



Mission Statement: *Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures*

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE STANDARDS BOARD OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

Date: Monday 25th November 2019
Venue: The Blackpool Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 5.00-6.50pm

- Present:** Mr C Simkins OBE (Chair)
 Ms J Gray (Principal)
 Ms W Middlemas
 Cllr D Clapham
 Ms D Taaffe
 Mr A Burr
 Mr N Webster
 Ms C Coyne
 Reverend S Haskett
 Mr M Hellewell
 Cllr C Baxter
 Mr J Saunders
- Together with:** Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
 Mr A Lloyd (Vice-Principal Information Systems and Resources)
 Ms T Cooper (Assistant Principal: Vocational)
 Ms S Benson (Assistant Principal: Vocational)
 Ms S Rainford (Head of MIS and Examinations)
 Mrs S Hawitt (Governance Administrator-FCAT)
- Apologies:** Ms V Blakeman and Mr S Rimell

		Action
41.2019	Preliminaries The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Jed Saunders the newly appointed lower sixth student director, everyone introduced themselves. Apologies were noted by Sharon Burton (Principal from Cheadle and Marple SFC who was invited to the meeting as an observer.	
42.2019	Declaration of Interest There were no declarations of interest	
43.2019	Consideration of any items of urgent business The resignation of Victoria Blakeman was noted	
44.2019	Confirmation of Quoracy It was noted the meeting was quorate	
45.2019	Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2019 The minutes of the meeting were approved following a discussion about the use of the word 'overwhelming' on page 3 (paragraph 3) regarding the changes to linear qualifications. The Principal and SLT confirmed they were happy with the wording.	

46.2019	<p>Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda</p> <p>a) Directors' Personal Record (DPR)-(item 27.2019 from the previous minutes) not all directors had completed the DPR due to teething problems with editing issues, clerk to follow this up</p> <p>b) Directors' Self-Assessment-(item 38.2019 from the previous minutes) confirmation changes were made to the Directors' Quality Improvement Plan</p>	Clerk
47.2019	<p>Teaching, Learning and Assessment</p> <p>Level 3 Achievement Rates Report 2019</p> <p>Directors received a presentation delivered by Sarah Rainford (Head of MIS and Examinations in support of the Level 3 Achievement Rates Report (paper 7.2). Sarah gave directors some background information into the changes which had occurred over the last few years and further changes in BTEC qualifications yet to be introduced which has had an impact on the reporting process to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Directors were informed that Ofsted will be using the Qualification Achievement Rates (QAR) report to form part of their inspection of colleges, however as a result of the variations and the limitations in QAR reporting at present the college will continue to develop internal monitoring reports on a mid-year and annual basis.</p> <p>It was noted that there is a lot of work being carried out nationally by the ESFA in response to the changes which will be reported back to directors. The Chair thanked Sarah for her presentation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Sarah Rainford and Alan Lloyd left the meeting</i></p> <p>Directors received the Level 3 Achievement Rates Report 2019 (paper 7.2) presented by the Assistant Principal: Vocational, she highlighted the following; BTEC year 1 achievement rates have increased again by 3.pp to 90.8%, a result of improved retention, however there is a slight decline in pass rate and steps will be taken to address this during year 2.</p> <p>A level year 2 pass rate has increased slightly (0.3pp) to 97.6% despite all subjects now being linear.</p> <p>A level year 2 achievement rate has declined by 2.1pp to 93.7% which is predominantly as a result of the decline in retention (-2.5pp). Directors were informed that there is a plan in place to address these issues.</p> <p>Questions from Directors</p> <p>In response to a question about how Ofsted make a comparison between colleges who are at different stages regarding the move over to linear qualifications, it was noted that comparisons are not like for like and that issues such as this have been raised with the ESFA and Ofsted. Directors were reassured by the Chair that SLT will guide them through the changes and fortunately for the college the Principal and Deputy Principal are Ofsted Inspectors who can share their expertise and experience.</p> <p>In response to a question about how long before we can expect a true comparison to other colleges it was noted that at least 2022 or even beyond if T levels are introduced which will result in further change.</p> <p>It was noted that from a director point of view the focus should be on retention and achievement of students and that the changes occurring will be sorted in due course.</p>	
48.2019	<p>ALPS progress report</p> <p>Directors received the ALPS progress report November 2019 (paper 7.1) presented by the Assistant Principals: Vocational and Academic. Directors were informed that the college had moved over to ALPS Connect Interactive The programme allows live data to be analysed to produce predicted ALPS outcomes by qualification level, subject and class.</p>	

Directors were given a brief update on the changes to the monitoring system as further training will be provided for directors at the annual conference in January. They were informed that Route 3 and L6 students will now receive a Minimum Expected Grade (MEG) as an alternative to Minimum Target Grade (MTG). However, as current year 2 students were given an MTG when they joined the college in 2018/19 they will continue with MTG in their second year.

