



**HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION**  
Corporation Meeting held on Thursday 12th October 2017 from 5.30pm.

**Confirmed Minutes**

**Present:** Ms L Summers (Chair), Mr J Dawson, Ms P McGuire, Ms T Wright, Mr K Webb, Mr S Buckley, Ms A Williams, Mr J Hood, Ms K Fleming, Ms A Thompson and Ms M Boryslawskij, Mr A Nelson, Ms H Haigh, Ms R Drury (attendance: 93%)

**In attendance:** Ms J Pryce.

**Clerk:** Mrs C Coupland

**1. Apologies for Absence/ Declaration of Interest**

Apologies of absence were submitted by Ms L Swinden and Mr P Kennedy.

Ms Summers advised that the Principal, all staff members, the Student Governor and the Clerk are to withdraw from the meeting for the reserved item whilst the Corporation consider the Remuneration Committee's recommendations. Ms Summers is to assume the role as minute taker in the Clerks absence.

**2. Minutes from Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017.**

**Resolved:**

- That these be accepted as a true record of the meeting, subject to one small amendment.

**3. Matters arising**

There were no formal matters arising.

**4. Student Outcomes 2017.**

Ms Williams presented Mr Kennedy's detailed report and informed Governors that the Headline success rates at the college are, for the fifth consecutive year, above the SFC average and for all qualification types and levels. For many indicators success rates are above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile for sixth form college performance and some, including overall success rate, are above the top decile for Sixth Form Colleges.

Outcomes again show an improvement in high grade performance for A level and Level 3 Vocational cohorts and a consolidation of the significant improvement in the GCSE high grade achievement in English under the new 9 – 1 grade scale. Value added performance across all level three qualification types remains very strong indeed and shows further improvement at A level, A level and on vocational Level 3 programmes. Maintenance of such high performance in raw and value-added outcomes over recent years is outstanding.

These outcomes place the college:

- Well above the top decile for Sixth Form Colleges on raw success rates for qualifications overall (all levels)
- Well above the top decile for Sixth Form Colleges for long level 3 success rate which forms 90% of our qualification aims
- Well above the top quartile for Sixth Form Colleges in terms of value added performance on AS and A2 qualifications according to the 6 Dimensions Report (and top decile for all providers at A level according to the ALPS report "Quality Indicator").
- Well above the top decile for value added performance in vocational level 3 provision; a top 5 SFC performance according to the 6 Dimension report.

- Well above the top quartile for Sixth Form Colleges for success rates on Long Level 2 qualifications (GCSE and Level 2 vocational course). This accounts for 9% of the student body.
- Significantly above average for Sixth Form Colleges on terms of the achievement of A\* - C grades in GCSE English and Science.
- Above average for Sixth Form Colleges for success rates on Long Level 1 qualifications. This accounts for the study programmes of around 1% of the student body.
- Outstanding positive progression through and from the colleges. Over 94% of students completing the 2015/16 academic year progressed to positive destinations in 2016/17.

Governors' were exceptionally pleased to hear that the outstanding performance of the college has also been achieved with HNC continuing to maintain its inclusive approach given that the College's AS/A level cohort for example has remained in the lower quartile for Sixth Form Colleges in terms of prior attainment. In terms of study programmes, the vast majority of the colleges students, 99.8% of whom are full time students, have succeeded in their qualifications at a level significantly higher than would be expected from their prior attainment. This level of success and progress is outstanding.

Ms Williams explained that the A level outcomes this year form a more complex picture than previous years as they include the first tranche of linear A levels alongside legacy specification outcomes in some AS and A level subjects and standalone new AS outcomes in subjects which retained an AS offer.

The A level success rate at 96.5% exceeds the high SFC average and the 6 Dimensions report indicates that value added performance is significantly above average for SFCs with achievement, success and high-grade indicators all in the top quartile. This correlate with outstanding ALPS grades (ALPS 2 for 'provider overall' and APLS 3 for 'students on Target' measure).

The Corporation was reminded that 2017 marks the final year of routine AS examinations sitting at the College as HNC progress to a fully linear model. The 2017 outcomes overall comprised a significantly reduced number of entries (481, from 1184 previous year) as some courses are already in fully linear mode and comprise both legacy / final AS examinations (290) and some linear A level embedded AS level entries (191). The raw measures show a 1.3% reduction in success rate and 7.6% reduction in high grade performance. Time was taken by Governors to explore the factors that have impacted upon this performance; The Corporation was satisfied that overall AS value added, despite the shift in high grades remains strong for this different sub set with all 6 Dimensions indicators significantly positive.

