

## HE Board

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 November 2015 at 8.30am in Room OP116

Present: John Hacking (Chair), Lisa O'Loughlin (Principal) and Cllr Sue Murphy,

Apologies: David Cain

In Attendance Mary Blauciak (Vice Principal HE and Academic), Rachel Curry (Vice Principal Planning and Performance), Rob Cressey (Group Finance Officer), John Evans (Vice Principal Quality and Standards), Jennifer Foote (Company Secretary), Angela Foulkes (Vice Principal Student Support), Christine Kenyon (Vice Principal 16-18) and Jennifer McKenna (Assistant Company Secretary)

*No declarations of interest were received.*

### Part A

1/15	<b>Election of Chair</b>  <b>RESOLVED</b> that John Hacking be elected as Chair of the HE Board for 2015/16. It was confirmed that recruitment to fill the co-optee vacancies on the Board was ongoing.  The Board received a copy of the Terms of Reference of the Board for information.  A Governor queried the definition of HE provision and it was confirmed that HE covered all HEFCE funded provision for level 4 and above eg foundation courses, degree courses and HN provision. It was confirmed that at the moment HE did not cover fee-paying provision but that this might change in future.
2/15	<b>Staff and Student Engagement</b>  The Board discussed the staff and student engagement strategy.  <b>Student Engagement</b> It was confirmed that a HE student governor had recently been elected and it was agreed that she should be appointed an ex officio member of the Board. However the engagement strategy should also encompass broader initiatives to engage with all HE students.  <b>Staff Engagement</b> The Board discussed staff engagement. It was agreed that a mixture of formal and informal mechanisms would be most effective and that detailed proposals for an engagement strategy would be presented to the next meeting. The Board agreed that the staff governors' expressed preferences would be discussed at the meeting of the Board on 8 December 2015.
3/15	<b>Student Voice</b>  The Vice Principal Curriculum & Support presented the results of the HE student survey 2014-15. It was confirmed that the satisfaction results were within 3% of the benchmark. The Board discussed curriculum areas with low student satisfaction ratings. It was confirmed that those areas which remained "red" at the end of last

	<p>year had been those most affected by the staff restructure, particularly in course management. It was confirmed that these areas had been issued with a notice to improve. A Governor queried why Access and Childcare &amp; Counselling were not represented in the second semester results and it was confirmed that these areas had failed to return a response. It was confirmed that these aspects of the survey would be managed more closely this year. The Board noted that student feedback in respect of the specialist HE libraries at Fielden and the Tower had been very positive, which reinforced the strategy to provide HE students with separate facilities.</p>
<b>4/15</b>	<p><b>Safeguarding &amp; Security</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal Curriculum &amp; Support presented the Safeguarding and Security report. The Board received updates on the visual ID policy and the Prevent plan. It was agreed that the Prevent training would be repeated for those Governors who had not been able to attend or accessed training elsewhere. The Principal noted that the HE Board would also be invited to a forthcoming seminar on Fundamental British Values (which was now part of the Ofsted framework). It was confirmed that 100% of staff had been DBS checked and that all new staff were checked prior to commencement. A review of Safeguarding policies and processes was being undertaken commencing with HR and IT. The third phase of the compliance exercise would be a review of campus access and security.</p>
<b>5/15</b>	<p><b>Annual Complaints Report 2014-15</b></p> <p>The Board heard that a revised complaints procedure had been introduced last year. Previously the report had only reflected formal complaints, not informal complaints or those which were resolved immediately, however these would now be recorded and reported next year along with any complaints which were upheld. The Board heard that the number of formal HE complaints had been relatively low but requested that any significant increases be reported.</p>
<b>6/15</b>	<p><b>Learner Numbers</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal Planning and Performance presented the Learner Numbers report. The Board heard that income had increased and enrolment numbers were strong despite the change in validating partner which had prevented marketing at a crucial time of the year. It was reported that a more rigorous approach to fee collection had been implemented this year. Students were now being invoiced and required to pay early in the year, whether they had completed a student loan application or not. A Governor queried whether any data was available on internal progression into HE. It was confirmed that this had risen from 3% to 17% but that there was scope for further improvement. It was reported that targets were now being set for each course in respect of progression into HE and that new access courses were currently being validated. It was noted that the provision of specific facilities for HE students would also make internal progression more attractive to students. It was confirmed that the HE strategy continued to focus on establishing coherent pathways for progression and identifying future areas of provision.</p>
<b>7/15</b>	<p><b>Academic Governance Structure</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal HE and Academic presented a report on the proposed academic governance structure. The purpose of the proposed committee structure was to ensure that the needs of HE students were being considered at every level in the organisation. A Governor queried and it was confirmed that the HE Quality and Standards Committee would function as the Academic Board and report into the HE Board. The Board discussed the representation of various groups on the proposed committee structure and it was noted that academic governance was distinct from corporate governance. The Principal confirmed that the HE Quality and Standards Committee would itself provide the required scrutiny and challenge but that Governors would be welcome to attend and observe. A Governor queried when the</p>

	<p>Committee structure would be established and it was confirmed that with the exception of the Research and Scholarship Committee, they would be established in early 2016. It was agreed that a training session on the QAA framework and how it differed from Ofsted would be provided for all Governors.</p>
<b>8/15</b>	<p><b>QAA Update</b></p> <p>The Board received an update on HEFCE's consultation on quality assurance in higher education. The outcomes of the first phase of consultation had been a new focus on data, an enhanced role for external assessors and an oversight role for governing bodies. No outcomes from the second phase had been announced but a green paper on a teaching excellence framework was due to be published in Autumn 2016. This framework was expected to introduce a grading system for HE Institutions. The Board discussed the potential impact of such a rating system.</p>
<b>9/15</b>	<p><b>Summary of External Feedback and Student Voice</b></p> <p>The Board received the report which summarised feedback from a variety of sources both internal and external. The declining trend in the National Student Satisfaction was of particular concern as it was published and benchmarked against other HW Institutions.</p> <p>The Board discussed the lower satisfaction rate for students with a disability. A Governor queried and it was confirmed that support for disabled students was provided by an external provider Access Summit and not by the College. The Board discussed the needs of students who required learning support and it was confirmed that data on this group was being collated. It was agreed that future reports should indicate the number of students who had responded in addition to percentages.</p>
<b>10/15</b>	<p><b>Strategic Landscape</b></p> <p>The Principal provided an update on the Area Review. It was confirmed that a report and preliminary findings would be presented to the Board of Governors in December.</p>
<b>11/15</b>	<p><b>Risk Management Update</b></p> <p>It was reported that the College was moving towards a new risk management process. Previously risk management had been a function of the Finance Department, however in future it would be devolved to the business divisions to increase engagement with and ownership of risk management. A detailed paper would be presented to the next meeting.</p>
	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that, as the items to be considered are deemed commercially sensitive the Board move to Part B.</p>
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