Questions from Directors

Directors considered the results by subject, in response to a question about subjects graded blue it was noted that these particular subjects, especially PE may not be offered in the future due to very small numbers, however an alternative such as BTEC Sports Science may be offered which is accepted by most universities. Directors were informed that, likewise German had been removed from the curriculum for this year due to low numbers.

It was noted that there is not the same commitment in schools to offer modern foreign languages (MFL) with only four feeder schools currently offering German, for example. Staff at the college are working hard to raise the importance of offering languages in schools. It was also noted that most sixth form colleges are only offering one language.

The Chair of this committee alongside the Principal and the Deputy Principal had met with all Heads of Departments (HoDs) with subjects deemed critical to discuss progress and were satisfied action is being taken to improve outcomes next year.

Directors noted that BTEC Alps results look very encouraging.

In response to a question about the downward trajectory of results for further maths it was noted that the data is based on the most recent progress grades entered by staff in October as opposed to a predicted grade.

It was noted that all staff are working on moderation techniques internally and externally to ensure data is as accurate as it possibly can be.

49.2019

Attendance and Retention

Directors received and considered the Attendance and Retention report for November 2019 (paper 8.1) presented by the Deputy Principal, she invited directors to ask questions.

Questions from Directors

In response to a question about how many Pastoral Mentors (PM) are currently employed by the college it was noted that there are 14, most PM have a caseload of 200 students, however those with students on Route3 have slightly less taking into account the additional support required by this cohort of students.

Asked about attendance and if there are any key dates/times for poor attendance, it was noted that returning to college after a holiday can be an issue, directors were informed that college staff work hard to ensure that every lesson is high quality and purposeful and that teaching and learning content is as good as it can be ensuring students do not want to miss lessons.

A discussion took place about the different measures of retention, for example student retention and course retention, it was noted that student retention had improved in comparison to last year with less students leaving the college before the 42 day cut off whilst the leavers show positive destinations such as moving onto apprenticeships. Directors were informed that early leavers are not reported on nationally, however college monitor the situation internally and follow up any issues. Directors asked that some of this information be included in the future reports.

Directors acknowledged 6.1 in the report and were pleased to see that retention in all year groups is above target at this point in the year, however this is to be expected so early on in the term, the most important figure will be the Summer term.

SLT

Directors asked about the attendance figures across the college, it was unfortunate that no cohort is above college target for attendance, however it was also noted that attendance remain high in comparison to colleges but not high enough for Blackpool Sixth.

50.2019

Destinations Report

Directors received and considered the Destinations Report November 2019 (paper 9.1) presented by the Deputy Principal. She highlighted some key points from the report including; Higher Education had declined over a 3 year period, however students are focussing on other routes such as employment. The students not in employment, education or training (NEET) has declined to 1.6% well below the 3% of NEET in the previous year and is well below the average for Lancashire for 16-18 year olds (10%) and Blackpool (9.2%)

Questions from Directors

Asked about the timescale for the collection of data and the possibility of collecting it at a later date due to some students taking time off after college before making decisions, it was noted that this would be useful, however time constraints and work load issues make this difficult to carry out.

In response to a question about how the college can further support those students who leave and go into low skilled employment it was agreed the Deputy Principal would follow this up

Asked about the increase in students moving into low skilled employment and the decrease in joining the armed forces it was noted that sometimes this is due to a timing issue, for example students may go into low skilled jobs waiting until they are old enough to join the police force for example.

In response to a question about the downward trajectory in applications to the Highest and High Tariff universities, it was noted some students prefer to stay locally to study and for some it can be lack of aspiration. It was also noted that there are more opportunities in Blackpool than students realise, the Futures Team and curriculum staff are working hard to address this.

Directors thanked Stuart Ormson, Head of student Support for a very detailed report

SLT left the meeting

51.2019

Terms of Reference

Directors reviewed and agreed the Terms of Reference for the Standards Board and subject to slight changes which the Clerk agreed to make

52.2019

Identification of any new or amended risks

There were no new risks to consider

53.2019

AOB

The Principal asked directors to inform the Clerk before next week of their preference regarding the times and social gathering for the annual conference

Date and Time of next meeting

Tuesday 5th May 2020 5.00pm

GY

Clerk

Directors

Signed _____

Date _____