

Minutes of the Students', Curriculum and Quality Committee Meeting

Held Wednesday 16 November 2022

Present Gail Rothnie (*Chair*), Joanne Rouse (*Vice Chair*), Aisha Benachour, Jamie Clayton, Lee Clulow, Alexandra Fratila.

In attendance Joanne Williams (*Director of Teaching and Learning*)
Craig Tucker (*Assistant Principal Quality and Standards*)
Jon Priest (*Director of Information Services*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

1	Apologies
	Apologies were received on behalf of Andy Dobson and Clair Graham.
2	Declarations of Interest
	Joanne Rouse declared her interest in agenda item 8, Higher Self-Assessment Report.
3	Minutes of the Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting held 15 June 2022 and Matters Arising
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held 15 June 2022 were approved as an accurate record. The Clerk noted that the actions table would be updated to record items closed at the June meeting.</p> <p>Under Matters Arising the Clerk provided an update against actions from the meeting held 15 June 2022:</p> <p>Regarding item 5ca, Target Monitoring; a review of providing high level aggregated data on student attainment was being progressed to be included in the annual targets.</p> <p>Regarding item 8a, Careers Education and Guidance Policy; it was noted that the Curriculum governor lead was a member of the Students', Curriculum and Quality Committee.</p> <p>Regarding item 9a, Review of Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business; it was noted that the Careers Strategy had been added to the Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Regarding item 9b, Review of Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business; it was noted that Assistant Principals were being invited to attend meetings where appropriate however, that names of staff had not been included in the annual cycle of business at this stage.</p>
4	Student Performance Report 2021/2022
	Jonathan Priest provided an overview of the terminology and data sources used to interrogate and reach an understanding of student performance across retention, pass rate and achievement. This included the context of data used for benchmarking, including National Achievement Rate Tables (NART), Association of Colleges' MiDES system and ALPs.

	<p>Joanne Williams highlighted the move towards a more standardised model to assist monitoring and driving performance, which reflected school systems of monitoring. The focus was on more meaningful data that supported better understanding of individual students and adding value.</p> <p>Members were particularly mindful of the last 'normal' data sets being 2018/2019 with the years of teacher assessed grades and the Covid legacy continuing to work through and impact on data comparison.</p> <p>Over the key measures the College's outcomes had declined and the context for these was explored. While retention was in line with national performance for 16–19-year-olds, both retention and pass rates for the 19 plus cohort were low in comparison with national rates. Levels 1 and 2 provision had underperformed and Functional Skills Maths, which had been unsuccessful for learners, had been replaced with GCSE (and a small minority of Entry Level provision).</p> <p>Jonathan Priest outlined the more positive picture for GCSE English and Maths where our College learners had performed better than learners at other Colleges when using comparative data through the AoC's MiDES system.</p> <p>As reported Apprenticeships had declined with Health Care Apprenticeships nationally impacted. However HE destinations remained strong with work to be done to encourage students to aim higher and look to Russell Group universities.</p> <p>Members asked that while attendance had declined and a new approach was being embedded in the current academic year, what follow-up action was being taken. It was noted that attendance remained a challenge in year and actions to boost this included a new awards system. Members discussed the impact of a tough but tender approach and the management actions in place to make a difference.</p>
	<p>The Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee received the Student Performance Report 2021/2022 and recommended it to the Corporation for information.</p>
5	<p>Value Added Report for 2021/2022</p>
	<p>Members noted that comparison remained with (now old) pre Covid data while awaiting publication of 2022 data. There was no data for comparison on newer courses. However the focus remained on the College understanding performance and where improvement actions were required to support students to achieve their best outcomes.</p> <p>Jonathan Priest answered questions on reading the data trends, particularly around some course areas.</p> <p>Joanne Williams confirmed that the College performed well in progressing students who started at the College with a lower grade profile.</p> <p>Members discussed entry requirement grades and outcomes, noting the challenges in raising student aspirations for higher grade achievement and progression to Higher Education. The College continued to push for higher pass rates. Craig Tucker emphasised the work on pedagogy with lecturers on the craft of teaching aimed at teaching to the top.</p> <p>The report was received.</p>

