MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HE PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021

Present

Angela Briggs	Governor
Ruth Brook	Governor (Chair)
Tom Burton	Governor
Roger Eccleston	Governor
Paul Grinell	Governor
Mick Lochran	Chief Executive
Paul Pascoe	Governor
Simon Stevenson	Staff Governor
Andrea Ward	Governor
Jordan Wilson	Student Governor

The quorum for the meeting was five Members.

In attendance

Kathryn Brentnall	Deputy CEO and Principal
Sharon Smith	Deputy CEO and Principal Designate
Maxina Butler-Holmes	Vice Principal HE
Alan Girvin	Director of HE
Debbie Jensen	Director of Academic Administration & QA (incl. Academic Registrar)
Joanne Platt	Interim Director of Governance / Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting was held via MS Teams and commenced at 4.30 pm.

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1   **Apologies**

No apologies for absence were received.

2   **Declarations of Interest**

Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.

Roger Eccleston declared an interest in Item 5 as he is employed at Sheffield Hallam University.

3   **Minutes of a meeting of the HE Performance & Quality Committee held on 8 March 2021 and any matters arising**

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and will be signed by the Chair.

Actions 6 and 7 are complete. It was noted that it had not been possible to convene an additional meeting in relation to action 10. The QIP has therefore been updated by the Interim Director of Governance in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and is on the agenda for further discussion at this meeting at Item 10.

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4   **University Centres Update**

The Committee considered a report providing an update in relation to retention, student progress and recruitment to date in 2020-21. It was noted that data is from the Progress Panel in March and will be updated when the current round of panels and Boards are completed.

In relation to retention, it was noted that retention for the full DNCG portfolio is 89.52% which is only marginally below previous years.

Retention for Full-Time Undergraduate programmes is 89.17% and is higher at UCNL (90.76%) than at UCD (89.17%).

Retention for Part-Time Undergraduate programmes is 92.37% and is higher at UCNL (93.82%) than at UCD (88.73%).

Retention for Postgraduate programmes is 86.93%. Although UCD retention (86.33%) is lower than at UCNL (92.86%), it was noted that there are only 14 PG enrolments at UCNL which makes the data for this statistically less significant.

Retention for Teacher Training programmes is 82.28% and UCNL (91.67%) is performing significantly better than UCD (74.42%). Staffing issues that impact on student's motivation may have contributed to this and an action plan is in place to address it.

Retention for Professional qualifications (which are currently only delivered at UCD) is 94.74%.

In terms of progress, it was noted that data is accurate to the end of May 2021.

74.90% of continuing DNCG students were reported as Completed / Achieved in recent programme reviews, with 9.81% of students needing to be reassessed and 15.29% of students not yet having completed due to carrying Mitigating Circumstances.

It was noted that there is a significant difference between UCD (84.71% of students reported Completed / Achieved) and UCNL (64.42% of students reported Completed / Achieved) and there is also almost three times as many continuing students at UCNL (165 students or 14.33%) requiring reassessment than at UCD (57 students or 5.13%).

At UCNL, there are twice as many continuing students who are not yet complete due to carrying Mitigating Circumstances (233 or 20.24%) than at UCD (113 or 10.16%). This difference is reflected in comparison of performance by subject area across the Group. At UCNL, Completed / Achieved are significantly below those at UCD in Children's Learning and Development, Counselling and Mental Health, Computing, Engineering and Construction, Literature and History, and Social Science. At UCD, Completed / Achieved are significantly below those at UCNL in Health and Social Care and Sport Science.

Governors noted that all students who are not in a state of Completion / Achievement have individual action plans, and programme-level interventions were documented in the Programme Area Reviews that were submitted by all programme teams in early May.

In terms of recruitment for 2021/22, it was noted that applications and enquiries for full-time new entrants as at 10 June 2021 were 39 below target but 70 more than at the same time last year at UCNL and 55 above target and 45 more than at the same time last year at UCD. Overall, applications were 16 ahead of the same time last year and 157 more than target across the Group.

In terms of Access, Success and Progression, it was noted that a Higher Education Dashboard is being developed to capture OfS requirements and the Access and Participation Plan (APP) targets. This will ensure that the reports on achievement gaps for HE, progression and continuation are more easily accessible.

It was noted that the APP 2019-20 Annual Monitoring Report and Student Submission return was submitted on 16 April 2021.

A student working group has been established with meetings held at both UCNL and UCD to support students to develop the student submission for the current year. To date, this has not been submitted for a number of reasons including the timeframe of the report, the students' own assessment work, effects of the lockdown, home-working and home schooling.

