

## CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

Date	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Time 4.00pm	<b>FINAL</b>
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Venue	The Executive Boardroom, New College Stamford
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Chair	Alison Grant
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**Membership:** Alison Grant, Luke Rurans and Paul Wingfield.  
**In attendance:** Janet Meenaghan (Principal), Rachel Nicholls (Vice-Principal, Curriculum & Quality ("VPCQ")) and Sally Brook Shanahan (Clerk to the Corporation).

**Apologies:** Zoe Nash, Allison Sunley and Andrew Tofts

**Disclosure of Members Interests:** There were no disclosures of interests beyond those already declared in the Register of Interests.

Item	Actions
<p>1. <b>Presentations</b>            The meeting was preceded by two presentations during which Members' questions were answered. The first, from Gary Munson-Pike, Learning &amp; Skills Manager for Business &amp; IT, provided an overview of that department and explained how the challenges it faced during 2014/15, including high staff turnover and poor student attendance, have been addressed. The second, from Paula David, Head of English &amp; Maths, was a positive report about results in these subjects and how they are being successfully embedded within subject areas.</p>	
<p>2. <b>Minutes of the Meeting of the Curriculum, Quality &amp; Standards Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015</b>            Subject to two amendments being made on page 3 about Action No. 7 as follows:            (i) To amend the title to "College Performance Reviews" to reflect the change of name of the reviews since the action was initiated, and,            (ii) To shorten the final sentence to read "The Action will remain on the Table for the time being as a prompt",            the minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum, Quality &amp; Standards Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>3. <b>Actions Table and Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015</b>             The Actions Table was received and the following additional points were made:   <b>From the Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015</b>   <u>Action No. 1 – Minute 3 – Page 2 –Action Table – English &amp; Maths Progress Report –</u>            With the required action having been covered by the earlier presentation it was agreed that the Action is closed.</p>	

	<p><u>Action No. 2 – Minute 3 – Page 3 – Action Table – Standards of Learning, Assessment and Teaching Report</u> - The procurement of the ALIS System is too far advanced for it to be reconsidered but the view was expressed that it will do the job required. The Action is closed.</p> <p><u>Action No. 4 – Minute 5 – Page 4 – Final Success Rates</u> – The percentages of A*-C grades at AS and A2 levels that were requested are included in the KPI Report. The Action is closed.</p> <p><u>Action No. 5 – Minute 7 – Page 6 – Post-Inspection Action Plan</u> – This Action about showing the impact of CPD will be carried forward to the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Action No. 6 – Minute 8 – Page 6 – Report on Ofsted Support &amp; Challenge Visit</u> – The idea suggested by two Members about using a gaming package to identify learning styles has been circulated for comment. The Action is closed.</p> <p><u>Action No. 9 – Minute 11 – Page 7 – Development of Key Performance Indicators</u> – The additional background information requirements have been finalised by the Committee and so the Action is closed.</p> <p><b>From the Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015</b></p> <p><u>Action No. 3 – Minute 3 – Page 2 – Post-Inspection Action Plan</u> – The presentation from a member of the Business Team had taken place before the meeting and so the Action is closed.</p> <p><u>Action No. 7 – Minute 6 – Page 4 – Feedback on College Excellence Reviews</u> - An item to consider the new feedback form to use at Link Visits will be added to the agenda for the next Corporation meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016.</p> <p><u>Action No. 8 – Minute 7 – Page 5 – Apprenticeship Quality Improvement Plan</u> – The idea about holding an Apprenticeship Awards Ceremony will be considered by the SLT and reported back to the Committee for further discussion.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Departmental Self-Assessment Summary Grades 2014-15</b></p> <p>The Self-Assessment Report (“SAR”) had been validated and moderated on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 in a process that was externally Chaired and involved three Corporation Members, including the Chair and Vice Chair. Key College managers and the SLT were also present.</p> <p>Members scrutinised the Summary Grades and updated actions. A discussion followed about the three priority areas of concern including the updated actions. Attention focussed on Animal Studies and the new issues that have emerged there around staffing. It was explained that in order to manage the situation work is underway to look creatively at the mapping of units and timetabling in order to manage the issues. Members raised questions about the communications around these issues which they emphasised is of key importance. It was confirmed that communications with both students and parents are being managed effectively.</p> <p>The process to validate the SAR was robust and effective and the Quality Improvement Plan is being developed.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question about measures to address performance issues in the Sport department it was confirmed that a new Learning &amp; Skills Manager is in post. External advice has been obtained on effective actions which the Principal confirmed had been a very useful piece of work. A request was made for the consultant to make a return visit to assess the progress made and indicate the expected date by which matters will have improved.</p>	VPCQ

