
MINUTES OF THE SIXTY EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 MARCH 2024, COMMENCING 16:00 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT: Mrs J McKeever, Committee Chair
Ms M Breslin (until item 68.9)
Mr P Clancy
Dr S Fisher
Mrs M Gormley (out of meeting from 16:51 – 17:00)
Dr K Kennedy
Mr B O’Neill
Mr P Thompson
Ms V Toland (until item 68.9)

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr C O’Mullan, Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards
Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services
Ms C O’Reilly, Boardroom Apprentice (from 16:23 until item 68.9)
Mrs É Doherty, Secretary to the Governing Body

68.1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Committee Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from Mr L Murphy and Mr F Smyth.

68.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS/DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no conflicts of interest declarations. There were no declarations of any other business.

68.3 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2023**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Paper EC 68.3 Draft Education Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2023

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

PROPOSED, Mr P Thompson

SECONDED, Ms M Breslin

68.3.1 MATTERS ARISING – 27 November 2023 Committee Meeting

65.5, Report 6 Following the expression of interest sent to eligible members of the Committee, Mr Paul Clancy has taken on the role as HE representative on the Board.

66.8 Mr Clancy referred to the proposed workshop that was discussed at the September and November 2023 Committee meetings. Mr Clancy reported that it was considered it would be more meaningful to wait until the Voluntary Severance

Scheme has been completed and a Workshop be scheduled for September 2024. Members were content with this arrangement.

66.8 Dr C O’Mullan had drafted a summary paper that included the NISRA data on the College and Sector. This was forwarded to Governors on 18 January 2024.

67.3.1 Report 3 An update was provided within the papers in respect to the mitigations in place on the consequences that may arise from the learning lost as a result of the current industrial action (Ref EC 68.5, Report 3).

68.4 COMMITTEE CHAIR’S BUSINESS

➤ **PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1	Review of the Committee’s Terms of Reference
Report 1.1	Proposed Amendments to the Terms of Reference
Report 2	Chair to the Committee – verbal report
Report 3	Internal Audit Review – Admissions

Report 1	Review of the Committee’s Terms of Reference
Report 1.1	Proposed Amendments to the Terms of Reference

Dr O’Mullan referred to Report 1.1 and brought members through the proposed amendments. The amendments had no material changes, they relate to the ‘duties’ section and an amendment to a job title.

The Committee were content to approve the amendments to the Governing Body.

PROPOSED, Mrs J McKeever

SECONDED, Mr B O’Neill

Report 2 Chair to the Committee – verbal report

The Committee Chair was delighted to announce that Mr Paul Clancy will take over the role as Chair to the Committee from the next academic year.

Report 3 Internal Audit Review – Admissions

The Committee Chair acknowledged the satisfactory assurance received for the Internal Audit Review on Admissions. There were no findings identified and a list of areas of good practice was provided. The Committee Chair thanked Ms Breslin, Staff Governor and Compliance and Admissions Manager and her team. Ms Beslin was the manager responsible for this area. Ms Breslin reported that the team were delighted with the positive outcome. Ms Moss, Head of Client Services noted it was beneficial to get this positive outcome as this was the first audit following the introduction of the new EBS online system. Dr O’Mullan also noted that an audit outcome such as this supports the continued interaction and integration between key support functions and the curriculum.

Ms C O’ Reilly joined the meeting during this item.

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

EC 68.5	Management Report
Report 1	College Development Plan 2023/24 Curriculum Targets
Report 2	College Curriculum Plan 2023/26
Report 3	Performance Reviews 2022/23
Report 4	Health & Social Care Hub
Report 5	Skills Competitions Update
Report 6	Academic Standards Committee Minutes – January 2024
Report 7	Compliments, Complaints and Academic Appeals 2022/23
Report 8	Business Support Centre Update

EC 68.5 Management Report**Report 1 College Development Plan 2023/24 Curriculum Targets**

Dr O’Mullan reported on the key component parts from her Management Report commencing with the CDP 2023/24 update. The final targets were included in Report 1. When final confirmation has been received from the Department (DfE) that the CDP for 2023/24 has been approved a progress report will be commissioned.

Following the Minister for the Economy’s statement on the intended focus and priorities the format for the 2024/25 CDP may change to align with the Minister’s priorities.

Report 2 College Curriculum Plan 2023/26

Dr O’Mullan referred to the final Draft of the College Curriculum Plan 2023/26. She recommended the document as a good reference guide to Committee members.

