. The report details good progress against the majority of the targets set in the initial plan, although it should be noted that these were superseded by the 2020-24 plan which was submitted in the following year, which was a more nuanced plan in response to the OfS developing a more refined view of the sector, particularly College based HE. A copy of the Monitoring return was previously distributed for information. The question was asked of Jerry White whether the following action included in the return, "Improve tracking and recording of personal tutoring by academic staff through CPD and use of e-ILP (electronic individual learning plan) to allow for tracking of engagement with academic support by under-represented groups" had been rolled out from September 2020, and it was confirmed that this had taken place.

The full content of the report was noted.

6.6 COVID-19 Risk Register

(Paper 11)

It was noted that the full COVID-19 risk register was updated and presented to the full Board at their meeting, which took place on 13 April, and the risks associated with the Curriculum and Standards committee were highlighted and discussed and the following noted:

The three C&S responsibilities were as follows:

- Capacity for delivering catch-up, NEET and BAU
- Summer 2021 exams
- Health and wellbeing of students

Of the three, capacity for delivering catch-up, NEET and BAU is RAG rated Red and is higher than governors' risk appetite.

Full discussions on each responsibility, and its migration, was noted.

6.7 Easton Report

Please see confidential minutes.

6.8 Governor Curriculum Scrutiny

6.8.1 English – Aron Whiles

The Chair informed governors that a meeting was convened with Aron Whiles on 20 April to focus particularly on Easton. It was agreed that the English report will be discussed as part of the report on Easton at the next meeting.

Action 1: English to be included in the Easton Report to be discussed at the next meeting taking place on 22 June 2021 (AW / CJ).

6.8.2 Maths – Andrea Blanchflower

Andrea Blanchflower informed governors that she had a productive meeting recently with the Maths team and the report will be discussed as part of the Easton report at the next meeting.

Action 2: Maths to be included on the Easton Report at the next meeting taking place on 22 June 2021 (ABI / CJ).

6.9 Strategic Priorities and Targets Update

(Paper 12)

The progress updates for Curriculum and Standards committee as per the reporting schedule was previously distributed for information. Full details were discussed as part of agenda item 6.1.

The full content of the report was noted.

6.10 Governance Matters

Clare Johnson informed the Committee that a response to the Code of Good Governance has been submitted and the College is awaiting the final version of the Code.

7. SECTION B – papers for discussion only if required by Governors

7.1 NTTC Report

(Paper 13)

The latest NTTC Report, previously distributed, was discussed at the meeting and the following information highlighted:

It was noted that NTTC has been able to give the Primary School direct trainees complimentary second placements from Easter. The partnership schools have been very supportive to enable this to happen. 19 of the 38 trainees changed placement after Easter. NTTC are grateful to their partner schools who continue to welcome the trainees and give them excellent support with their training. NTTC have now successfully completed two terms of the 2020/21 programme and from a starting point of 27 Primary trainees and 44 Secondary trainees, there are now 28 Primary trainees (one returned and one left at Easter) and 39 Secondary trainees (one returned from deferral).

With 19 Post Graduate Trainees on their courses, NTTC is supporting them through to their End Point Assessment from September 2021 to November 2021. NTTC need to have around 30 trainees so there is the capacity to observe, meet and monitor the new cohort. For Secondary, NTTC are finding that applications are down on previous years. Currently there are 19 trainees due to start in September with two recently dropping out due to changes in their financial circumstances. The financial burden in an unsettled climate added to the significant reduction in bursaries, is limiting applicants for Secondary. This is reflected nationally where uptake for training places has fallen. NTTC continue to market the course. It was confirmed that contracts with schools have not been long enough for Post Graduate students to complete their apprenticeships which last longer than the academic year. This issue has been resolved with new recruits, but a couple of current apprentices will be without a contract next term. CCN will address this issue as soon as possible.

Ofsted – Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers nationally can expect to be inspected from 4 May 2021. NTTC now have data provided by the DFE (ISDR) for initial teacher training. An inspection will be carried out through one visit and an online phone call to the NTTC team and CCN managers. The team are preparing materials for the 'long phone call'. Jacqui Waring has completed inspection training in preparation for ITE Inspection with NASBTT an organisation that supports ITE providers nationally. Both Jerry White and Corrienne Peasgood have met with her to share their expertise to help with the planning for an Inspection. Jacqui Waring and her team have met for a day to plan for an Inspection visit and are implementing the changes required for the new Ofsted Framework as best as they can alongside reacting to the needs of current trainees and being flexible in relation to COVID-19 requirements.

Jerry White informed the committee that as the TEN Group is no longer a motivating factor for the college to have teacher training provision and the potential increased competition, the future direction of NTTC will be reflected upon and reviewed in the coming months.

Governors asked for the point in Section 1 of the report on Primary Teaching Apprenticeships to be clarified and Jerry White agreed to update the sentence accordingly.

Action 3: Jerry White to clarify the sentence in section 1 of the NTTC Report (JW).

The full content of the NTTC Report was noted.

7.2 Student Voice Report

Emily Staley provided a verbal update to the committee and the following highlighted:

- Mental Health Awareness Week activities have taken place across all three sites, via social media.
- Brainstorming is currently taking place, with Freshers Week in mind.
- Vacancy Executive Roles are being advertised and interest has been received.
- End of Year Feedback Form is being written.
- FIKA - 'Essentials of Mental Fitness' online course – is being rolled out to staff at the present time and will be rolled out to all students in September. It was agreed that the word fitness is more appropriate than health, going forward.

The positive work undertaken by the Student Union was noted, with thanks to Emily Staley.

7.3 Spring Term 2020/21 Complaints and Appeals Report (Paper 14)

The Spring Term 2020/21 Complaints and Appeals Report was previously circulated for information and no notes for immediate discussion were raised.

The full content of the report was received and noted.

8. SECTION C – papers for information only

There were no papers tabled in this section of the meeting.

9. Other Urgent Business

There was no other urgent business tabled at today's meeting.

10. Confidentiality

It was agreed at the meeting that agenda item 6.7 would remain confidential.

11. Date of Next Meeting

C&S Committee: Tuesday 22 June 2021 at 4.00 pm, via Microsoft Teams.

All business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 6.10 pm.

Signed Date

(Chairman)