Students will be given opportunities to present the findings of the APP Student Submission at the ASP Committee, Student-led Conference, Academic Board of Studies, HE Backstage and Student Society and staff working groups are to be established to consider the APP targets and completion of the annual monitoring return for the next academic year.

The DNCG sample for the National Student Survey 2021 consisted of 604 students (156 more than in 2020) and at the close of the survey, the overall response rate was 71.03% (429 of 604) compared to a response rate of 74.33% last year.

15 programmes met the threshold for publication and 10 programmes did not.

Graduate Outcomes is the model for the collection of graduate destinations data and informs one the three student outcomes considered for the purpose of assessing condition B3 of the Ongoing Conditions of Registration (Graduate employment and progression to professional jobs and postgraduate study). The survey of 2018-19 graduates ended in September 2020 and the survey of 2019-20 graduates began in December 2020. Sector results are provided by HESA and to date, there has been a statistical bulletin and open data release for students who graduated in the 2017/18 Academic Year.

Governors noted that the Pandemic is adversely affecting students' ability to complete all their assessments to deadline. Without targeted interventions and support, there is a risk that a backlog of work could lead to in-year withdrawals which will adversely affect the Group's ability to meet its income target for 2020-21 and may lead to students failing to pass their studies this year which will impact on progression and income targets for 2021-22.

Governors thanked the Director of HE for his report, noting that it was very detailed. They asked for a more high-level exception report for future meetings that provides a visual representation of the data (using charts) and draws Governors' attention to key issues and concerns. It was agreed that the format for this will be discussed outside of the meeting, with input from Governors on the data they would like to see.

VPHE, Dir HE with input from Governors and Deputy CEO / Principal

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The timing of the Committee was also discussed, as it was noted that data from the current round of panels and Boards wasn't yet available. It was agreed however, that moving the meeting date back would have an adverse impact on the Committee's ability to provide assurance on HE Performance to the Corporation Board meeting usually held in the first week of July.

5   Higher Education Strategic Priorities Development Plan Update

The Committee considered a report providing a summary update on the key strategic priority areas for development during the current academic year. It was noted that most actions were complete or that significant work was in progress.

The 2019-20 Development Plan had identified several areas for strengthening cross campus approaches as part of ongoing capacity building, including changes to the deliberative structures, working towards greater staff flexibilities and continuing compliance with the Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework. One of the positives arising from the Pandemic was Directorate Leadership Teams from both university campuses meeting 2-3 times weekly which proved useful in promoting a culture of collaboration.

The 2020-21 Development Plan sought to build upon those foundations, and to incorporate the learning from the OfS Audit to develop the leadership structure and academic infrastructure to drive growth ambitions and economies of scale over the lifetime of the 2020-23 strategic planning period.

There was desire from local NHS providers to 'grow our own nurses' and the College was working with them and the University of Hull to support this ambition. Currently, full time nursing programmes were delivered at Sheffield Hallam University with part time programmes due to be delivered at UCD.

It was noted that the Pandemic has resulted in the need to focus on the B2 and B3 OfS Registration conditions to deliver successful outcomes for all students, which has impacted on the ability to showcase the UCNL building and particularly the Industry 4.0 facilities. Business engagement will therefore be a high priority as lockdown restrictions ease.

The Plan recognises that the national policy landscape continues to evolve, and the in-year updates recognise and articulate the Group's response to this. In addition to the Institute of Technology, Higher Technical Education and Post-18 reform narratives, other external influences such as the OfS Quality Standards Review processes, and developments relating to the Teaching Excellence Framework and National Student Survey will need to be addressed.

The Committee noted that RSM was currently undertaking an audit of the OfS action plan.

It was also noted that the Higher Education Strategy 2021-24 will be developed through the new HE leadership structure. Working with SLT colleagues from FE and using feedback from the recent Governor Away Day and strategy session held just before this meeting of the Committee, the future vision of the DN Colleges Group to maintain our position as the largest College-based Higher Education provider will be defined.

In response to a question from a Governor, it was confirmed that there had not yet been any progress in relation to the validation for short 'bite size' programmes. The

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Pearson 'Flex' units are currently being promoted to industry and businesses through the skills agenda.

Governors asked if the growth ambition for HE was realistic in the current climate and it was confirmed that the Group is optimistic that growth can be achieved, as the demand and estates infrastructure (with the capital projects) are there. It was also noted that the local councils are supportive of growth plans with the vision for a University City for the Doncaster area and continued profile raising of UCNL in North Lincolnshire.

