

SSMS – Quality and Curriculum Committee

Venue: Conference Room 1, South Shields

Date: Wednesday 20 May 2015

Time: 4.00pm – 6.10pm

Members Present: Nick Whalen-Griffiths (Chair)
 David Byrne
 Terry Cornick
 Philip Gordon
 Gary Hindmarch (Principal SSMS)
 Masuda Rahman
 Alison Rowley (part)
 Andrew Watts (part)

Apologies: Lindsey Whiterod

In Attendance: Neil Longstaff (Clerk)

ITEM NO.	ISSUES	ACTION
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>The members approved apologies for absence received from those identified above after first considering their reasons for absence.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interests</p> <p>Members were reminded to declare any conflict of interest as they arose on the agenda.</p> <p>DB informed the Committee that he was a business user of the simulator (3rd party).</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p><u>Confidential minute see attached.</u></p> <p>It was noted that all action points had either been addressed or formed part of the reports for this meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Quality Report</p> <p>Confidential item</p>	

5.	<p>Destination of Learners HE Report</p> <p>This report provided an update on the information the College received via an independent agency on the destination of its HE UK graduates.</p> <p>GH highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The survey of students was conducted annually, six months after they had graduated from a Higher Education course. • The information collected shaped the Colleges' strategic planning of future programmes and provided important information to prospective students on their employment prospects after graduation. Employment prospects for South Tyneside College graduates continued to exceed the national average. <p>This data was shared with HEFCE as part of their annual Destination of Learners from Higher Education survey, which enabled the College to make national comparisons.</p> <p>GH stated that South Tyneside College continued to be successful in providing courses that lead to full time, well paid employment for their graduates.</p> <p>Members felt that the data would be encouraging for students to see and this information should be used to market the College.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report is received and accepted.</p>	GH
6.	<p>Competition and Market Authority (CMA) guidance for FE Colleges offering HE qualifications</p> <p>This report provided information on a change in consumer law and outlined the effect on College operations and processes.</p> <p>It was confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College's policies had been checked to ensure they complied with this recent guidance of the rights of students who paid fees for educational services. • The guidance had been circulated to the Head of MIS and the Head of Student Services to ensure College staff adhered to College policies and processes and hence the College's operations would be compliant with this new guidance. <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the report is received and accepted.</p> <p>ii. That the Committee is satisfied that the College was compliant with the new guidance.</p>	
7.	<p>UK Visa and Immigration update</p> <p>This report provided an update on the recent changes that UKVI had introduced and the current status of the College performance as measured against the UKVI audit criteria.</p>	

	<p>Members were made aware of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College held Tier 4 (previously called Highly Trusted Status) with the UKVI which enabled the College to recruit an unlimited number level 3 and higher education students. The income from overseas learners was circa £3800k / annum or 13% of College turn-over. • The UKVI had clamped down on visa abuse and were introducing new measures to restrict students attending poor quality or unregulated colleges. • All colleges must hold Good or higher grades from Ofsted and “Meets UK expectations” or higher from QAA. The College currently achieved both levels. <p>Q. Loss of all learners including HE? Yes, even though Ofsted don’t cover HE and would not inspect HE courses.</p> <p>Members noted with some anxiety that Ofsted were controlling an area that was not within their scope.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the report is received and Members are aware that the College is compliant with the new UKVI requirements.</p> <p>ii. That GH is to ensure that the risks highlighted in light of this guidance is recorded appropriately on the Risk Register.</p>	GH
8.	<p>Curriculum planning report 2015-16</p> <p>Confidential item</p>	
9.	<p>Market research incl. position paper on potential growth areas and new opportunities</p> <p>Confidential item</p>	
10.	<p>Monitoring progress against targets set in Marine Strategy</p> <p>GH presented a report that updated Members on the current progress being made on the planned Marine Strategy actions for 2014/15.</p> <p>From the School Business Plans, a combined Marine Strategy Action Plan had been created to provide medium term action planning and monitoring.</p> <p>Expected progress had been made on most actions, except the validation of the new BSc degree. Academic performance on underperforming courses was being monitored in year and further actions taken where required to effect faster improvements.</p> <p>GH responded to questions.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report is agreed.</p>	

11.	<p>Minutes/feedback from student forum meetings since last meeting</p> <p>This report provided the Committee members with feedback from the cross College forums that were held for the HE students.</p> <p>It was reported that there had been two forums held since the last meeting; 4th March and 29th April. College managers for the support services were in attendance at these meetings to provide direct feedback on issues raised.</p> <p>In most cases issues were resolved at the forums. Recently there had been positive feedback from students.</p> <p>Q. Issue with speed of internet? Two students had been downloading a considerable amount of data which slowed the internet.</p> <p>A report on Sodexo was to be given at the next meeting. Changes to the catering arrangements at MOST were reported and noted.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report is received.</p>	GH
12.	<p>Committee Workplan 2015-16</p> <p>The draft Workplan was presented for the Committee's consideration.</p> <p>Members made several suggested changes which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The addition of the Marine Strategy Action Plan • Removal of elements of the Quality Report which were not appropriate for the particular time of year • Term 'safeguarding' be used instead of bullying and harassment incidents <p>Resolved: That the Workplan, as presented, is approved subject to the changes identified.</p>	NL
13.	<p>Higher Education Strategy 2014-17 (Revised HE Mission Statement)</p> <p>GH reported that the medium term strategy for the Higher Education provision was under review.</p> <p>Members were reminded that they had requested that an over-riding vision statement be developed for the Higher Education provision.</p> <p>This vision statement mirrored the format of the existing College Mission and Values statements.</p> <p>Resolved: That the medium term strategy and vision statement are approved subject to an amendment to P4 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title changed to 'HE vision' in place of 'Marine School vision' • Vision to read "To deliver an innovative and employer facing Higher Education offer that inspires learners and enhances their employment prospects" 	GH

14.	<p>Annual review of College Charter</p> <p>The report provided the committee with the working document of the College Charter that formed part of the student handbook</p> <p>It was explained that the aim of the College Charter was to provide, to students, an outline of the service they could expect to receive from the College during their time at the College.</p> <p>The Charter focused upon the student learning experience from initial enquiries to the student leaving the College: Key elements of this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries/applications • Coursework and teaching, learning and assessment • English and maths qualifications • The tutorial framework • Learners views and student committees/governance • Accessing information e.g. Policies and procedures <p>The Charter was currently made available to all students via the student handbook of which all students received an e-copy. The Charter was also displayed on notice boards throughout the College.</p> <p>Members suggested some changes to the document which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P8 ‘ample car parking’ to be changed to ‘car parking’ • Under ‘Useful Info’ remove personal information if document is to be electronic version only • Document should have a core element applicable to all students then sectioned/appendices to focus on specific areas i.e. HE/Marine and FE. • ProMonitor to be removed? This was to be clarified as it had been reported that it had been replaced. <p>Resolved: That the College Charter for 2015-16 is approved subject to amendments identified by members.</p>	GH
15.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None.</p>	
16.	<p>Identification of Confidential Items</p> <p>Resolved: That Item 4 – Quality Report, Item 8 – Curriculum Planning and Item 9 - Market Research are to remain confidential.</p>	
17.	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next Committee meeting was to be agreed by the Board as part of the annual calendar of governors meetings.</p>	

Chair’s signature:

Date: