
MINUTES OF THE SEVENTIETH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2024, COMMENCING 17:00 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT: Mr P Clancy, Committee Chair
Dr S Fisher
Mrs M Gormley
Dr K Kennedy (from 18:19)
Mr L Murphy, Principal & Chief Executive (from 17:42)
Mr B O’Neill
Mr P Thompson (until 18:15)
Ms V Toland

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr C O’Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

APOLOGIES: None

70.0 Dr C O’Mullan provided the meeting with a comprehensive overview of the curriculum. This is the core of the College. This included the strategic context, the range of curriculum provision and progression pathways, the Sector activity in 2022/23 and the demography of enrolments. Members were advised of the many cross College multidisciplinary forums, the challenges and the key College and Sector strategic priorities.
A question and answer session followed.

70.1 WELCOME
The Committee Chair welcomed everyone.

70.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS
There were no conflicts of interest declarations. There were no declarations of any other business.

70.3 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 MAY 2024

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 70.3 Draft Education Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2024

The Draft Minutes were taken as read and agreed were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

PROPOSED, Mrs M Gormley

SECONDED, Ms V Toland

REPORT 1 MATTERS ARISING – 28 May 2024, Committee Meeting

There were no matters arising from the May Committee meeting.

70.4 COMMITTEE CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Committee Chair was delighted to report that Mr B Dougherty has recently been appointed to the Board. Mr Dougherty will serve on the Education Committee.

Report 1 Vice Chair to the Committee

The Committee Chair reported that the position of Vice Chair to the Committee remains vacant. **An Expression of Interest will be issued to relevant Committee members.**

70.5 MANAGEMENT REPORT – Dr C O’Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards.**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

EC 70.5	Management Report
Report 1	DfE CDP Commissioning Letter 15 August 2024
Report 2	CDP Enrolment Targets 2024/25
Report 3	2024/25 Full-time Enrolment Update
Report 4	Quality Improvement Plan
Report 5	Academic Standards Committee Draft Meeting Minutes, May 2024
Report 6	Business Support Centre Update

EC 70.5 Management Report

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards highlighted the CDP Enrolment Target Progress as at the end of July 2024 for the 2023/24 academic year¹. HE, HLA FE and ES actuals were all slightly below target. Retention issues may have a reflection on the data showing at the end of the academic year, ie July 2024. TFS/AppNI total was above target. The new programme ‘Step Up’ exceeded enrolment targets. The wide range of student activities and awards in 2023/24 were noted.

Updates were noted on curriculum reform including the SIB evaluation of the Traineeship provision which was requested by the Department (DfE). No report has been received to date.

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards updated the Committee on key priorities within curriculum development highlighting ‘Multiply’ a new provision, AppsNI contract ending in July 2025, consultation on Levels 4/5 HE in FE, DfE Sectoral Action Plans and the Pearson qualifications being replaced or discontinued post 2025/26.

Work is in progress on outcomes for 2023/24. The data will be shared with the Committee when available.

The new Heads of Faculty have been assigned as chairs within relevant areas on the multi-disciplinary College Working Groups.

The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards was delighted to report that following approval of the OBC for the Strabane Town Centre Regeneration Project (Strabane new Campus) the Financial Deal will be signed on 18 September 2024.

¹ CDP Dashboard at end July 2024 as final Progress Report for 2023/24

Report 1 DfE CDP Commissioning Letter 15 August 2024

The correspondence noted the discussion at a DfE workshop on the CDP and Quality Improvement Planning processes. This follows concerns raised by Colleges in regard to duplication of reporting. A number of changes have been made to the 2024/25 CDP template. The CDP will be mapped to the Minister's key objectives as part of the new Economic Vision.

Report 2 CDP Enrolment Targets 2024/25**Report 3 2024/25 Full-time Enrolment Update****Report 3.1 Update on Full-time Enrolments against Target at 16 September 2024**

The Enrolment Targets for 2024/25 were noted together with the recent Report (3.1) as at 16 September 2024. The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards was pleased to present a very positive picture of full-time enrolments vs plan for 2024/25. This reflects several factors including a slight uplift in demography, the normalisation of grading for exam results and an ongoing promotion of the value of professional and technical qualifications.

