

Minutes of a meeting of the B&FC Quality and Standards Committee

Held on 3 October 2023 at 5.00pm

In the Boardroom at University Centre, Park Road, Blackpool, FY1 4ES

Members' attendance record:

		3 Oct 2023	21 Nov 2023	19 Mar 2024	7 May 2024	2023/24 attendance to date
Helen Broughton MBE DL	Independent Member (in the Chair)	✓				100%
Antony Lockley	Independent Member	✓				100%
Adrian Mills	Independent Member	✓				100%
Wendy Robinson	Independent Member	✓				100%
Julia Williams	Co-opted Subject Specialist (by Teams)	✓				100%

In attendance:

Cheryl Dunn	Vice-Principal for Higher Education and Student Enhancement
Kate Coughlan	Director of Quality and Standards
Helen Fogg	Director of Higher Education
Paul Howard	Governance Professional, PDH Advisory (minutes)
Simon Hughes	Vice-Principal for Quality and Curriculum

1. Chair and quorum

Helen Broughton took the chair and noted that due notice of the meeting had been given to all members and that a quorum was present. She therefore declared the meeting duly convened and constituted.

2. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

3. Declarations of interest

No committee members declared an interest in any of the agenda items.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 May 2023 were **AGREED** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

With regard to the action around potentially involving students in a deep dive, it was agreed to defer discussion on this to the next meeting,

5. Quality and Standards scorecard

Simon Hughes presented the regular Quality and Standards scorecard which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He drew particular attention to the significant improvement in student behaviour that had been experienced and also noted that attendance figures, whilst there remained some work to do, were encouraging.

The committee received the scorecard and noted the content.

6. Outcomes for Further Education, Higher Education and Apprenticeships

Kate Coughlan presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to share details of the current overall FE and HE achievement rates, along with details of the good honours degree classifications for 2022/23 and the expected achievement rate for apprenticeships. Particular note was made of the strong performance in T-levels, with a good level of retention being reported for the cohort and an excellent level of attainment, with 66% of students achieve merit grade or above.

Adrian Mills commented that he recognised some of the comments in the report from his own experiences in the workplace, particularly around students needing additional support in softer workplace skills and behaviours, and commended the college for its efforts to help students in this way.

In response to a question from Helen Broughton, Simon Hughes confirmed that students on breaks from learning are included within monthly reconciliation exercises to ensure that accurate records are constantly maintained.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

7. Office for Students' Condition B3 update

Helen Fogg presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to update the committee in relation to the Office for Students' (OfS) condition B3, noting that B&FC had exceeded the minimum thresholds in 15 out of 18 measures and that action plans were in place for the remaining three measures. Particular note was made of the fact that progression data is measured through the Graduate Outcomes Survey which takes place 15 months after graduation and that respondents have a two-week window in which to participate. Confirmation was provided that B&FC has a strong communication plan in place to support this year's survey, with the aim of increasing participation.

In response to a question from Antony Lockley, the committee agreed to include a deep dive into first degree progression at the March 2024 meeting, to allow members to better understand the metric and the direction of travel.

Cheryl Dunn reminded the committee that the sector averages provided are taken from all higher education providers and do not take account of local or provider nuances.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

8. Student progressions and destinations for Further Education and Higher Education

Kate Coughlan presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to update the committee on student progression and destinations, noting that B&FC continues to expand the ways in which it confirms the destination of students after they finish their programme. Particular note was made of the fact that B&FC has a 99% positive onward direction, with 70% of students choosing to continue their studies with B&FC and 17% moving into employment.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

9. Teaching Excellence Framework 2023 outcome

Helen Fogg informed the committee that B&FC had been awarded Gold status in all elements of the Teaching Excellence Framework 2023, including as an overall status. She noted that there were only three further education colleges nationally to receive a gold status overall which made the achievement all the more impressive. Committee members congratulated the college on its achievement.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

10. Learning, teaching and assessment

Kate Coughlan presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to share the findings of the many learning walks, observations and peer observations that had been completed, noting that the majority of FE sessions observed were assessed as providing learners with experiences that are effective, well-structured and supportive and that the majority of higher education students benefit from well-planned and delivered courses that provide effective feedback to help students develop and progress.

Helen Broughton commented that a significant challenge for any organisation is that of consistency, and asked whether there was a link to staff engagement or a link to performance reviews. In response, Simon Hughes advised that there is no formal link with performance reviews and briefed the committee on the updated approach to learning, teaching and assessment observations that has been in place since Easter 2023. Wendy Robinson commended the model in place.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

11. Customer satisfaction 2022/23

Kate Coughlan presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to share details of feedback received through the various surveys undertaken during the year.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

12. Annual report of the Higher Education Academic Board

Helen Fogg presented the annual report of the Higher Education Academic Board for information.

The committee received the report and noted the content.

13. Feedback from committee self-assessment in May 2023

Paul Howard presented a report which had been circulated with the agenda to share the feedback received from the committee self-assessment exercise undertaken in May 2023. Antony Lockley also suggested that consideration be given to committee members observing a session or potentially arranging events which showcase innovation or allow members to feel the B&FC experience.

14. Date, time and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee will be held on 21 November 2023, 5.00pm, by videoconference.