	<p>Discussion followed about the high grades achieved by sub-contracted providers that it was confirmed have all been validated.</p> <p>The FE Student Governor commented on the improved feel in the Academic Studies department this year and the positive impact of the staff changes.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Key Performance Indicators 2015-16</b></p> <p>Members received the Report and scrutinised its Appendix that provided a RAG rated update against each KPI. It was acknowledged that the grade profile needs to improve and that in order to ensure this happens interventions are taking place including pre-Ofsted training to help staff manage the inspection.</p> <p>Attention focussed in particular on the Amber and Red ratings against the quality targets which views expressed that these may have been adversely influenced by the views of students returning after the College's previous challenging year. Members were reassured that a further "temperature check" is to be taken in February 2016 after which new data will be available for their scrutiny. The biggest issue, however, remains around attendance with confirmation given that the disciplinary procedures are now being applied in a timely and consistent manner. With the Principal and Vice Principal Curriculum not in post until September and October 2015, respectively, it was accepted that some slippage in attendance had already occurred beforehand.</p> <p>A wide ranging discussion followed about attendance in which Members were told about the pilot of a mobile 'phone "App" to encourage attendance. Members discussed the difficulties experienced by students who are also carers in the course of which it was confirmed that there are only a small number of such students.</p> <p>Members were briefed about the application of the student Disciplinary Procedures including that one of the two Directors of Learning has 40 Stage 2 Disciplinary hearings across all levels and areas. Members expressed concern about the potential for the Disciplinary Procedures to lose impact in the light of this extent of use. In the discussion that followed it was noted that the procedures need traction from Day 1 and that some early casualties are required to reinforce that impact. The cultural change in College recruitment from quantity to quality was noted and that this will result in a right-sized high quality College. A Member suggested that students lose half a grade by poor attendance and that they have seen a poster that used the example of attendance slipping from 100% to 95% and offered to locate one with a message to this effect that the Principal could use. It was also suggested that this message would be an ideal one for use as a screen saver. A Student Member acknowledged this would help to get the message across to students whilst noting that sometimes such messages are out of date. Members nevertheless advocated the power of such subliminal messages and supported their use.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Teaching &amp; Learning Report</b></p> <p>The Report provided Members with an update on teaching, learning and assessment during the Autumn term 2015. This included observations to date where at 74.3% the grade profile for the College is significantly below the target of 95% being "Good" or better. It was noted that the 95% or better figure is based on the grade profile at the end of the academic year and not all curriculum areas have yet been observed. It was confirmed that as observations have been conducted on a risk based approach the expectation is that the grade profile will increase.</p>	

