

UCEN Manchester Board

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2020 at 10:00am in OP116.

Present: Kimoni Bell, Cllr John Hacking (Chair), Katrina Michel, Lisa O'Loughlin (Principal), Beth Rockey and Peter Winter

In Attendance: Amy Avery (Assistant Company Secretary & Solicitor), Rachel Curry (Deputy Principal) for items 01/20-03/20, Jennifer Foote MBE (Company Secretary and General Counsel), Susan Holden (Director of Quality, Standards and Strategic Partnerships), Christine Kenyon (Deputy Principal) for items 01/20-06/20, Edward Lack (Group Director of Quality), Wendy Pennington (Director of Student Experience and Engagement), Debbie Sanderson (Divisional and Finance Director College and Income Team) and Michael Walsh (Vice Principal and HE Dean)

No declarations of interest were received.

Part A

01/20	<p>Covid-19</p> <p>The Board received assurance that operational plans were in place regarding Covid-19 and that the LTE Group Board would receive an update at the meeting on 31 March 2020.</p>
02/20	<p>Part A minutes of the meeting of the UCEN Manchester Board held on 22 November 2019</p> <p>The Part A minutes of the meeting of the UCEN Manchester Board held on 22 November 2019 were received, approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.</p>
03/20	<p>Quality Action Plans</p> <p>The Group Quality Director presented the Self-Evaluation Document for 2018/19 (SED) and the Quality Improvements Plan for 2019/20 (QIP), which highlighted progress against actions.</p> <p>The Board was assured of the on-going and regular monitoring of the improvements against the QIP and also of the significant level of investment being focused on improving quality.</p> <p>The meeting's attention was drawn to the key Areas For Improvement (AFIs) and it was noted that in order to achieve a lasting and sustainable impact, the implementation of these actions would take place over time.</p>

The meeting referred specifically to actions which had already evidenced some in year improvement:

Afl 1 – Decline in the end of year achievement rates putting future qualification achievement rates at risk: the first sit pass rates from the semester one assessment board had indicated a 3% improvement on prior year to 85%.

Afl 3 – A small minority of teaching is insufficiently challenging for the level of qualification: ETLA observations currently underway were reporting positive outcomes with further support identified through coaching.

Afl 4 – registration and withdrawal processes are not sufficiently reliable to ensure accuracy of Pearson student records: New processes agreed and training delivered to HoDs.

Afl 5 – timeliness and helpfulness of student feedback needs to evidence its impact via to NSS scores: Participation rates for NSS currently stood at 82%, a significant 8% increase on prior year.

Afl 8 – the need for some cross-college services to increase focus on HE provision: Greater collaboration between TMC Student Support Services and UCEN Manchester staff under the 'Future U' umbrella has already delivered some improvements to service.

In response to a query, it was explained that the SED was not shared at HE level as widely as the same for FE but that this opportunity could be explored.

A concern was raised regarding Academic Studies. However, the Board was assured that these figures represented a small cohort of students but nevertheless the need for improvement was recognised.

The Office for Students Quality & Standards Action Plan Update (QSIP) was received and the progress against actions were considered. The Board was pleased to note the positive outcomes against the targets in 2018/19.

The meeting was reminded of its delegated authority, from the LTE Group Board, to act as the oversight committee for the OfS.

The Board understood that once the written QAA report was received, it would be assessed and actions identified for areas for improvement.

RESOLVED that the UCEN Manchester QIP 2019/20 be approved, subject to amendments following improvement outcomes from the QAA report.

Rachel Curry left the meeting

<p>04/20</p>	<p>HE Fees Policy</p> <p>The tuition fee rates and tuition fee policy for 2021/22 was received by the Board for its review and approval in order to meet the on-going OfS registration requirements.</p> <p>The meeting discussed an amendment to the tuition fee policy, to include the cost of equipment, effective from September 2020, and noted the supporting rationale. Subject to future feedback on whether this change had a positive impact, the Board was made aware of the possibility of wider group implementation.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the tuitions fees and the tuition fee policy, as set out in the report, be approved for 2021/22, subject to any amendment following validation outcomes.</p>
<p>05/20</p>	<p>Student Satisfaction</p> <p>The Board received a report in respect of student satisfaction surveys which provided assurance that the UCEN Manchester students were highly satisfied. The report highlighted that as students were key stakeholders, high levels of student engagement and student satisfaction remained a priority in the context of quality improvements and the TEF metrics.</p> <p>The meeting reflected on the participation rates by department and feedback from various internal student surveys, student representatives and the National Students Survey 2020 (NSS).</p> <p>It was highlighted to the Board that actions had been put in place to improve engagement further, which included steps taken to close the feedback loop.</p> <p>The Board flagged the importance of students feeling the impact of improvements whilst on their course.</p> <p>Module Evaluations The Board noted that module evaluations had started in December 2019 but data was not yet available.</p> <p>NSS The meeting understood that that UCEN Manchester had been invited to engage in the 2020 NSS pilot, which had been expanded from a final year student survey to a wider cohort. The Board noted the results would not be published and were expected to be communicated internally to the UCEN Manchester SLT in July 2020.</p> <p>Student Representatives The Board was pleased to note that Student Voice was being used to inform the recruitment strategy.</p>
<p>06/20</p>	<p>Update from Academic Board</p> <p>The minutes from the Academic Board were received for consideration.</p> <p><i>Christine Kenyon left the meeting.</i></p>

07/20	<p>Review of Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech</p> <p>The Board reviewed the Code of the Practice on Freedom of Speech which had been updated to reflect changes in role titles and campus locations.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech be approved and adopted.</p>
	<p>----- Chair</p> <p>----- Date</p>

The meeting closed at 1:15 pm