The Corporation reviewed the progress made in the areas previously identified as needing attention, as per the Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17. Governors were pleased to see progress made in a number of areas. The Corporation was advised of the main courses that continue to require further improvement and how the College intends to address the underperformance where progress remains slow. Governors were satisfied that robust improvement strategies have been identified to address issues of underperformance in the identified subject areas; along with curriculum developments and other actions to support further improvements.

Particular consideration was given to the disappointing final sitting of the legacy specification for GCSE maths given that grade A\*-C rate declined by almost 10% to 40%. Ms Williams explained to the Corporation that the overall high grade rate was impacted particularly by the performance of one staff member who is no longer at the college. Two new members of the department have since been recruited for this year and there is a great urgency to ensure that high grade improvements are secured in the new 9 – 1 specification next summer. Governors recognise that college performance in GCSE maths continues to remain above the post 16 sector benchmark but all were satisfied and assured with the improvement plans in place to ensure better outcomes next year for this 'passport qualification'.

Ms Williams confirmed to the Corporation that the college analyses the performance of different groups of learners according to; incoming attainment, gender, ethnicity, learning difficulty and disability and is developing more detailed analysis of indicators of deprivation such as previous free school meal eligibility. Ms Williams confirmed that the overall performance differences are to be further analysed at course level to identify any area for concern of performance of different groups. These will be reported in curriculum self-assessment reports and actions to address any issues noted in the Quality Improvement Plans.

Governors however took this opportunity to scrutinise the reported difference in data for the college's 2016/17 student profile for A2 all subjects (33% male and 67% female). Without benchmark data available, Ms Williams offered the Kirklees demographics, performance differential between genders at key stage 4 and subject restrictions in feeder schools as possible explanations for the gender differences. Governors were satisfied

however that marketing messages continue to be non-gender specific with the use of positive role models to challenge existing gender stereotypes. The Governors also recognised that the curriculum continues to be open and accessible to all regardless of gender.

Ms Summers explained to the Corporation that historical practice had been to send letters to the courses that are outstanding in performance as listed within the six dimensions report. Feedback via a recent Staff Voice meeting raised concerns as to this practice for it excludes other best performing teaching and non-teaching departments. The Governors agreed it more appropriate to send a general message of congratulations to the whole college in recognition of the outstanding outcomes in 2017.

**Resolved:**

- **That the report be received**
- **That all staff be congratulated on the outstanding outcomes in 2017**

**5. Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17 : Final Update**

Ms Williams presented the year end updates to the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2016/17. The QIP includes the headline quality improvement measures being taken by the college to ensure the best possible student outcomes. Governors were satisfied with the significant work which had been undertaken and with the final progress RAG rating and thanked staff for their continued support and hard work in addressing the identified areas for improvement and development. Ms Williams gave an early indication of the probable main areas of challenge in 2017-18, including the increasing financial pressures. Such matters will be reviewed further when the 2017-18 QIP is presented.

**Resolved:**

- **To receive the report**
- **To sign off the Quality Improvement Plan 2016/17.**

**6. Board Assurance Review – Initial Assurance Review for Risk: Poor Student Recruitment, both numbers and nature of cohort.**

The Governors thanked Ms Pryce for the comprehensive assurance report and helpful commentaries. After a full discussion the Corporation was satisfied that the actions being taken by the college to mitigate against the risk was robust and effective. The successful management of this risk was borne out by the high level of recruitment for 2017-18, which was particularly noteworthy in light of the demographic dip. The Corporation was also confident in the different levels of assurance identified within the BAF. Governors therefore agreed that an overall green assurance level shall be assigned to the risk.

The Corporation asked for the breakdown of recruitment data for the new intake student programmes to satisfy itself that the breakdown between Levels 1, 2 and 3 and between substantially academic and substantially vocational study programme cohorts at Level 3 are in the planned proportions. Ms Pryce agreed to submit this information at the next corporation meeting within the corporate report.

**Resolved:**

- **To assign Green overall assurance to the risk**
- **For the Clerk to update the Master BAF**
- **For breakdown of recruitment data for 2017/18 to be submitted to the Corporation at its next meeting.**

*Ms Pryce left the meeting at this point.*

**7. Student Union Annual Financial Report: year to 31 July 2017**

Mr Buckley on behalf of the Student Executive presented the Student Union Annual Financial Report which outlined how the monies dedicated to the Student Union Account had been spent over the year.

The Corporation was advised that an annual return simply showing the total income and total expenses for the year shall be returned to the Charity Commission given that the total income of the SU is less than £10,000.

**Resolved:**

- **For Mr Shaw, (Assistant Principal – Finance) to complete a return to the Charity Commission confirming that the financial activities of the Student Union are below £10,000 for the year ended 31 July 2017**

**8. Student Voice 'What's on top'**

Mr Buckley had no additional information to bring to the attention of the Corporation.

