

HE Board

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 8 July 2016 at 9.30am in Room OP116

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

In Attendance Rachel Curry (Vice Principal Planning and Performance), Jennifer Foote (Company Secretary & General Counsel), Angela Foulkes (Vice Principal Curriculum & Support), Christine Kenyon (Vice Principal 14 - 19), Phil Nickisson (Assistant Principal HE) and Debbie Sanderson (Finance Business Partner)

No declarations of interest were received.

Part A

8/16	<p>Part A minutes of the meeting of the HE Board held on 10 February 2016</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of the HE Board held on 10 February 2016 were approved as an accurate correct record.</p>
9/16	<p>Budget and Business Planning 2016/17</p> <p>The Vice Principal, Planning and Performance gave an outline of the business planning process today. The work undertaken had been used to inform the draft consolidated group budget for 2016/17, with an intention for a discrete HE budget to be recorded from September 2016. A prudent view of planned growth had been assumed, with increased programmes planned for academic studies, construction, Media and Visual Arts and Performing Arts. Investment had also been allocated for the proposed new Student Union. In response to a query it was confirmed that this investment was in set up costs and the intention was for the Student Union to be self funding.</p>
10/16	<p>Bursary Proposals</p> <p>The Board received details of a proposed bursary scheme for HE students. This had been drafted in response to the removal, as a result of Government austerity measures, of the National Scholarship Programme for undergraduates. Rather than a simple 'cash back' mechanism, the Manchester bursary would comprise two elements measured against attendance and achievement. The maximum bursary available for each student would be £500. In addition to this the college would continue to operate its hardship fund for HE students and also planned to participate in the Greater Manchester Higher Project to work with secondary schools in respect of the widening participation agenda.</p>

	<p>Governors supported the concept of an 'earned' bursary but requested detail on the rationale behind the split in payments. It was explained that this was based on experiential research. However, the Board concluded that 'achievement' did not reflect the fact that HE learners might complete without achieving and that therefore the bursary should be linked to the completion of the last submission. It was agreed that this would be reflected in the bursary offer.</p> <p>The student governor questioned whether other mechanisms were needed to drive attendance, rather the place see reliance on the bursary and it was confirmed that the bursary was only part of the framework in place.</p> <p>In response to a query on competitor analysis it was explained that competitors offering a higher bursary also had a higher tuition fees and that student experience rather than costs appeared to be the deciding factor when choosing a course.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED</i> that the achievement and attendance bursary scheme be approved in principle and that the approval of the details of the balance of the constituent parts be approved by the Chair of the Board of Governors under delegated authority in consultation with the Chair of the HE Board.</p>
<p>11/16</p>	<p>HE Tuition Fees</p> <p>The Committee received draft proposals for HE tuition fees for 2016/17. Members were informed that HE fees charged by the college were currently well below those of comparable institutions. In response to a query it was explained that upon investigation into the potential impact of any fee increase of widening participation, evidence suggested that students were prepared to pay an increased level of fees for a high standard, valued HE experience. Any increase in fees would be targeted at improving the student experience and finance the bursary outlined at Minute No 10/16.</p> <p>The Board referred to both Foundation Degree Awarding Powers and Taught Degree Awarding Powers (FDAP and TDAP) and was of the opinion that an informed discussion needed to take place on how the institution wished to respond to this. It was agreed that an FDAP/TDAP working group with membership comprising both governors and senior leaders should be established to consider the issue and develop a policy on the way forward for consideration by the Board of Governors.</p> <p>Reference was made to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and discussion took place on the impact this would have on fees policy. A further report would be submitted to the Board.</p> <p>With reference to the outcome of the National Student Survey (NSS), the Board was keen to ensure that any improvement on the rating of the college was not merely a reflection that others in the sector were declining. The Principal explained that she was keen to move the college forward from an expectation of consolidating a 'good' standard towards adopting and driving towards more aspirational measures and targets.</p>

	<p>In response to a query it was confirmed that careers and employability hubs were planned both as virtual centres and as part of the college estate in order to underpin the college vision of 'careers not courses'.</p> <p>A table of fees for both full time and part time programme was submitted for consideration.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED</i> that the HE tuition fees for 2016/17, as set out in the report, be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.</p>
<p>12/16</p>	<p>HE Quarterly Update</p> <p>The Principal gave an update on the current position in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the performance framework • quality • student experience • finance • planning for 2016/17 • college 2020 and brand strategy. <p>In respect of performance, concern was expressed at the decline in applications. It was agreed that further work detailing the actual numbers year on year for new learners, progressing learners and conversions should be presented to the next meeting of the Board.</p> <p>Reference was made to predicted success targets and it was noted that further work needed to be undertaken to understand the reasons behind learners staying for the full programme but not achieving. This would then inform what further support mechanisms could be put in place to enable learners to achieve.</p> <p>Governors discussed the 76% target for achievement. The student governor expressed an opinion that the improved student experience evident in college would drive the performance profile and success rates. This perspective was welcomed by the Board. Reference was made by the Principal to the unique selling point of the college which was the ability to support learners to increase their chance at gaining employment. It was therefore critical that this was underpinned by a meaningful learner experience.</p> <p>The Board examined the OTL grade profile and received assurance that progress was being made in the performance management of staff. Governors were keen to stress that the college should not feel constrained when implementing stringent performance measures but that this should be undertaken with appropriate Trade Union consultation.</p> <p>The Board noted the positive increase in contribution made by HE to the group. It was queried whether there was a result in an improvement in fee collection</p>

	<p>services. Recent improvements in MIS and reconciliations of fee income against payments enabled discrepancies to be highlighted and investigated sooner.</p>
	<p>----- Chair</p> <p>----- Date</p>



The
Manchester
College
be amazing