



**Minutes of the Higher Education Committee meeting
held on 15 February 2022 at 3:15pm via Teams**

Committee members	Pat Wilde	PW	Committee Chair
	Ellie Burrridge	EB	
	Lee Charnock	LC	
	John Chudley	JC	
	Wilf Hudson	WH	
In attendance	Ryan Thomas	RT	Head of Higher Education
	Wendy Randle	WR	Director of Governance
	Kate Wills	KW	Group Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality (DP C&Q)

		Action
1	<p>WELCOME</p> <p>The meeting had been rearranged from 09/02/22 due to the Ofsted Inspection. It was not possible to identify a date when everyone could attend, prior to the Board meeting; apologies were received and accepted from Ian Tunbridge, Jane Warren and John Evans. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>Ellie Burrridge (Student Governor), Lee Charnock (Staff Governor) and John Chudley (co-opted Committee member) were welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>There were no further interests to declare than those previously disclosed on the register of interests.</p> <p>The agenda was taken in a slightly different order than planned.</p>	
2	<p>MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2021</p>	
2.1	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
2.2	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>An actions update had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee considered the update on obtaining the student voice. It was reported that the College plan to continue the current approach for this academic year in order to obtain a consistent set of data and implement changes for the new academic year. It was noted that Programme Committee Meetings (PCMs) will become more important for capturing data moving forward, in line with Office for Students (OfS) requirements.</p>	

<p>3</p>	<p>Balance Scorecard/ KPIs To include a data update: recruitment, attendance, withdrawal and suspension A report was circulated prior to the meeting, the following highlights were noted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the dataset is now cross referenced with the Operating Statement. ▪ further work is required, to include parity across campuses, regarding the 79.3% achievement rate. ▪ previous withdrawal data had been impacted due to historic reporting styles, improvements in reporting are reflected in the data. It was noted that the apparent increase in suspensions at this point of the year might result in an overall increase in withdrawals, but the picture will not be clear until the end of the year. ▪ retention impacts on the calculation of success rate. The limits on the current capacity of the HE Operations team on the delivery of the HE strategy was noted. ▪ a performance and impact group for HE is being considered. ▪ a Committee member noted the concerns the data presented, highlighting the impact of the advice and guidance provided to students prior to them joining the College could have on withdrawals and suspensions. ▪ the data will be further reviewed at the June meeting. ▪ the College undertake student exit surveys; results indicate that withdrawal/ suspension themes include mental health, family commitments or a change in circumstances. Support is in place but may not always be enough to overcome students’ barriers to continuing with their studies. 	
<p>4</p>	<p>HE STRATEGY 2021-26 The Committee considered the first draft of the HE Strategy, developed following discussions from the last Committee meeting and in consultation with two senior staff from the College. The Committee provided the following feedback;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Praise for the last two pages, noting the length of the document and suggesting the College consider preparation of the document for Board – a more succinct document may assist in the most effective engagement by Board members. ▪ The Committee are keen to encourage innovation in the HE provision, noting the traditional offer included within the strategy. Thought should be given to how the College can build on its existing strengths in vocational subjects and apprenticeships – and its employers links - in this regard and explore new markets such as provision for middle management top-ups. ▪ the College’s level of ambition for attracting students from outside of Cornwall, noting that the developing strategy does not outline the vision to attract students from outside of Cornwall. ▪ Consideration to the resources required in order to achieve the strategy; for example block teaching/ associate lecturers/ scope for innovation in thinking. ▪ Strengthen the links from Access provision into HE. ▪ Increased use of the College FDAPs, where strategically appropriate. ▪ Synergy between the Access and Participation Plan (APP) and the HE Strategy, and links to the emerging land based strategy ▪ Increased detail of information on the courses to include detail on the coursework/ additional funds available to learners which could result in improved student retention. <p>It was noted that the HE Strategy will be shared with HE staff, then the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and will return to the June Committee meeting for recommendation to the Board for approval in July 2022.</p>	<p>KW/ RT</p>

<p>5</p>	<p>HE SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT (SED) DRAFT</p> <p>Following guidance from the last Committee meeting, the revised SED was reviewed. In response to a Committee member question, the College have improved dissemination of student support mechanisms, with a clearer pathway for students to know who and how to raise feedback. It was understood that CSEC receive ‘you said we did’ feedback, yet it was noted that not all students have received much course feedback by this stage in their course. The College are currently developing an online space to enable quicker responses to student queries and to support the more formal processes in place.</p> <p>The Committee reflected on student – lecturer communication, concluding the negative impact of numerous communication platforms on finding the information required, limitations due to technology skills and lack of consistency of tech use, for example some courses use different platforms.</p> <p>It was understood that the same approach used in FE for teacher and learner observations is also used for HE and the College acknowledge the need for further develop these observations for HE as they move towards considering, and developing confidence, in HE as its own entity in order to maintain OfS registration.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to recommend to Board the approval of the SED.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>HE ACTION PLAN</p> <p>Going forward the HE Action Plan will remain an operational document for College use, with strategic themes to include the HE Strategy and key risks, included within the Operating Statement which will be key monitoring document for the HE Committee and Board.</p>	
<p>7 7.1 2022/23</p> <p>7.2 2023/24</p>	<p>It was reported that an issue regarding HE Fees for 2022 – 23 had been identified, whereby international students could have paid less than national students to compete one of the masters programmes. Following a detailed discussion, the Committee agreed to propose to Board that both UK and international students pay the same fees. In response to a Committee member question there not been any inaccurate payments received from students.</p> <p>A paper had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee agreed to continue with the same fees model as for 2022/23 as discussed.</p> <p>It was noted that the HE fees are also considered by the Finance and Resources Committee with both Committees recommending their approval to Board. The HE Committee agreed to recommend to Board the approval of the 2023/24 fees, inform Board of the amendment to the 2022/23 fees and propose the proposal for both UK and international students to pay the same fees.</p>	<p>PW</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN (APP)</p> <p>The draft APP had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee were reminded of their responsibilities delegated from Board; to agree the APP in order for the Principal to sign it prior to submission to the OfS at the end of the month.</p> <p>A Committee member noted that that some sections of the APP contained no detail and that they would only be able to approve elements circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee acknowledged that</p>	

