



## Minutes

### Meeting of the Higher Education Oversight Committee Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 4.30pm Principal's Office, Mansion

#### PART 1

<b>Present:</b>	Pippa Goodwin	<i>Committee Chair &amp; Chair of Governors</i>
	Katie Beckinsale	<i>HE Student Governor</i>
	Daniel Clawson	<i>Governor</i>
	Gillian May	<i>Principal</i>
<b>In attendance:</b>	Tracy Reeve	<i>Director of Governance</i>
	Jan Selfridge	<i>Director of Higher Education (HE)</i>

#### 20/19 Apologies

There were no apologies. The Chair welcomed the new Higher Education (HE) Student Governor (KB) to her first meeting; all attendees introduced themselves and their roles. It was noted that KB was a third year BSc Vet Physiotherapy student and had undertaken the course as a mature student after a period away from education.

#### 21/19 Notification of any other business

There was no other business notified.

#### 22/19 Notification of Members interests

There were no interests notified.

#### 23/19 Minutes of the Meeting 2 October 2019

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

#### 24/19 Matters arising from HE Oversight Minutes of 2 October 2019

- **Minute 12/19, HE Oversight Minutes July 2019:** The Director of Governance (TR) highlighted that she had not yet received a copy of the HE Oversight Committee minutes from 24 July 2019 from the HE Academic Registrar (MF).

***JS to ensure that the minutes from the additional HE meeting on 24/07/19 were sent to the Director of Governance for the record.***

- **Minute 15/19, FD Attendance at HE Oversight Committee:** The Principal informed the meeting that the attendance of the FD to present work on the HE financial contribution would be deferred until after the QAA Review. This would be carried forward to the March 2020 meeting.

***FD to attend HE Oversight Committee in March 2020 to consider financial contribution of HE courses at BCA.***

- **Minute 16/19, BSc Vet Physiotherapy Maintenance Loan Issue:** The meeting was reminded that the issue with BCA Vet Physio learners losing their access to Student Loan Company Maintenance Loans after the course had been re-classified as Distance Learning in August 2019 had now been fully resolved. Governors were

given assurance that this would not be a problem for future applicants. The meeting commended JS for her work on securing a reversal of the original Student Loan Company decision; this was crucial to the success of the course in the future.

### **NOTED**

It was confirmed that there were no other matters arising from the minutes that were not already covered by the agenda.

## **ITEMS FOR DECISION/ APPROVAL**

### **25/19 Higher Education (HE) Improvement Plan**

The Director of HE (JS) updated the meeting with progress against the HE Improvement Plan as submitted to the Office for Students (OfS). The importance of this document in relation to the upcoming QAA inspection was noted by the meeting.

The meeting closely scrutinised this document and asked for a number of additional data point to be included. The Principal asked that the KPI date on page 1 to be headed as 'BCA Currently' and 'BCA Target' for clarity. The Chair sought and was given confirmation that the 88% target for continuation was based on the National Average (NA) data. The Principal asked that the Action Plan should include attendance/ continuation/ completion data by programme so that any gaps in performance could easily be seen.

The meeting considered the progress comments on page 2 in relation to 'Governing Body oversight of HE'. The meeting asked that the new Quality of Education Committee and the HE Oversight Committee should be included in these comments along with the fact that the Chair of Governors was the Link Governor for HE.

When considering the progress against the 'Student Recruitment Process' the meeting asked that the impact column should be amended to include the fact that the suggested written task had been prepared and would be used during the interview process, 15 January 2020 onwards. The completion date for this action should be amended to March 2020 to reflect the timing of the interviews.

The meeting was given an update on the outreach to local sixth form pupils but DC (Head of Sixth Form at Desborough College) informed the meeting that he was unaware of this initiative. JS assured the meeting that she would double-check the contact details for the school outreach marketing. JS also informed the meeting that HE Taster Days would take place after the UCAS deadline as there had been no demand during November and December. The Chair sought additional clarification on what the target of '1 application per school/ college/ target group' was based on. JS informed the meeting that this was not 'scientific' but this would demonstrate progress against the current position. The meeting discussed the use of current HE students in marketing to their own sixth-forms i.e. send them back to schools careers events to promote BCA. The typo on line 5 page 5 December 2020 – should read 2019 was highlighted. The Principal highlighted that the HE Team had met the marketing agency responsible for the new website during the previous week. One suggestion had been that the College should refer to 'Degrees' not HE. More data on HE traffic would be available after the website was amended to include hotspot tracking for HE views. Governors (DC) sought clarification on whether the College attended UCAS exhibitions; he was informed that the cost and small scale/ regional or local-pull of BCA meant this was not a viable option. DC suggested that the College investigate having a stand at the University and Apprenticeship Fair event held in London. The Principal confirmed that BCA would be represented at the

National School Leavers Show in Ascot, week commencing 3rd December 2019; there would be an HE staff presence at this event. The meeting went on to discuss the way that the College marketed HE provision to existing FE learners and was given assurance that the HE option was made visible to all curriculum areas.

In considering the Student Academic and Welfare section (page 7) Governors were assured that the master RAG rating criteria for HE learners was now in place (in relation to potential academic or welfare concerns). JS confirmed that this would be completed by 20th December for all Year 1 HE learners. The Principal asked that these 'red' rated items under student academic and welfare monitoring should be moved to the beginning of the HE Action Plan to highlight the priority for completion. DC sought clarification on what the criteria for risk-assessment were based on. JS informed the meeting that these included: engagement as an individual, engagement within the group; attendance; and submission of tasks. Governors sought, and were given, assurance that these 'risk assessments' on learners would be regularly reviewed throughout the year. The Chair asserted that in future years these risk assessments should be completed earlier during the first term.