- Higher Education, full-time enrolments were showing 421 against target of 416.
- FE Enrolments were showing 1433 against target of 1347.
- AppsNI enrolments were showing 574 against target of 528.
- Traineeship enrolments were showing 431 against target of 515.

The courses scheduled across campuses for 2024/25 that have been withdrawn were listed. The Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards noted that all students involved were contacted and redirected to another college course.

Further funding has been received to secure further participation in skills competitions.

Report 4 Quality Improvement Plan

The National Student Survey (NSS) has been published for 2023/24 final year, HE students. The College has achieved the highest response rate and outcomes in the sector. The College also achieved much higher than average and NI outcomes in a range of aspects of the survey including; 'Teaching on my course', 'Learning opportunities', 'Assessment and feedback', 'Academic support' and 'Student voice'. The overall student satisfaction rate for the College was 92.52% vs the Sector average of 79.58%.

The College are continuing to work with the present QIP format pending a less stringent formal reporting schedule to the Department (DfE) going forward. The new approach should link in with expectations of ETI around quality improvement and the CDP.

The updated version of the WCQIP was presented to the Committee for discussion. Actions completed were noted along with several updated actions relating to

consolidation and support for the new management structure following the Voluntary Severance Scheme.

It was agreed for an update be provided by the HR Manager on the challenges on supporting and developing staff following the VSS.

The revised ETI framework for inspection, identifying a new format focusing on five core questions and nine contributory areas was noted. The ETI framework and QAA Code will be the focus of the forthcoming Staff Conference in October 2024.

Report 5 Academic Standards Committee Draft Meeting Minutes, May 2024

The Director of Curriculum and Academic Standards highlighted key items with the Draft Minutes.

Report 6 Business Support Centre Update

The report was noted.

The Committee Chair thanked Dr C O' Mullan and invited Ms G Moss to report to the Committee.

70.6 CLIENT SERVICES – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1 Equality Update
Report 2 Learning Support

Report 1 Equality Update

The Head of Client Services highlighted key work and events that have taken place to raise equality awareness. The calendar of events for 2024/25 has been issued. The College had representation at the Foyle Pride event on 24 August 2024. The agenda items were noted for work going forward for the Equality Working Group. The College three designated charities received funds this year from contributions raised by staff and students over the year.

The Report included activities tracked against Section 75 Categories during 2023/24.

The Principal reported on emerging issues from the Programme of Government focusing on the areas of adults with special educational needs and violence against women and girls.

Report 2 Learning Support

The Head of Client Services reported on work of the Learning Support Team within the College. DfE agreed to undertake an independent review of student support for Further Education participants. The funding has not increased in the disability support funding in eight years, despite increasing demand.

The Head of Client Services provided details on the initial findings from the review. One of the recommendations from the review was to consider expanding the definition of students supported by the ASF Funding (Additional Support Fund) to

include those students who do not have a registered learning difficult or disability but require support.

Following a brief discussion, Mr F Smyth, Governor reported that positive progression should be captured to show success in different ways.

The Staff Governor Academic suggested it would be beneficial if HE students had their own common room facility. The Principal accepted the point and agreed that the Estates Team could look at the options available.

In concluding her report the Head of Client Services was delighted to report that following the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) audit on 16 April 2024 in relation to Access arrangements for students with additional needs. The Learning Link were found to be fully compliant and there were no recommendations.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Moss for her report.

70.7 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

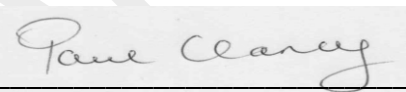
70.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business to discuss.

70.9 RESERVED BUSINESS – Taken separately.

That being the end of business the Incoming Committee Chair thanked everyone. The meeting ended at 19:20.

Date of Next Meeting – 13 November 2024

Signed 
Mr Paul Clancy, Committee Chair

Date 13 November 2024