MINUTES OF THE HE ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21 JUNE 2023 AT 1.30 PM HELD REMOTELY VIA MS TEAMS

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Present: Phil Dover (Chair), Chrissy Draper, Jane McNeil, Mandie Stravino

In attendance: Roberta Hall, Melanie Lanser, Kate Martin, Heather Simcox, Rose Matthews (Clerk)

	Action	Date
22/22-23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
There were no apologies for absence.		
23/22-23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, CONFIRMATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND QUORUM		
All members were eligible and the meeting was confirmed to be quorate. There were no new declarations.		
24/22-23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2023		
The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.		
25/22-23 MATTERS ARISING		
15/22-23 Once the College had received a response on the TEF (likely July) then it will be shared with Board members.	Sept	2023
26/22-23 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEW		
The Vice Principal – Quality of Education shared progress with the HE Improvement Plan.		
Overall, the College were on track with the majority of the overarching targets set.		
A specific higher education Teaching and Learning Strategy had been drafted.		
Members heard a peer observation process was being trialled with many of the HE practitioners conducting peer observations.		
The Committee Chair said he would like to hear more about the peer mentoring programme. It was noted this had started as a research project to enhance the student experience for new students entering the programme. It was formally recorded and those mentored at Level 4 did progress. CD shared the example in Criminology which worked well for Level 3 students that wouldn't always go onto university. Students said it helped them understand the qualification better.		

Teaching observations confirm the majority of sessions observed were good quality – with those not provided with mentoring. End of year analysis is due to take place to identify the development foci for 2023-24.

Members noted further work was required on embedding career education into the curriculum planning. This was a focus of 2023-24 curriculum planning.

Overall student satisfaction was shared. A report on NSS would be shared at the next meeting. Increased participation in student voice. Further work is required on employer voice, this is being collated locally but needs an overarching process. This is being addressed by the Head of Higher Education.

27/22-23   TEF APPLICATION/TIMELINE

The Deputy Principal explained the assessment process was still underway. It was hoped a further update would be available at the next meeting.

28/22-23   NEW CURRICULUM UPDATE

The Deputy Principal provided a verbal update with regard to curriculum developments which centered around the IoT HTQs in relation to management and sustainability, which should both be introduced from September.

An update was shared in relation to the HTQ for software and digital with the University of Derby which would be registered in the next window for IFATE which would be next year. **Members questioned why this had happened,** which was then discussed.

Future developments with the IoT were also discussed.

29/22-23   STUDENT OUTCOMES

A verbal interim update was provided.

KM   Sept 23

The exam boards were currently ongoing and feedback from Team Managers on the outcomes were positive.

There was 100% completion of those retained.

A full report would be presented at the next meeting when outcomes are formally available.

30/22-23   HE DATA DASHBOARD REPORT

The Head of HE presented the HE Data Dashboard, with attendance sitting at 91%.

Those Academy's significantly below the College attendance target of 95% were shared and discussed. The HE Academic Coaches were providing support to these areas.

	Action	Date

The College were working towards the OFS definition of continuation. The current retention rate was 91%, which was above the College's target. Three areas were below target and all three had small student cohorts.

JMc said it would be good to cross reference retention with attendance to get an overall indicator if there is a connection.

JMc questioned the retention rate for apprentices. It was pointed out this doesn't relate to the apprentices completing the qualification but to them continuing on the end point assessment.

JMc said retention was still important to those individuals. She asked if there was something that should be addressed. It was noted these were apprentices that dropped out before they completed the programmed. It was agreed to revisit this internally and respond at a future meeting.

(Action: RH/KM — Date: Sept 23)

HE enrolment numbers had exceeded the budget with Teacher training and Public Services over recruiting which offsets shortfalls in other areas.

JMc questioned careers advice and employer voice and asked when that would be reported to this Board. It was explained that this year the College would be drawing from the validations and reviews undertaken in relation to local employer voice to then provide institutional oversight dedicated to HE. This will be reported in the new academic year.

(Action: ML — Date: Sept 23)

The curriculum teams were engaged in planning the curriculum to include careers education and this will feature in future reports.

CD said the curriculum teams were working hard on the careers side and Criminology in particular had run an employment week and were looking to run another one. The intention was to replicate the best practice. Employer voice could also be captured during this period of engagement with employers.

31/22-23   HE RISK REGISTER

The Head of HE shared the risk register which had been regularly reviewed. There were few changes since the last meeting.

Reporting by exception. Risk 17 relating to the recruitment of specialist staff had been reduced to amber due to mitigation and control measures working effectively.

Risk 8 relationship with HEI partners had been reassessed as a low medium risk due to the successful validation of the foundation degree in Software Development.

32/22-23   STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

The Head of HE presented a report on Standards and Assessment practices to satisfy OfS B5 conditions of registration.

Academic standards are reviewed through a number of means which included the HE Academic and Quality Standards Committee, course validations, accreditation by professional statutory and regulatory bodies, course review monitoring, annual programme reviews and programme validation.

Policies and procedures were in place to underpin high quality standards.

Overall, there is strong evidence to support the quality processes at DCG that inform and ensure that condition B5 is met. Quality standards are high, robust and meet national standards in all programmes.

JMc pointed the OfS were worried about grade inflation, she asked if the College were seeing any of this and if it had any worries or concerns.

There were 4 out of 20 firsts this year going to the exam board (around 20%) in English and similarly in landbased. There are robust systems in place and there is a full internal moderation process with all programmes having external moderators. There are a good set of mechanisms that are fully tested.

The Deputy Principal pointed out the College had achieved firsts for years with different teachers and had a consistent profile.

There was a training session scheduled in the next week on ChatGP and AI. **JMc pointed out it might be useful to look at UCL who had published guidance on their website.**

33/22-23   COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIP REPORT

The Deputy Principal provided a verbal update.

The College worked with Sheffield Hallam, University of Derby and Pearsons. These institutions all carry out checks and the College are compliant with their processes.

The evidence to support in this process had already been discussed earlier in the meeting in relation to course review monitoring, annual programme reviews and programme validation.

34/22-23   OFS COMPLIANCE

The Clerk had confirmed with the Director of Regulation the College were fully compliant with the OFS Conditions of Registration.

The graduate outcomes cohort C and the capital monitoring return had been submitted within the deadline. All upcoming deadlines were also in line to be achieved.

35/22-23   FREE SPEECH LEGISLATION

The Clerk to the Corporation provided a brief headline of the Freedom of Speech Act which would be enforced by the OFS and place certain liabilities on governors of a HEI.

Members have a duty to promote Freedom of Speech on site, which is a legal obligation.

At the time of the meeting it was not clear when the legislation would come into effect. The College already had a Freedom of Speech Policy which would be reviewed accordingly once more was known.

The Chair questioned the proposal by the OfS to introduce a new condition of registration in relation to tackling harassment and sexual misconduct against students, and asked if this would form part of the Safeguarding Policy. All relevant policies would be reviewed in line with legislation.

36/22-23   POLICY REVIEW

The HE Tuition Fees had been reviewed with no significant changes for 2023-24. A review of the policy for the following academic year would be presented in September.

37/22-23   WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM TODAY'S MEETING?

Members thanked the officers for the evidence of the B conditions, the challenges to be met and actions to address these.

The meeting finished at 3.00 pm