



**Minutes of the Quality and Curriculum Committee  
held on 14 October 2020 at 5.30 pm via video conference**

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| <b>Present:</b>       | Libby Bush<br>John Ennis<br>Ian Looker<br>Grace Morrison (from 6.08pm)<br>Lee Probert (Chief Executive and Principal)<br>Carol Runciman<br>Mark Rushworth<br>Fiona Thompson (Chair)<br>Cathy Waters   |               |
| <b>In Attendance:</b> | Glyn Jones – Vice Principal for Academic and Applied Education (VPAAE)<br>Graeme Murdoch – Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality and Student Experience (DCE)<br>Karen Robson – Head of Higher Education (from 5.56pm to 6.20pm)<br>Mike Saunders – Head of Quality Improvement (from 6.00pm)<br>Sharon Smith – Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational and Professional Education (DPHVP)<br>Gareth Catterson – Interim Director of Governance (DG) |               |
|                       | <b>Item 1: Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest</b>   | <b>Action</b> |
| Q.21.01               | Apologies were received from, John Robinson and Owen Trotter. Grace Morrison and Mike Saunders apologised that they would be late joining the meeting.<br><br>There were no declarations of interest.   |               |
|                       | <b>Item 2: Minutes and Matters Arising</b>  |               |
| Q.21.02               | <b>2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 17 June 2020</b><br><br>The Chair requested amendments to Q.20.24 and Q.20.28. She also asked if Foundation Degree students had returned in August to complete assessments so they could progress to their BSc in September, as detailed in Q.20.31, and was informed they had.<br><br><i><b>The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting subject to the changes requested.</b></i>     | DG            |
| Q.21.03               | <b>2.2 Actions Summary</b><br><br>The Committee noted the progress on actions presented on the Actions Summary Sheet. All actions were either completed, not due or addressed on the agenda.<br><br><i><b>The Committee resolved to note progress on the Actions Summary</b></i>  |               |
| Q.21.04               | <b>2.3 Any Other Matters</b><br><br>There were no other matters arising.  |               |

|         | <b>Item 4: Statutory and Regulatory Compliance</b>  |  |
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| Q.21.05 | <p><b>3.1 Office for Students Matters</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational &amp; Professional Education gave a verbal update to the Committee as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OfS are reviewing and resetting regulatory requirements. They will still include a risk-based approach but also a more principled approach.</li> <li>• There will be consultation regarding reducing the administration burden.</li> <li>• They will reduce enhanced monitoring</li> <li>• There will be no random sampling in 2020-21</li> <li>• There will be access and participation plan workshops to explore problems achieving aspects of the app because of Covid-19. This will inform how annual monitoring of these plans is carried out.</li> <li>• Some data returns that were suspended last year have been reintroduced and the College's OfS monitoring calendar has been updated to account for these.</li> <li>• OfS is looking to reduce fees by 10% because of Covid-19 though this will not be brought in until 2022-23.</li> <li>• The National Student Survey is being reviewed but no significant changes to questions are expected for 2020-21</li> <li>• There is still no news on the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) though OfS say there will be consultations on the TEF process.</li> <li>• There was a lot of guidance about the start of year and how this was communicated to HE students, and this has been followed rigorously</li> </ul> <p>In answer to a query she confirmed that the College was not subject to enhanced monitoring, but it was required to produce two strategies, Teaching &amp; Learning (see Item 9.2) and Employability which was slightly delayed.</p> <p>The Chair stated it was her understanding the OfS were looking at a possible internal restructure with a reduction in staff and wondered if this would lead to a reduced administration load for colleges. The Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational &amp; Professional Education reported there was no detail available yet, but it may be significant that some 'shelved' reportable events had not yet been reinstated.</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to note the report on the Office for Students Matters</i></b></p> |  |
|         | <b>Item 4: Strategic Plan Implementation</b>  |  |
| Q.21.06 | <p><b>4.1 Implementation Plan – Pillar 1</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal for Quality &amp; Student Experience reminded members that all Pillars had been considered by the Board in July, and since then SLT had created the implementation plans that were presented in this and the following papers. In drafting the implementation plan, SLT had purposely not gone into detail as this would have produced an unwieldy document.</p> <p>Members asked how the implementation plan would be transformed into manageable/understandable sections so that teachers knew what they were trying to achieve through a RAG rating or dashboard system. The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience explained that for every Pillar there was a Strategy Group whose role was to monitor progress. The Teaching and Learning Strategy Group and</p>  |  |

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|         | <p>Support for Students Group were breaking down all the parts of the Implementation Plan. As part of this process, the work was also being sequenced with associated timescales so that progress could be monitored at a more granular level. The Chair stated that it was helpful to be reassured that the plan would be a 'living' document and suggested some amendments.</p> <p>The view was expressed that the level of detail was right, and it was clear about what would be done but not what would be different from the current position in five years' time, for example what would have to be changed in what was currently done, to get to the scenario set out in the strategy. The Chief Executive and Principal stated that this may not be articulated in the current document, but this was the challenge of presenting sections as they were developed. However, there would be a further section, articulating the vision, and this would be included in the papers presented to the Board the following week.</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to note the Implementation Plan for Pillar 1</i></b></p>   | DCE |
| Q.21.07 | <p><b>4.2 Implementation Plan – Pillar 2</b></p> <p>There were no further questions specifically regarding Pillar 2</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to note the Implementation Plan for Pillar 2</i></b></p> <p><i>Mike Saunders joined the meeting</i></p>  |     |
| Q.21.08 | <p><b>4.3 Final HE Strategy</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational &amp; Professional Education reported that she had met with the Chair of the Committee and Prof. John Robinson after the presentation of the HE Strategy at the last meeting of the Committee. Feedback from this meeting and from other members of the Committee had strengthened the context and facilitated a better order to the strategy. Some items, for example the validating partner, had been removed as they were too specific.</p> <p><i>Karen Robson joined the meeting</i></p> <p>Members commented that it now read very well, but they questioned what differentiated the College's offer, asking if price was part of the strategy. The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience stated that feedback from students was that price should not be used as a differentiator as students linked lower price with lower quality.</p> <p><i>Mike Saunders joined the meeting</i></p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to approve the Final HE Strategy to the Board for approval.</i></b></p> <p><i>Part of this minute was considered confidential and a separate confidential minute was recorded.</i></p> <p><i>Karen Robson left the meeting.</i></p> |     |
|         | <b>Item 5: Student Engagement and Success</b>  |     |
| Q.21.09 | <b>5.1 Quality Report</b>  |     |

