



HARTPURY

MINUTES

**Meeting Hartpury College Board of Governors
11.30am – 12.40pm Thursday 11th February 2021
Via zoom**

Present:	Mr Edward Keene (Chair)	University and College Board
	Mr Russell Marchant	Vice-Chancellor/Principal
	Mrs Barbara Buck	College Board (Vice Chair)
	Mr Patrick Brooke	College Board
	Ms Mary Heslop	College Board
	Mr Kam Nandra	College Board
	Mr Sean Lynn	College Board – Staff Governor
	Mr Graham Van der Lely	College Board (until 12.30)
	Mr Chris Moody	University and College Board
	Mr William Lees	College Board – Student Governor
In Attendance:	Ms Lynn Forrester-Walker	Chief Operating Officer
	Ms Claire Whitworth	Vice-Principal Further Education
	Ms Gillian Steels	Clerk to the Governors
Apologies	Ms Helen Wilkinson	College Board

		Action & Action Date
FE01/02/21	Apologies – as detailed above.	
FE02/02/21	Quoracy It was confirmed the meeting was quorate.	
FE03/02/21	Declarations of Interest It was noted that the Chair, Vice Chancellor & Principal & Mr C Moody – were also Members of the University Board.	
FE04/02/21	Consideration of Key Strategic Issues Facing Further Education The Principal took the Board through a presentation which highlighted strategic issues for the Board to consider. These included:	
	T levels – unknowns included that the design of agriculture was still ongoing, it was unclear if there would still be funding to support capital changes to meet the needs of the T levels Hartpury planned to start to deliver in 2023 given that delivery of other T levels had already commenced. It was confirmed Hartpury was keeping application for T Level Capital funding under review to be ready to progress once a suitable scheme was released. It was noted there was only limited capital funding.	

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	<p>How these qualifications would link to other qualifications and support progression was not yet known. The possibility that applied Btec courses might cease to be recognised was noted.</p> <p>It was recognised that the transition to T levels for agriculture and animal would be challenging.</p>	
	<p>Climate Commission - this was high on Hartpury's agenda, but currently Hartpury was only at the start of its journey and needed to reflect how it would take forward to climate action road map. The groups needed to support this were being established and it would then be shared with governors. It was targeted to commence a project with the University of West of England (UWE) in March. UWE were to provide a consultancy service which would support Hartpury in mapping its existing practice and establishing a holistic action plan to move forward. It was planned to put in place a post to support this. Initially it would be 3 days per week and would be advertised shortly, initially internally.</p>	
	<p>Increased 16-18 Demographic - this represented a great opportunity to explore diverse income streams so that the student experience could be maintained whilst growing income. Apprenticeships and Levels 4 and 5 were particular opportunities.</p> <p>It was noted that Capital funding opportunities should start from April. The Principal advised that the first date for Expressions of Interest was mid-March and it was planned to submit a bid relating to Graze 2. He commented that the government was keen to have shovel ready projects, and that Hartpury's work on the masterplan should position them well to make applications.</p> <p>Governors queried whether there were opportunities to grow landbased apprenticeships. The Principal advised that it would be possible to grow agriculture, and link to engineering, but that investment would be required to ensure Hartpury could remain relevant in that field. Opportunities for animal were also to be explored. A governor commented that nationally apprenticeships in this area tended to be in horticulture which was less relevant to Hartpury. It was noted that the offer would need to be considered holistically to ensure it was not just spreading the same applicants. The Principal recognised that this would need to be reflected on. He commented on potential demand for Level 4 and 5 apprenticeships which might be more attractive to potential students and employers. The need to avoid damaging the viability of full time courses was flagged. The Principal confirmed that these aspects would all be further considered.</p> <p>The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that Level 2 and Level 3 apprentices were areas of growth in the current year. In two years currently the aim was for this to grow to 100. She commented that they had seen some switching from full time provision to Apprenticeship provision and that she recognised the need to be careful to hit the full-time target as well as grow apprenticeships.</p> <p>The Vice-Principal Resources advised that the management team had also looked at equine and animal apprenticeships but these were areas where other providers were currently meeting needs locally and if we</p>	