The Principal suggested that the responsibility for the ongoing update of this HE Action Plan should be passed to the HE Academic Registrar (MF) and that MF should be invited to attend all future HE Oversight Committee meetings.

***It was AGREED that the HE Action Plan should be amended and updated to include:***

- ***KPI date by programme area dated November 2019 (page 1)***
- ***Additional Governance comments (page 2) as listed detailed above.***
- ***Additional 'Recruitment' comments (page 3) as detailed above.***
- ***JS to circulate the 'HE Tactical Marketing Plan' (Page 4) to HE Oversight Committee members ASAP.***
- ***JS to ensure that HE Academic Registrar database for Head of Sixth Forms was correct.***
- ***Typo on line 5 page 5 – December 2019 NOT 2020.***
- ***Additional detail on line 6 page 5 in relation to the launch of the new website: the HE team had met the agency last week and they would be including 'hotspot tracking data' on the HE link so that applicants could be better tracked.***
- ***JS to investigate the cost of BCA being represented at the University and Apprenticeship Fair event held in London.***
- ***Date for completion of RAG rating criteria for all Year 1 HE learners (page 7) now confirmed as 20th December 2019.***
- ***The 'red' items on the HE Action Plan (page 7) in relation to academic and welfare monitoring to be moved nearer the start of the Action Plan to reflect the priority of these actions.***
- ***The successful election of the new HE Student Governor (KB) and her input to HE Oversight Committee, Quality of Education Committee and Corporation moving forward (page 9).***

***It was AGREED that responsibility for the ongoing update of this HE Action Plan should be passed to the HE Academic Registrar (MF) and that MF should be invited to attend all future HE Oversight Committee meetings.***

**26/19 QAA Inspection Update: timeline and actions**

The meeting noted the timeline and scope of the Quality and Standards Review which would be undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education from Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 January 2020. The meeting was reminded that the aim of the review was to assess whether all students from admission through to completion, were provided with the support that they needed to succeed in and benefit from higher education. The meeting was informed that the review would comprise of a desk-based review of a range of evidence and an on-site visit which would include meetings with the BCA HE Team and BCA HE Students.

Governors were reminded that the review would explore the following questions:

*Q1) The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.*

*Q5) The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience*

*Q6) The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.*

*Q9) The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.*

The meeting noted and discussed the detailed working plan to ensure that the College was fully prepared and the evidence that would be provided for QAA in response to the four questions outlined above.

**NOTED**

**27/19 Enrolment & Retention Update 2019/20**

JS confirmed that numbers had grown for the September 2019 HE intake but the College had been rigorous when ensuring candidates were the right calibre. Total HE numbers at the College were now at 102, compared with the prior year figure of 89. There had been 1 further withdrawal since the last HE Oversight Committee meeting. Governors were reminded that the internal target for 2019/20 had been 108 HE learners. The FdSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare now had 16 Year 1 learners which included 3 re-take learners.

Applications 2020/21: JS reminded the meeting that applications via the UCAS portal would close on 15 January 2020 and at this point the College would have a clearer idea of numbers for the next academic year.

***The HE Enrolment Report was NOTED.***

**28/19 Partnership Work**

- **Franchise Agreement with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU)**

The meeting was given an update on progress with discussions with the RAU around the possibility of converting the BSc Vet Physio provision to a full franchise agreement, (to mirror the arrangement already in place with University of Reading for HE Childcare provision). JS confirmed that discussion with the RAU were ongoing; BCA had now received a concept note/ draft proposal and a decision from the RAU would be the next step. The Chair asked the Director of HE to clarify the date that the RAU Board were likely to make a decision on the proposal.

***Director of HE to ascertain the likely timetable for a decision from the RAU on the franchise option for the BSc Vet Physiotherapy.***

- **University of Reading (UoR)**

The meeting noted that the Director of HE and the Principal would be meeting with the Vice-Chancellor of the UoR on 29 November 2019 to discuss the franchised provision. The Principal reminded the meeting of the ongoing success of this partnership working with UoR over the last 15 years.

**NOTED**

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **29/19 Any Other Business**

- **HE Student Governor Feedback**

The Chair asked the new HE Student Governor (KB) for feedback on her experience as an HE student at BCA over the last 2½ years. KB informed the meeting that her course had been great overall but she had found the first year hard with the focus on distance learning. As a mature student with children this had required her to be very self-disciplined in order to study for the necessary hours each week. She did however assert that the support that she received from the College had been great and helped her to complete years 1 and 2 successfully. KB also informed the meeting that time-frames for feedback and the quality of teaching and learning all markedly improved from the start of Year 2 onwards. The fact that the College gave learners all dates for the on-site learning at the start of each academic year had been a particular help for KB and allowed her to schedule her learning appropriately around her life. KB was full of enthusiasm for her new career which she had already made plans for in summer 2020 after successfully completing the course; she asserted the value of the BCA course which would enable her to come away fully qualified and able to register as a Veterinary Physiotherapist and start her own new business.

***Governors NOTED KB's comments and her overwhelmingly positive feedback***

There was no other business.

### **30/19 Date of Next Meeting**

The meeting dates for 2019/20 were confirmed as:

- Thursday 12 March 2020, 4.30pm
- Thursday 18 June 2020, 4.30pm