



**MINUTES OF THE PART I MEETING OF THE
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

Monday 20 February 2017 at 1.30pm

Members

Governors: James Wisdom (Chairman)
Heather Barrett-Mold OBE
John Bennett
Stephen Dowbiggin OBE
Joy Hillyer
Tony Leach

Staff Governor: Andrew Smith

Student Governors: Mechelle Hemley-Francis
Polly Robson-Halil

Observer: Roger McClure

In attendance: Malcolm Goodwin, Deputy Principal
Joanne Coffey, Clerk to the Governing Body
Damien Fallon, Director of Finance
Simon O'Hear, Director of Human Resources
Richard Prowse, Assistant Principal Facilities, Health and Safety

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were given for Heather Barrett-Mold.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no additional declarations of interest relating to this meeting.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

RECEIVED: Paper 3 – Report of the Clerk, for decision.

NOTED:

- i. Nominations were requested for a Vice Chair of the Academic Committee
- ii. John Bennett proposed Heather Barrett-Mold to stand and Tony Leach seconded the proposal

- iii. Although Heather was not in attendance, she had indicated to the Clerk that she would allow her name to go forward if nominated.

RECOMMENDED TO THE GOVERNING BODY that:

- i. **Heather Barrett-Mold be elected as Vice Chair of the Academic Committee for a 3 year term.**

4. MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2016

RECEIVED: Paper 4 – Minutes of the Academic Committee held on 16 November 2016, for decision.

NOTED:

- i. The recommendations relating to the updated Terms of Reference, SAR and QIP were all accepted by the Governing Body
- ii. Minute 13.i. was amended to provide clarity:
The College is now providing two Foundation Degrees (FdSc) in Animal Management and Garden Design (in partnership with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), Cirencester) and a City and Guilds (C&G) Level 4 in Floristry.

RESOLVED to:

- i. **approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 November 2016 as a correct record and authorise the Chair to sign them.**

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING 16 NOVEMBER 2016 NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting.

6. ANNUAL STUDENT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) DATA REPORT 2015-16

RECEIVED: Paper 6 – Report of the Director of HR, for information.

NOTED:

- i. A number of specific statistics were explored in detail
- ii. Governors were reassured that performance standards and measures did not indicate any discrimination
- iii. Governors recognise the importance of the College reflecting the richness and diversity of London, as a world city
- iv. The Director of HR was thanked for the care and detailed analysis included in the report.

7. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) 2016-17 (FEBRUARY 2017 UPDATE)

RECEIVED: Paper 7 – Report of the Deputy Principal, for information.

NOTED:

- i. The QIP normally goes to the Academic Board before the Academic Committee. Due to the rescheduling of the committee day this was not possible
- ii. Textual amendments were made to the QIP:
 - a. '(and previous)' was removed from the last column heading on the Summary of Progress table (Page 1)
 - b. 'OBJECTIVES' was replaced with 'ACTIONS' in the 5th column headings of the main table (Pages 3-21)
- iii. Overall progress is better than expected
- iv. The only 'red' flag is in developing Animal Care's online application (to reflect on student's own experience to recognise their own transferable skills). The College was confident this could still be achieved using initiatives developed in Floristry
- v. Academic Board will review the Ofsted post-inspection action plan to ensure all appropriate actions are included in the QIP
- vi. The Student and Staff Governors confirmed that the working documents for quality improvement were very helpful, easy to work with and used by staff
- vii. The Staff Governor explained that all Heads of School find it a good source and that it guides their teams on where improvements are needed in their own area (prior to breaking these down to form a more comprehensive action plan).

Mechelle Hemley-Francis joined the meeting (2.12pm)

- viii. One of the aims regarding improved pass rates had been flagged as complete despite progress stating otherwise. This was due to the timing of the Academic Board who need to give final pre-validation (Page 4, AM 103/4)
- ix. The importance of 'keeping the pressure on', before reflecting on the interim review of past performance, has demonstrated improved effectiveness against comparative years
- x. Governors challenged the wording for some specific tasks to make actions even more specific and ensure greater clarity
- xi. Governors were content with progress.

8. HIGHER EDUCATION 2016-17

RECEIVED: Paper 8 – Report of the Deputy Principal, for information.