6   Higher Education Structure

The Committee considered a report providing a summary of the Group level structure for HE which will be implemented in phases in advance of the 2021-22 academic year. The new structure will provide the capacity to drive the developing Higher Education Strategy over 2021-24.

It was noted that the HE Strategy is structured around three strategic strands, namely Learning Teaching and Student Experience, Academic Administration and Quality Assurance and Business & Community Interaction and Employability. Each strand will be led by a Director, reporting to the Vice Principal HE.

The Strategy will be informed by national policy drivers, regional development priorities, UK Quality Code themes and the OfS Conditions of Registration.

Governors noted that there are four academic schools in the structure, each with a Group Head of School and two Deputy Heads of School, with a Deputy Head of School being based at each university campus. This will create enhancement-led subject based learning communities.

Current staff will be assimilated into new roles, with two Head of School posts and the Director of Business and Community, Integration and Employability being recruited externally. The new structure also provides opportunities for future staff progression.

The Academic Administration and Quality Assurance strand will build upon the work already underway under the Academic Registrar and will oversee the new Integrated Professional Administration Service (IPAS).

The Business & Community Integration and Employability strand will provide strengthened focus on the Access and Participation strategy and associated targets, recruitment strategies, careers, employability and employer engagement and graduate outcomes.

Governors asked if the structure was too inward looking and it was confirmed that both the Head of School roles and Strand three will be outward facing, focusing on meeting the needs of local employers and local communities.

Governors considered how Strand three will provide the link between HE and the College Stakeholder Boards (CSBs), and it was acknowledged that the CSBs need development and a refreshed membership. It was noted that the Director of HE was doing a lot of work with external stakeholders on the HE agenda and skills development to ensure that programmes are designed to get people into work and are under pinned by work-based placements. It was noted that the new Director of Business & Community Integration and Employability should be a member of the CSBs.

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Roger Eccleston left the meeting at 5.36 pm

| | The Committee asked for an update on the recruitment to the new structure and the work being carried out by the Director of HE at a future meeting. | **VP HE and Dir HE** |

In response to a question from a Governor in relation to the number of levels of management in the structure, it was confirmed that this was to ensure continuity of leadership across both university campuses, using a similar model to that developed for English and Maths in FE.

It was noted that at merger (2017/18), UCD had 498 students and with investment numbers had significantly increased to over 1,200 by 2020/21., The structure was costing only marginally more than the existing arrangements but would provide significantly more capacity to deliver the developing strategy.

Governors noted that the Group wants to be not only the biggest College-based Higher Education provider (CBHE), but also the best. To achieve this, it needs to invest to grow. The investment will nevertheless need to be evaluated to measure the impact it has had on outcomes for local communities and business.

7 Office for Students Update

The Committee considered a report providing an update on some of the Conditions of Registration which are either the subject of national policy focus or relate to compliance in light of the Pandemic.

It was noted that the Group has continued to respond to OfS guidance since March 2020 in relation to COVID-19, ensuring that its obligations for student and consumer protection are fulfilled and it has continually reviewed practices to ensure compliance to provide assurance to the Governing Body.

The OfS has recently announced that the Quality and Standards Conditions of Registration will be revised, including the regulation of student outcomes and the new Teaching Excellence Framework by the end of 2021.

Governors noted that the Conditions of Registration are not at risk of being breached and also that the OfS action plan in relation to the audit of ILR HE data is currently being audited by RSM.

It was noted that details of how to access training for Governors from Advance HE had been shared with all Governors and was also specifically targeted at members of the Committee. However, some of the content was specifically for governance professionals.

It was agreed that the Director of Governance would keep the programmes offered by Advance HE under review and alert Committee members to any relevant programmes or material.

VP HE / DoG

It was also agreed that a University partner would be invited to attend a future Governor Development event.

8 HEPQ Terms of Reference and Workplan 2021/22

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The Committee considered its Terms of Reference and cycle of business for 2021/22, which have been reviewed to align with the revised Scheme of Delegation considered by the Search and Governance Committee at its meeting on 19 May.

The Committee discussed how student voice was captured as this doesn't feature in the Committee's Work Plan.

It was noted that the two HE Student Governors are members of the Committee. However, the Student Governor attending today's meeting said that whilst he had gained a lot from the experience, he was not clear on his role as a member of the Committee. It was confirmed that student governors are to provide a student insight into any matters under consideration, but their role is not to act as a representative of students. It was also noted that HE Student Governors often have jobs and family commitments which prevent them from attending all meetings.