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|         | <i>This minute was considered confidential and a separate confidential minute was recorded.</i>   |    |
|         | <b>Item 6: Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b>  |    |
| Q.21.10 | <p><b>6.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b></p> <p>The Head of Quality Improvement highlighted the establishment of a new on-line, teaching and learning handbook, which was a new way of explaining to staff what the expectations of the College were and working with them to build and meet those expectations.</p> <p>The Chair asked if good practice was part of the handbook and was informed that the teacher toolkit, a repository of good practice and ideas was amalgamated into the handbook and was continually being added to.</p> <p>Asked how the handbook had been received by staff, the Head of Quality Improvement stated that it was growing in approval as staff shared more through it.</p> <p>The Chair asked about update training on MS Teams for assessors and IQAs and was informed that a system had been implemented to track training and ensure it was current. Training was continuing through the year and would then be renewed on a 3-year rolling programme. The Chair asked the Director of Governance to ensure that a report on completion of training was brought to the last meeting of the academic year.</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to note the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report</i></b></p> <p>Lesson observations and learning visits had been put in place.</p> <p>The outcomes for last year show that 81% of all External Quality Assurance (EQA) reports did not contain actions or sanctions, which is a significant improvement on the 54% obtained in the 2018/19 academic year. This supports the effectiveness of the procedure implemented in 2019.</p> | DG |
| Q.21.11 | <p><b>6.2 Interested Party Feedback</b></p> <p><i>This minute was considered confidential and a separate confidential minute was recorded.</i></p>  |    |
|         | <b>Item 7: Supporting Students</b>  |    |
| Q.21.12 | <p><b>7.1 Supporting Students Report</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience highlighted the key items from the paper. The Chair commented that both the current and previous papers demonstrated how well the College responded to stake holder feedback to ensure students had the support required, even through the difficult period of lockdown.</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to note the Supporting Students Report</i></b></p>   |    |
|         | <b>Item 8: Corporate Governance and Assurance</b>   |    |
| Q.21.13 | <b>8.1 Strategic Risk Management</b>  |    |

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|         | <p>The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience highlighted that the risks had been changed to 6 core risks relating to the 6 pillars of the Strategic Plan with the addition of one to address Covid-19 and another related to cyber security. The Committee was responsible for reporting to the Audit Committee any concerns related to Pillars 1 &amp; 2 risks which were the risks relevant to the Committee's scrutiny.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that the new Teaching &amp; Learning handbook should be included as a mitigation of the risk attached to Pillar 1.</p> <p>Asked what the residual risks represented, the Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience stated that it was primarily about the College's ability to respond to the current situation with the Covid-19.</p> <p>Members expressed concern about what the key risks were that could not be mitigated. They asked for more detail regarding the residual risk. This should be reported to the Audit Committee.</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to note risks and report to the Audit Committee that more information was required regarding the residual risks.</i></b></p> | DG |
|         | <b>Item 9: Policy and Other Matters</b>   |    |
| Q.21.14 | <p><b>Item 9.1 Teaching and Learning Policy</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience stated that there were very few changes to the policy.</p> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to approve the Teaching and Learning Policy.</i></b></p>  |    |
| Q.21.15 | <p><b>Item 9.2 Teaching and Learning Improvement Strategy</b></p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal Quality &amp; Student Experience highlighted the tracked changes to the document. The document had been adapted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to make it more applicable to blended learning in whatever way individual course teams were delivering this.</li> <li>• to make it more evidence based.</li> <li>• to link it to the new Strategic Plan</li> <li>• to add the appendix regarding lesson observations at the end of the document.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>The Committee resolved to approve the Teaching and Learning Improvement Strategy.</i></b></p>  |    |
|         | <b>SUMMARY MATTERS</b>  |    |
| Q.21.16 | <p><b>Item 10: Key Meeting Outcomes and/or Actions</b></p> <p><b>10.1 Matters for report to the Governing Body (if any)</b></p> <p><i>This minute was considered confidential and a separate confidential minute was recorded.</i></p>  | DG |
| Q.21.17 | <p><b>10.2 Matters for report to Audit Committee (if any)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More detail was required regarding the residual risk</li> </ul>  | DG |

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|               | <b>11 Summary Matters</b>                                  |  |
| Q.21.18       | <b>11.1 Any Other Business - None.</b>                     |  |
| Q.21.19       | <b>11.2 Date of the Next Meeting – 24 February 2021</b>    |  |
|               | The meeting closed at 7.05pm                               |  |
| <b>Signed</b> | Approved remotely as an accurate record – 24 February 2021 |  |
| <b>Name:</b>  | Fiona Thompson   |  |
| <b>Date:</b>  |  |  |