NOTED:

- i. As the College is now providing Higher Education courses in partnership with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), the report clarified which policies are relevant for respective courses.
- ii. That the existing Academic Board and Academic Committee would be responsible for oversight of the higher education provision alongside further education

9. LEARNER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2016-17 (INDUCTION)

RECEIVED: Paper 9 – Report of the Deputy Principal, for information.

NOTED:

Sir William Stubbs joined the meeting (2.25pm)

- i. The survey has now moved from paper-based collection to being online without

- material change to the questions or the structure of the survey
- ii. The document was corrected to state that it was not deemed necessary to identify variations between 'strongly agree' and 'agrees' as such differentiation is an entirely subjective rather than objective view (Page 1, 1)
 - iii. The entry 'Spoken to teachers about extra learning support' (Appendix I, No. 22) potentially only relates to a small group of students (but all students are asked to record any instances)
 - iv. A more sophisticated tool is used for tutor-led analysis as this gives a better evaluation of whether resources are effectively targeted
 - v. The above also applies to disability support
 - vi. The questions in the future will be re-considered for amendment to: 'have you had sufficient support?' to increase passivity for those who have not acted (or prefer not to record it) depending on assurances about internal and external benchmarking
 - vii. The lower return rate to Crystal Palace appears to have magnified some low satisfaction rates
 - viii. Issues, such as IT access at Crystal Palace need to be addressed for future online surveys to maximise student involvement (and this will all be taken into consideration for the revised master plan)
 - ix. The main student voice is expressed through the Course Representatives meetings and tutorial groups. The student survey is used to validate or triangulate such processes to ensure nothing is missed (as well as providing external measures, benchmarking and noting distance travelled)
 - x. As the population of 16-18 year old students increases, this may affect year on year comparisons on 19+ students who give more balanced opinions which is at present 40% to 60% respectively on the return rates

10. OFSTED INSPECTION NOVEMBER 2016

RECEIVED: Paper 10 – Report of the Deputy Principal, for information.

NOTED:

- i. The Ofsted inspection was intense and positively challenging
- ii. Governors, staff and colleagues were thanked for their support during the inspection
- iii. The post-inspection report follow-up will be considered by Academic Board
- iv. The staff conference was used to help encourage staff to reflect on the inspectors' opinions and to give staff an opportunity to bring some of their own ideas forward
- v. Any immediate changes that could be made, have been made, and it's now for staff to take true ownership of the long-term changes required
- vi. The College is aiming for Ofsted Outstanding but this will take time and staff development needs to reflect and support this ambition
- vii. The main issue for Ofsted was around the pace of change and the need for 84% achievement of vocational qualifications by 16-18 year olds. This is something staff must prioritise
- viii. Animal Care practical's need to clearly demonstrate a step up in knowledge, regardless of the more routine elements
- ix. Ofsted recognised over 95% of the improvements needed were in the QIP, equating to a firm Good *en route* to Outstanding
- x. The two most difficult issues had been:
 - a. the proportion of 16-18s achieving their main vocational qualifications has declined by 8% in three years (which was masked by an increase in overall performance)
 - b. English and Maths performance was not improving quickly enough

- xi. Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) tend to 'cut into' data to obtain a narrow snapshot of statistics which can be too subjective but in this case such a detailed focus has been helpful
- xii. The challenges of improving performance in English and Maths is a national one. The College supports the Government's ambitions in this area but is not confident that current Government measures accurately reflect improvements in employability or progress made in this area
- xiii. One of the College's most valuable assets is its ability to improve students' confidence and self-esteem, due to the nature of practical learning, which then prepares students well for HE and/or the workplace.

11. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

RECEIVED: Paper 11 – Report of the Deputy Principal, for information.

NOTED:

- i. The GCSE grades have been revised, to include new content resulting in the higher grades being split, which will have some impact on recruitment. This is being watched and monitored
- ii. The apprenticeship reforms are imminent and the College has responded well and put new structures in place to address the changes
- iii. The College has already recognised a medium risk in the more expensive Arboriculture apprenticeship (where the Government needs to change the cap from £3k to £6k to enable the framework to be delivered)
- iv. A discussion took place regarding class structure in Britain and how this may affect the College.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NOTED:

- i. No other business was discussed.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 21 June 2017 at 1.30pm