Support Review Executive Summary

Subcontractor: Aspire

Quality Manager: Colleen Baker

Provision: Community Learning Provision

Reviewing Team: Jo Hall, Alison Erhorn & Victoria Barker

Date of Report: 28th May 2021

Introduction

This summary provides an overview of the main findings and recommendations following a Curriculum and Quality Monitoring Visit with Aspire, which was undertaken to support creation of the subcontractor Self-Assessment Report for 20/21 and review of current performance during COVID-19 restrictions.

Background

The intention of the activity was for the Lead Practitioners from New College Durham to work with Aspire in order to review quality activity and teaching and learning practice across the provision, in order to identify key strengths and areas for development that are aligned to College expectations and the Education Inspection Framework (EIF). This involved a range of activities which included: Leadership & Management Discussion, Remote Observation Visits (covering planned sessions), Work Scrutiny, Student ILP Reviews, IQA Review and Staff Voice. Following completion of activities, a summary of each activity including specific actions, recommendations and support opportunities was shared with Aspire and New College Durham Business Development Unit. The team would like to thank Colleen Baker for taking an active role in the activities during the week, with a significant number of activities completed jointly. This collaborative approach is particularly useful for both parties in this exercise, thank you.

Findings

A full summary of findings per activity is available on request. The following strengths were identified across the provision during the activities undertaken:

- Aspire have created a unique and outstanding organisational culture which embraces all students, and staff by removing barriers to accessing education opportunities and providing exceptional support to those who need it most. This was particularly evident through Leadership and Management conversations, observations of teaching and learning, and through staff voice activities as part of this review.
- The team were very responsive in providing all evidence requested within 24 hours of notification of the activity.
- IQA activities are planned and conducted despite all programmes being unaccredited qualifications. As part of planning, there is good evidence to demonstrate that standardisation meetings occur frequently, and that all student work is reviewed against outcomes.

- Tutors provide exceptional support to their students and teach across a very diverse student group. Individualised support is evident through observation activities which engage, encourage and stretch students to develop.
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment practice observed as part of this review demonstrated highly effective strategies for those studying on maths programmes. Planning, Questioning, Learning Checks and Support were all outstanding.
- Additional Learning Support requirements are well documented within the ILP and additional documentation. This could be further enhanced by reviewing the impact of the ALS at the end of the student programme.

Areas for Development identified across the provision during the activities undertaken included:

- Whilst IQA is planned and standardisation is robust, there are opportunities to further enhance and develop this progress further, particularly in relation to the feedback and feed forward provided to tutors. The team also could consider how to link the action plan to IQA and observation documents to provide a more concise and holistic process.
- Spelling and grammatical errors are often not identified across student work, which is a missed opportunity to support students to continually improve their work.
- Whilst feedback is provided to students, this is often focussed on the current piece of work and does not include feedforward on how they can improve on subsequent pieces of work. This is a key area for development across all work scrutiny samples undertaken as part of this review.
- Feedback and feed forward are to be delivered more timely to students. In some samples it is difficult to ascertain the length of time between the completion of a piece of work, and when it was marked. For feedback and feed forward to be effective in securing student progress, it is important that this activity takes place as soon as possible following assessment. This can be easily addressed.

Actions

During the review, some areas for development were identified. These actions have been listed below and evidence requested should be sent to the Lead Practitioners in order to close these actions in preparation for Self-Assessment.

Action	Person Responsible	NCD Lead Practitioner	Target by
Business Development Unit to review the template in use for ILPs and whether this requires review to provide more robust and personalised information on each student.	Colleen Peters	N/A	20/07/2021
Where tutors are providing written feedback, this should include feedforward identifying what the student can continue to focus on for their remainder of their programme and identify progress made.	Colleen Baker	JH/AE	25/06/2021

Consider amending workbooks to include clear prompts for the tutor and student where dates and signatures can be recorded. This should be when a piece of work is started and completed, including any feedback or comments provided.	Colleen Baker	NA	30/07/2021
Colleen Baker to deliver training to tutors that was delivered by Lead Practitioners, Lead Practitioners can support with this if required.	Colleen Baker	JH/AE	25/06/2021
Team to think about creating one document that will include both the review, observation report and action plan for ease of referencing and review of actions closed or carried forward.	Colleen Baker	Lead Practitioner can support with this.	09/07/2021

A full breakdown of all findings and recommendations per activity is available upon request and will be discussed as part of the Quality Review process.

Quality Support Offer

The Quality Team are available to provide support to the team in securing improvements to this provision moving forward. Please contact the team to arrange support where this would be beneficial.