	<p>although the OfS had requested the APP last summer term, there had been significant staff changes and periods of gaps in staffing which had impacted on its timely completion. In response to Committee member questions it was understood that the involvement of students in the development of the APP had been minimal and that the outreach section would be shared with a Committee member for feedback prior to submission.</p> <p>A discussion took place on the support in place for students for their personal circumstances and the community bursaries available once enrolled. The Committee reflected on the pastoral welfare provision across the campuses and potential barriers to developing meaningful relationships with engagement officers due to their location.</p> <p>The Committee were satisfied to approve the APP content circulated prior to the meeting, requesting the final version be shared with Board in March.</p>	
<p>8 8.1</p>	<p>Learner voice Student Complaints</p> <p>It was reported that the next Student Voice sessions have been scheduled (detail has been shared with the Board). A discussion took place on the various communication platforms used by the College and the impact of strengthening communication platforms to enable improved learner voice.</p> <p>8.2 National Student Survey (NSS)</p> <p>Previous discussion had covered this agenda item; the College plan to put in place measures to increase student participation in the NSS next term.</p> <p>8.3 Update from ELT and feedback from Strategy Day on HE accommodation</p> <p>It was understood that further work is required on the HE accommodation strategy with an update on proposals expected in time for the next Board meeting.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Summary HE Academic Board (HEAB)</p> <p>The Committee received the recent HEAB Committee meeting minutes, circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee acknowledged that the HEAB Committee was operational yet noted that staff workload and metrics remained ongoing conversations reflected in both the minutes and Beyond the Boardroom visits completed by Committee members. It was noted that the College have put in place working groups on HE issues such as these. The Committee noted the differences between HE and FE provision and the need for HE to be underpinned by excellent research and scholarly activity – this contributed fundamentally to the quality of the student experience and hence to continuing OfS registration. This would need to be factored in to Executive Leadership Team (ELT) discussions on the balance of teaching, research and programme management responsibilities for HE staff, noting the need to recognise the potential impact on staff retention and recruitment.</p> <p>Following discussion the Committee requested a report for the next meeting to enable them to monitor progress in this area, in order to identify any risks to the successful delivery of the HE strategy.</p> <p>The Committee recognise the qualifications achieved via the Foundation Degree Approving Powers (FDAP) and the proposed future programmes. A Committee member suggested a Committee member attend an FDAP event to review the process.</p>	<p>KW/ RT</p> <p>WR</p>

	In response to a Committee member question regarding the withdrawal of the veterinary nursing foundation degree, it was reported that the College plan to run this programme via FDAP, noting the industry need is with the Level 3 provision. The Committee were keen to ensure a pathway into HE.	
11	<p>Key risks to the delivery of the HE Strategy and the quality of the HE provision</p> <p>At the previous Committee meeting a discussion took place on the need to identify HE risks for inclusion on the Group Risk Register (RR). Following this meeting, a Committee member met with the Group Principal Curriculum and Quality and Head of HE with the outcomes presented in the paper circulated prior to the meeting. In summary the RR had been reviewed with the risks relevant to all areas of education, noted.</p> <p>It was reported that the RR is undergoing further development by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The Committee noted the need for the inclusion of additional risks linked to the delivery of the HE Strategy, to include HE growth and HE accommodation. The Committee were keen to receive increased reporting against the risk register, requesting that the next meeting includes the corporation risk register, with extracts linked to HE highlighted, following this the Committee can review the HE risks.</p>	KW/ RT
12	<p>BEYOND THE BOARDROOM</p> <p>12.1 Visits completed and potential for further visits</p> <p>It was reported that a small group of Governors, to include two HE Committee members, had completed a visit to Rosewarne to view the HE provision and facilities and that the same group plans to visit Stoke for the same purpose.</p> <p>12.2 Programme Course Manager (PCM) dates</p> <p>The next PCM dates have been circulated to the Board, the Committee members were encouraged to attend a session.</p>	ALL
13	<p>OfS letter: Audit of aspects of 2019-20 ILR higher education student data</p> <p>The Committee received the OfS letter circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted this will also be shared with the Audit and Risk Committee.</p>	
14	<p>IMPACT OF THE MEETING</p> <p>Following a discussion reflecting on the impact of the meeting the Committee noted the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The diversity of thinking of the Committee members, ensuring good debate, specifically on the Fees agenda item; ▪ The encouragement from the Committee for the College to be innovative in their HE provision moving forward; ▪ The thread of the learner voice throughout all discussions, to include the impact of decisions on the learners. 	
15	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <p>16/06/2022</p>	