	<p>It was reported that the Teaching &amp; Learning Coach role is currently under review both in terms of the numbers required, what the role entails and the timetable for change. The introduction of Curriculum Area Reviews (“CARs”) is providing a focussed approach in the drive to improve quality. The Festival of Teaching and Learning that will take place in June 2016 is a further initiative with the same focus. Meanwhile on-going support is being given to staff who have had a Grade 3/4 observation alongside a more focussed mandatory CPD programme to enable curriculum areas improve teaching and learning in their areas.</p> <p>Discussion followed about the use of lesson plans in addition to schemes of learning and the need for them to be dynamic, live documents that show attention has been given to the students who will be in the class and that they meet their various needs. Members supported the requirement for all lessons to be covered by lesson plans in order to support staff to have a successful experience in class and on inspection and to avoid mid-lesson review and repeated delivery.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Study Programmes</b></p> <p>The Report provided Members with an update on changes to Study Programmes and the further enhancement required for the delivery of employability, work readiness and personal development.</p> <p>Members discussed the recent Ofsted publication “Transforming 16-19 Education and Training: the early implementation of 16 to 19 study programmes” and the concerns that remain one year into implementation, whilst noting that much of the criticism in the Report is addressed to sixth forms. Significant work being undertaken around work experience which now needs to be promoted externally with the message that studying at New College Stamford will help students gain not only qualifications but the employability and work readiness skills and qualities that will enable them to gain employment.</p> <p>With Study programmes now a judgement grade as part of the Common Inspection Framework and the importance of the College addressing this agenda and making the necessary improvements to study programmes and the delivery of employability, work readiness and personal development it was suggested and agreed that the paper is presented to the full Corporation in order to ensure all Members have a general understanding of Study Programmes. A short session during one of the forthcoming Corporation Development Days to include Study Programmes will also be developed using a questionnaire that will be completed before the session.</p> <p>With evidence that there are varying levels of delivery in relation to tutorials, employability and personal development on study programmes a Next Steps Passport has been developed to standardise delivery and introduce a minimum entitlement for students. The Passport that was launched earlier in the week will be completed by every student on a Study Programme. Whilst much of evidence that is captured may relate to activities students are already undertaking, the Passport brings additional benefits by focussing on their work readiness. In the course of the in-depth discussion that followed the following suggestions were made and will be developed further for the further enhancement of the Passport in 2016-17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The enhancement of Attendance and Punctuality measures so the Passport becomes a visual temperature check that can be reviewed at regular intervals.</li> </ul>	<p>VPCQ and Clerk</p> <p>Principal</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inclusion of a place on the Passport to record where students go above and beyond the evidence required</li> <li>• The introduction of graded awards at Gold, Silver and Bronze levels</li> <li>• The development of links between the Passport and the Governors' Link Scheme, including Link Members congratulating students who achieve and consideration of an internal whole College Passport Award, including a Link Governor Award</li> <li>• With the benefit of clarification that the minimum 95% target for Attendance will be effective from the date the Passport starts meaning no student with a previously poor attendance record will be disadvantaged, Members canvassed the idea of an Attendance Award.</li> </ul>	VPCQ
8.	<p><b>Curriculum Area Reviews</b></p> <p>Curriculum Area Reviews ("CARs") are the new, key quality process that has superseded the Principal's Excellence Reviews. The CARs are a live, collaborative, focussed and supportive analysis of all activities involved in an area of the curriculum. The process is owned by the Learning Standards Managers ("LSMs") and teaching staff with input from the Head of Quality, Directors of Learning and the Vice Principal, Curriculum &amp; Quality and designed to facilitate in-year improvement which results in a much wider view of data, teaching, learning and assessment and student experience.</p> <p>CARs usually take place over two weeks and are led by the Learning Standards Manager ("LSMs") with input from the course teams and students. It was confirmed that a written guidance document has been provided for the benefit of all LSMs who are required to produce a report for their area that is then moderated by a panel which includes the Vice Principal, Curriculum &amp; Quality, Head of Quality, Director of Learning and another LSM. Thereafter the triangulation of the information in order to give a real live picture of the area is of key importance. Members commended the approach and re-emphasised the importance that the process must be managed and owned by the areas. The Vice Principal, Curriculum &amp; Quality reported that she had used a similar approach at her previous College and she expects it will lead to positive change as it had done there. Meetings are taking place to schedule CARs for the rest of the term on a risk based approach.</p> <p>Attention turned to the content of the form used to capture information at the CARs. With the benefit of Members' scrutiny it was questioned whether having fifteen criteria to review are too many. It was felt that for the time being there were none that could be overlooked. An opportunity to seek some external input on the criteria and reporting from an organisation the College is already dealing with was suggested but the conclusion reached that in order to optimise the benefits of the CARs they will work better when the internal team comes together. Members noted that the CAR process has been well received and that with its planned roll out on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016 it will contribute to making the College Inspection ready.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Curriculum Planning 2016-17</b></p> <p>The paper emphasised the need for the College to run an effective Curriculum Planning process that plans appropriate programmes and enrolments in volumes that fulfil the College's funding potential and takes into account Local Enterprise Partnership</p>	

	<p>("LEP") priorities, labour market information, competitors and pricing where appropriate. It should predict, as closely as possible, the numbers of students on each course and in each area, the funding they will bring into the College and must include assessments of the staffing hours and costs that will be necessary to deliver the courses planned along with key information for the budgeting process and opportunities to reduce delivery costs.</p> <p>LSMs have been asked to complete a curriculum strategy document for their areas in the format appended to the paper. This was praised by Members for driving curriculum development and priorities which is essential for inspection and will be a key area of questioning when Inspectors are assessing the effectiveness of leadership and management. It was emphasised that Inspectors will also expect all Members to understand how the curriculum meets LEP priorities.</p> <p>Once the curriculum priorities have emerged from this process the consequences of adding or closing courses will be assessed. The teams will begin to formulate their departmental curriculum plans by the end of January 2016 with input from MIS to follow with the expectation that a paper will be presented to the Corporation in June/July 2016 about the position reached and how the curriculum is matched to the allocation.</p> <p>Discussion followed about the decision making that will be required to implement changes to the curriculum in which it was emphasised that it must be responsive to local employers' needs with courses tailored to sector priorities.</p> <p>In view of the need for all Members of the Corporation to understand Curriculum Planning, the new CAR process and Study Programmes it was agreed that the papers and supporting documents in relation to them will be added to a new folder on the Board portal entitled "Essential Reading" and that it should be accompanied by an explanatory email.</p>	<p>VPCQ</p> <p>Clerk</p>
10.	<p><b>Any other urgent business</b> (i) <u>Meeting times</u> – it was suggested that future meetings should start at 5.30pm and be planned to end by 7.30pm.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Date of next Meeting</b> The next meeting of the Committee will be held on <b>Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016</b> at 5.30pm in the Executive Boardroom.</p>	

The meeting ended at 6.35pm

**Signed** ..... Chair

**Date** .....