The College retention rate to 20 March 2024 was 94.76%. The target is 90%. Attendance rates to 20 March 2024 for full-time was 84.88% and part-time 88.46%. Members commended the positive retention and achievement outcomes despite the ongoing challenges.

Data was provided to 20 March 2024 in relation to unmarked registers as a result of the ongoing action short of a strike. Workarounds are in place.

Members noted the HLA offer planned for 2024/25 together with the targets for Traineeships for 2024/25.

Report 3 Performance Reviews 2022/23

A series of performance reviews by Department and Curriculum Area were undertaken by the Director of Curriculum & Academic Standards and the Head of Quality Enhancement.

Referring to the KPI's on retention rates for 2022/23 showed 88%. The target is 90%. Achievement rate was 85% and success rate was 74%. The success rates are below the 80% target. Work continues to improve this figure. Following an analysis of the 2022/23 performance it was noted that a review of the full-time provision at Level 3 and Level 5 showed a steady and concerning attrition between years 1 and years 2 in a significant number of courses. Resources will be engaged in this area to try and promote retention and achievement.

Dr O'Mullan followed with an update on the action short of a strike as referred to earlier (Ref 66.8). As at 20 March 2024 there were 747 outstanding outcomes in relation to the non-reporting of student results by teaching staff. Contingency plans are in place.

Report 4 Health & Social Care Hub

Members were alerted to the Report and the many events, activities and work taking place in this area.

Report 5 Skills Competitions Update

Members noted the Report on the recent and upcoming Skills Competitions. There is a dedicated Skills Champion based in Greystone Campus who continues to work with curriculum teams on their participation in skills competitions.

The Head of Quality & Academic Standards referred to the vast range of curriculum events and awards.

Report 6 Academic Standards Committee Minutes – January 2024 – members noted the Minutes.

Report 7 Compliments, Complaints and Academic Appeals 2022/23

The number of compliments had decreased by 69.81% from the previous year. This may have been due to the Quality Manager been on long-term sick leave. Informal complaints have increased by 53.85% on the previous year.

Academic Assessment Appeals increased by 60% on the previous years.

Report 8 Business Support Centre Update

The Report included the announcement in November 2023 that the College will deliver six Assured Skills Academies over the next three years to fill 72 jobs. The first Academy commenced in February 2024.

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

68.6 CLIENT SERVICES – Ms G Moss, Head of Client Services**➤ PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS**

Report 1	Equality Update
Report 2	Summary Progress Report to Committee – Business Development & Employability Review
Report 3	Safeguarding Report
Report 3.1	Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy
Report 4	Widening Access and Participation Plan 2024/25 -2026/27

Report 1 Equality Update

The Head of Client Services reported on the calendar of events to promote and raise awareness in respect to important topics. Work is in progress for Refugee Week from 20 – 26 June 2024.

Engagements continue with community and charity groups to strengthen the engagement between them and the College

The College were successful in achieving the Anti-Racism School of the Year Award. The College's International Officer was recognised for her work in Advancing Racial Justice and Fairness at the event.

Ms Breslin Governor, in her capacity as Compliance and Admissions Manager was a panel member in the Diversity in Leadership Event which took place on International Women's Day in Seagate Technology.

As part of the work with Stonewall/Rainbow Project training will be arranged for Governors on sexual orientation.

Report 2 Summary Progress Report to Committee – Business Development & Employability Review

All recommendations from the Business Development & Employability Review were now complete.

Report 3 Safeguarding Report

The Head of Client Services reported that the Safeguarding Team received 377 referrals for support from September 2023 to March 2024. As a result of the promotion of the Safeguarding Team, at induction 95 students have self-referred for support. Anxiety continues to be the most common reason for referrals. It has been noted that students are presenting with more than one mental health condition. An Access NI Registered Body Audit was carried out on 21 November 2023. Positive feedback was received from Access NI and no recommendations were received.

Report 3.1 Safeguarding, Care and Welfare Policy

The Head of Client Services referred to Appendix 4 showing the amendments to the Policy as at December 2023. These changes relate to additional wording to include Operation Encompass and Digital Safety and changes to the disclosure of criminal history procedure.

Report 4 Widening Access and Participation Plan 2024/25 -2026/27

This Report has been returned to the Department (DfE), no feedback has been received to date.

The Committee Chair thanked Ms Moss for her report.

68.7 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

68.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business to discuss.

68.9 RESERVED BUSINESS – Taken separately

That being the end of business the Committee Chair thanked everyone. The meeting ended at 18:09.

Date of Next Meeting – 28 May 2024

Signed;  _____

Mrs J McKeever, Committee Chair

Date: 28 May 2024