**9. Search & Governance Committee: meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Ms Summers informed the Corporation of the business of the Search & Governance Committee. Attention was specifically drawn to the Governors' training plan and schedule for 2017 /18 – all present agreed that key training and CPD needs had been identified for this academic year.

Ms Summers briefed the Corporation on progress made to date for the key corporate developments that the Committee has been tasked with i) undertaking a cost-benefit analysis of converting to e-governance and ii) creating the Governance Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. The Governors welcomed the update.

Ms Summers explained that the responses received for the Competency Framework for Governance, issued over the summer, are to provide the necessary supporting evidence for the Self-assessed Grade for Governance. Identified areas for development are to also feed directly into the Governance Quality Improvement plans for this academic year. At the time of the Committee meeting it was noted that some governors had not submitted their responses. The Committee therefore asked for the Clerk to chase outstanding returns. The Clerk confirmed that all Governors have now submitted their responses and an updated summary would be presented to the next Search and Governance Committee Meeting.

**10. Audit Committee: meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Mr Nelson briefed Governors on the business of the Audit Committee. The Corporation's attention was drawn to the Internal Audit strategy approved by the Committee. In response to a question raised by governors, Mr Nelson advised the Corporation that the ICT audit on Data Protection (GDPR) had been purposely scheduled for 2018/19 (post GDPR implementation) to best test college procedures and practice to assure the Corporation that all elements of the GDPR are being complied with. The Corporation agreed with the Committee that the strategy for internal audit covers the colleges key risks and assurance needs.

The Corporation considered and duly approved the Risk Management Policy as recommended by the Audit Committee.

Mr Nelson referred to the work being done by the Committee to produce a statement of Risk Appetite, which will be submitted to Corporation for approval in due course.

Mr Nelson informed the Corporation that HNC must complete an annual self-assessment questionnaire to assess the colleges' compliance with regularity requirements and to inform the direction and shape of the auditors' work. Mr Nelson advised Governors that the Committee had reviewed the completed self-assessment of compliance for 2016/17 and that members were satisfied with the colleges responses.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Minutes be received.**
- **That the Risk Management Policy be approved and implemented immediately.**
- **That the Internal Audit Strategy 2017/18 be received.**

**11. Any other Business.**

The Corporation took this opportunity to wish the Clerk a speedy recovery from her planned surgery next week. Ms Summers briefed governors on the agreed clerking arrangements in place for Ms Coupland's absence.

**12. Learner Impact Reflection**

The impact of discussions and scrutiny of the College's work in improving the outcomes and experience of all learners was considered and the following agreed:

- **Assurance that the college continues to remain an inclusive Sixth Form College and continues to successfully offer post 16 education opportunities to a diverse range of students.**
- **An informed Board of Governors is effective in its scrutiny, challenge and support of the senior leadership team thus ensuring positive outcomes and progress for all students.**
- **Maintaining high performance in term of outcomes enables HNC to continue to support students, giving life changing opportunities to our student body.**
- **Areas of concern / underperformance have been identified to ensure that the college is working towards improvements across all study programmes, courses and qualifications.**
- **The college in maintaining high performance in terms of outcomes overall continues to support students, giving life changing opportunities to our student body.**
- **The outcome of the Quality Improvement Plan leads directly into the whole college self-assessment review for 2016/17. It is in its construction and review therefore the key driver for quality improvement (including the maximising of student outcomes) in operation in the college.**
- **A financially supported Student Union Executive has the funds to directly engage with and involve the whole of the student body in creative college activities.**
- **The Internal Audit Strategy provides assurance that the college has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control. The scope of the internal audit includes an advisory audit on the quality of the students learning experience; this will provide additional external assurance for the Corporation on 'college life'.**
- **By approving the Governor Training Programme – the Corporation is committed to ensuring that every governor develops the skills they need to be effective and to make an active and valuable contribution to the work of the governing body.**
- **The board continues to conduct its affairs as openly and as transparently as possible.**

### **13. Determination of confidentiality**

The supporting papers for agenda item 15 are deemed to be confidential.

### **14. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2017.**

### **15. Remuneration Committee: meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016 (Reserved item)**

The Principal, staff and student members and the Clerk all withdrew from the meeting at this point whilst the Corporation considered the Remuneration Committee's recommendations. Ms Summers assumed the role as minute taker in the Clerk's absence.

Ms Summers also updated external governors on her correspondence with a former member of staff and her approach was agreed.

### **Resolved:**

- **The Corporation approved the senior post holders pay reviews as recommended by the Remuneration Committee.**