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	<p>wanted to offer in this area we would need a different model to attract students.</p> <p>The need to ensure efforts were targeted in the right place and not too broadly dispersed was recognised. A governor recognised the need to ensuring we were providing students with the right independence advice and guidance to ensure they made the most appropriate decisions to meet their circumstances and aspirations.</p> <p>Governors reflected on the disparity of apprentices being paid less than the minimum wage, and recognised this was a disincentive to take an apprenticeship. It was noted that employers were able to pay an apprentice at a higher level if they wished and that where employers demonstrated they valued apprenticeships through their selection processes, pay and support that they attracted a higher calibre of candidate. The challenge of getting micro-SMEs to invest in staff was recognised. The need to have terminology within apprenticeship levels that employers could understand was recognised.</p>	
	<p>White Paper – the focus on skills and lifelong learning were welcomed but it was recognised that there were also threats. There was a lack of understanding of the landbased sector which meant some of the proposed changes – such as regional working – would disrupt existing working relationships and mean that the needs of landbased provision might be lost within discussions about non-specialised provision. The focus on employers within the White Paper was also recognised as an area of challenge in many industries, including landbased, as it could be difficult to get employers to consider future skills needs rather than immediate issues. It was noted that the key was to develop confident workers who were able to operate safely and adapt to change. Transferable and flexible skills were recognised as important. A governor commented on the challenge of attracting young people into the landbased industries. The Principal commented on the need to help young people understand the benefits of the roles and develop further options for them to create career pathways. The need to be able to send landbased careers to those without family backgrounds was recognised as an issue both for young people and those advising them such as teachers and parents to ensure they understood modern farming and the range and diversity of the skills required.</p> <p>The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that they had asked agri-tech employers what skills were missing in students and they had advised analytical skills, which were now built into the Hartpury Certificate.</p> <p>Opportunities for Capital Funding were welcomed. The White Paper's references to adult learning and a form of entitlement for everyone to be able to work towards a Level 3 and credit accumulation models was considered. It was noted that currently Hartpury did not have a focus on adult learning. The Vice-Principal Further Education commented that they were reviewing how things could be done differently in the light of the proposals within the White Paper, for example at the Agri-tec Centre.</p> <p>It was noted that LEPs would continue to have a role.</p>	

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	<p>Possibilities of funding for a college business centre – and whether this would match to plans for Graze 2 were highlighted as an area for exploration.</p> <p>A governor commented that he had recently attended an FE Week Seminar on the White Paper and the focus on skills provision being employer led and driven had been highlighted. He commented that this seemed complex to achieve and queried whether we would be expected to link within the landbased sector or within the south-west. The Principal advised it would be a difficult element of the proposals to work through. He was concerned that a local skills improvement plan would not map to Hartpury's more national reach. He noted that the landbased sector was a higher proportion of industry in Gloucestershire than in other counties and it could still be challenging for it to get its voice heard in the LEP. The need for this to continue to be highlighted was recognised.</p>	
	<p>Governors recognised that many of the themes within the White Paper reflected previous papers and priorities, but recognised the importance of continuing to engage. Governor queried if there were issues in accessing capital because the majority of Hartpury's buildings were owned by the University. The Chief Operating Officer advised she was taking legal advice on this.</p>	<p>COO May 2021</p>
	<p>The Strategic Discussion was NOTED.</p>	
FE05/02/21	<p>OFSTED Update</p> <p>The Vice-Principal Further Education took the Board through a presentation on OFSTED. She advised that OFSTED were not currently visiting schools or colleges but had undertaken some informal visits in the autumn term. Findings from these visits had been that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges were working hard to deliver on-line and confidence in delivery was growing. • Lecturers were being developed to gain skills and confidence • Areas for consideration were the use of a mixture of on-line platforms which could be confusing for students, understanding the impact of a different pedagogy • Confusion over changes to timings for assessments • Challenges of English and Maths resits <p>Types of questions highlighted for Boards to consider were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the curriculum been adapted? <p>At Hartpury we had moved to mixed delivery and then to 100% on line in line with government requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have progression and sequencing been affected? And what is the impact? <p>At Hartpury this has been reviewed to consider when assessments can best be undertaken and adapting the sequencing where necessary to accommodate this. but ensuring that changes do not hinder development of core knowledge required to progress. In some cases this has meant the use of industry based scenarios rather than practical sessions. The Hartpury Certificate had been adapted to reflect the restrictions in place.</p> <p>Students have also received updated careers advice which reflects the changing jobs market.</p>	