I/DoG

It was agreed to add 'Student Presentation' to the Committee's cycle of business at Meeting 2.

Chair / DoG / Student Governor

The Chair of the Corporation Board advised the Committee that she has been discussing student governor engagement with the Director of Governance and would ask her to seek advice on best practice from the Association of Colleges. It was agreed that discussions on how to better engage with student governors would take place outside of this meeting and the HE Student Governor agreed to participate in this discussion.

RESOLUTION: subject to the addition of a Student Presentation to Meeting 2 of the Committee's Cycle of Business, to recommend approval of the Committee's revised Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business for 2021/22 to the Corporation Board for approval.

9 Link Governor Update

The Link Governor for Careers and IAG informed the Committee that the Careers and IAG strategic group of which she is a member has been re-established and she will provide feedback on this to the Committee as required.

Other activities are included within her annual report which will be considered by the Corporation Board at its meeting on 7 July 2021.

10 Governance QIP and Emerging Risks

The Committee considered a report setting out the Committee's position in relation to its QIP at the end of Term 2, noting the progress made since the QIP was last reported to the Committee.

It was noted that Action 5.12 (Seek assurance that the Group aspires to meet local employment needs and student aspirations) was on-going and the Committee asked that the QIP be updated to reflect the work of the College Stakeholder Boards and other work with partners being undertaken by the Director of HE. The creation of the new role of Director for Business and Community Integration and Employability was also noted, and direct work done by the College with stakeholders will be captured by the post holder when appointed.

I/DoG

In relation to Action 5.13 (Oversee the development of adult L3 - L6 upskilling provision post Covid19), the overlap with the Curriculum, Quality and Performance

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Committee was noted and the Committee was advised that the Director of Adult Education has been asked to provide an update to the Curriculum, Quality and Performance Committee, which will be shared with this Committee. This should be in liaison with the Director of Higher Education.

Dir Adult Education / Dir HE

The Committee reviewed its current risks. It was noted that the risk relating to the recruitment of curriculum specialists to deliver cutting edge programmes in the future was already included within the Strategic Risk Register. It was therefore agreed that no changes were needed at this time.

11   Any Other Business

The Committee noted that this was the last meeting of the Committee for Paul Pascoe, Paul Grinell and Jordan Wilson as their terms of office as governors come to an end on 31 July 2021. The Chair thanked them all for their valuable contributions to the work of the Committee and thanked all members of the Committee for their contributions.

The Chair also thanked staff members for all the work they do to support the Committee.

12   Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HE Performance & Quality Committee is scheduled for Wednesday 24 November 2021, 5.30 pm North Lindsey College/Teams

The meeting closed at 6.34pm

Joanne Platt
Interim Director of Governance / Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: ………………………………… (Chair)   Date: …………………….

TABLE OF ACTIONS			
Date	**Minute**	**Action**	**Responsibility**
23 June 2021	4	Work with Governors to develop a high-level exception report for future meetings that provides a visual representation of the data (using charts) and draws Governors' attention to key issues and concerns	**VP HE / Dir HE with input from Governors and Deputy CEO / Principal**
23 June 2021	6	Provide an update on the recruitment to the new structure and the work being carried out by the Director of HE at a future meeting.	**VP HE and Dir HE**
23 June 2021	7	Keep the programmes offered by Advance HE under review and alert Committee members to any relevant programmes or material	**DoG**
		Invite a University partner to attend a future Governor Development event.	**VP HE / DoG**

TABLE OF ACTIONS			
Date	**Minute**	**Action**	**Responsibility**
23 June 2021	8	**HEPQ Terms of Reference and Workplan 2021/22** Add 'Student Presentation' to the Committee's cycle of business at Meeting 2.	**I/DoG**
		Seek advice on best practice on student governor engagement from the Association of Colleges	**DoG**
		Arrange a meeting between the Chair of the Corporation, the Director of Governance and Jordan Wilson on how to better engage with student governors.	**DoG**
23 June 2021	10	**Governance QIP Term 2** Update Action 5.12 to reflect the work of the College Stakeholder Boards and other work with partners being undertaken by the Director of HE and the creation of the new role of Director for Business and Community Integration and Employability, who will capture all direct work done with stakeholders.	**I/DoG**
		Provide an update to the Committee in relation to Action 5.13 (Oversee the development of adult L3 - L6 upskilling provision post Covid19).	**Dir Adult Education / Dir HE**