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	<p>Areas of focus for consideration have been attendance/presence, engagement and learning – recognising that the first does not necessarily mean the other two are being achieved.</p> <p>Questions to consider were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are we ensuring learning is taking place? At Hartpury a range of processes were in place to support this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ setting teacher expectations, ○ monitoring, observing and surveying students ○ weekly staff team meetings to identify students who were not engaging and identifying strategies to improve their engagement ○ Qualification Review Boards ○ Attendance threshold monitoring • How are we supporting level 1 and level 2 students? At Hartpury students with High Needs (HNS) are still able to attend face to face and be supported by learning support workers. Other students who lack the appropriate equipment to work from home have also been accommodated on site if necessary or supported through provision of equipment. • How are we ensuring learners are up to date with practical and vocational elements of their courses? Hartpury has approached this through resequencing, innovation- for example using own animals (ensuring that equity remains in place when any innovation or adaption is considered) and on site work experience where possible. • How are we responding to digital poverty? Hartpury has responded by providing device loans, bursaries and dingles as well as allowing some students to use the learning centre on site. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are we supporting staff training and development? Hartpury is providing training in IT, confidence building, exams and pedagogy. The observation process has been adapted and support has been provided through JISC to provide a national picture and best practice has been shared. • How are we keeping learners safe on line? At Hartpury training undertaken by students in safeguarding and Prevent, responding to screen fatigue through varying provision and breaks. Raising cyber awareness – e.g. passwords. Continuing to deal with individual concerns through the My Concern processes. Keeping in touch with the vulnerable – 14 students in this category on site, ensuring students dress appropriate and use alternative backgrounds where required, cameras are expected to be on where possible. <p>The chair thanked the Vice-Principal Further Education for the adaptability and flexibility of staff in ensuring students were continuing to be taught and engaged.</p> <p>Governors commented positively on the evidence Hartpury would be able to provide were it to be subject to inspection. 12.30 Graham van der Lely left the meeting.</p>	

		Action & Action Date
	<p>A governor queried whether vulnerable learners were being tracked. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that those with protected characteristics had been reviewed. This had indicated that the retention gap for students with mixed ethnicity was reducing, HNS (High Needs Students) were progressing well and felt safe. A review was ongoing of the process used to monitor students receiving ALS (Additional Learning Support) to move this from being a manual reporting process to automated to improve the ability to monitor this category.</p> <p>Governors queried how the College could protect its grade 1 Outstanding classification from OFSTED. The Vice-Principal Further Education commented that the main challenge was on line delivery when student preference was for face to face delivery. She noted however that a 6% increase in satisfaction with on line learning had been achieved, although it was still below face to face. She commented that Hartpury's focus on continuous improvement was its key strength. Staff would need to be able to judge the organisation and students against the different operating environment and consider how to articulate this. The Chair queried whether any colleges were currently giving staff graded observations. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that there was variation in the sector.</p> <p>The work being done by staff was recognised.</p> <p>The OFSTED Update and actions providing assurance in relation to Hartpury's Response to the Pandemic and ensuring the Student Experience were NOTED.</p>	
FE06/02/21	Any Other Business - None	

The meeting closed at 12.40

It was noted that the slides from the sessions would be available on the Governors Website.

Dates of Future Meetings - all scheduled to commence at 11.30am except where noted.
9th November 2021