6	<p>Progress Report on Quality Improvement Plan for 2022</p>
	<p>Members considered the final review of progress against the previous year's Quality Improvement Plan and noted where actions were consolidated into the proposed plan for 2023.</p> <p>Joanne Williams highlighted T Level developments and that while there were issues with the Health T Level, that Early Years was working well. Apprenticeships had been addressed through a rapid improvement plan and attendance actions such as attendance awards were being undertaken.</p> <p>Joanne Williams emphasised that actions which needed to be carried forward included linear A Level and Apprenticeship retention, including use of AS qualifications where possible and attendance improvement actions.</p>
	<p>Members of the Students' Curriculum and Quality Committee received the final update against the Quality Improvement Plan 2022 and recommended it be provided for the Corporation.</p>
7	<p>SAR 2021/2022</p>
	<p>Members commended the detail and breadth of the Self-Assessment Report which illustrated the College's assessment of performance, including both key areas of strength and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Joanne Williams confirmed that overall the College had assessed as a Grade 2, however that this was not quite as strong as in previous years.</p> <p>Key strengths included being ambitious for learners, good progression and skills development with good industry level knowledge and skills across the curriculum, which in turn was shaped by employer collaboration. Additionally, student achievement was good or better in the majority of areas, personal development was better and there were good examples of student work placements. Students themselves were demonstrating confidence and determination.</p> <p>Members asked questions about continuing improvement on Apprenticeships which was reported as having been streamlined and addressed under the Rapid Improvement Plan with an improving picture.</p> <p>Members also asked about student destinations and the decline in progression to higher tariff universities.</p> <p>The Chair thanked staff for the huge amount of work in providing the Self-Assessment and other key performance reports.</p> <p>Members discussed with the student governor understanding of development and progression on course.</p>
	<p>The Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee having considered the College Self-Assessment Report for 2021-2022 agreed to recommend this to the Corporation.</p>
8	<p>Higher Education Self-Assessment Report</p>
	<p>In considering the College's provision of Higher Education Joanne Williams highlighted that while the College had a range of courses it did also work hard to encourage students into university provision.</p> <p>Recruitment to the College's courses had been reduced. However, the College was rethinking its approach to Marketing, also to growing the best course offer and curriculum pathways. This would be aligned with local needs identified</p>

		<p>through the Local Skills Improvement Plan and in discussion with the Dudley Group of Hospitals and Health Education England.</p> <p>Members noted delivery on Higher Level Technical qualifications and progression to Higher Education. The College would continue its discussions with the universities of Wolverhampton and Worcester and would need to work with other local FE providers to meet targets moving forwards.</p>
		The Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee having considered the College Higher Education Self-Assessment Report for 2021-2022 agreed to recommend this to the Corporation.
9		Review of Courses Under Notice of Improvement
		<p>Members considered the data on retention and achievement against courses identified as under notice of improvement. This included direction of travel for courses from the previous year.</p> <p>In considering management actions and interventions members asked if staff were engaged. Craig Tucker reported that in addition to management information being cascaded through Heads of Department and through the department Quality Improvement Plans, there was additional staff support and development on the craft of teaching and building resilience for exam taking. Support for staff was pointed and targeted through Heads of Department with three Teacher Development Managers in faculties to support new or struggling teachers. The Staff Development Day for January would also focus on the craft of teaching.</p> <p>The report was received.</p>
10		Student Complaints Analysis Report
		<p>Members monitored the complaints report noting that all complaints were resolved and that none went beyond the College processes for resolution.</p> <p>Members received the report.</p>
11	11a	Pastoral Report
		<p>Members considered the detailed overview of information focussing on information addressing Safeguarding and on students with SEND or High Needs.</p> <p>Under Safeguarding challenges continued to be addressed and recorded and awareness raised for staff and students.</p> <p>Students with SEND or High Needs continued to increase in numbers. A new manager had been appointed and there was a system in place for monitoring health care needs.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed that some subject areas attracted the most students with SEND needs based on subjects where the most positive educational experience had previously been gained.</p> <p>Members accepted the report which addressed activity across 2021-22 and thanked staff for their hard work and focus.</p>
	11b	Careers Plan
		The Careers Plan was in place to underpin the Careers Strategy and addressed key priorities identified through self-assessment and the Gatsby benchmarks.

		<p>Members noted the work through Careers to raise student awareness and aspirations, including discussions with universities on activities and focus groups with Russell Group universities. Feedback from some students suggested that while they may achieve higher grades, other factors stopped them from applying to higher ranked universities, including a lack of confidence, not feeling these were as welcoming and higher expense.</p> <p>Joanne Williams outlined a range of activities that could raise confidence in A Level students, including visits by role models, particularly alumni students.</p> <p>The report was noted with further progress updates to be provided through the year.</p>
12		Update Report on Apprenticeships
		<p>Craig Tucker reported that following a period of support the rapid improvement plan had been met and Apprenticeships was now working to the Quality Improvement Plan. Key staff and robust processes were in place and the Quality Manager was undertaking deep dives to check timely progress, completion and end point assessments. Safeguarding and Prevent had also been added to the tutorial programme to support wider understanding.</p> <p>Key priorities were outlined and colour coded to illustrate progress.</p> <p>The Chair asked how Apprenticeships had been streamlined and Joanne Williams explained that courses had been aligned to regional skills priorities and where courses were not delivering success they were stopped.</p> <p>The College was pleased with progress, however, the area remained under careful monitoring.</p> <p>Members thanked staff and particularly Julie Edwards for the hard work in improving Apprenticeship provision.</p>
	Action 12a	It was agreed that the Committee would continue to monitor Apprenticeships reports as appropriate through a standing item on the agenda.
13		Update on Student Enrolments against contract – In-year 2022/2023 Data
		<p>Members noted the position regarding current year enrolment and the risks to the model, which would be highlighted to the Corporation. While the 16-19 contract had been broadly met, the composition was different, with some areas lower than the previous year at the same point. While there was overperformance for Study Programmes, there was underperformance for T-Levels.</p> <p>The Adult Learner contract had not yet been realised, with January recruitment planned, however, affordability for adult learners was a known national issue.</p> <p>The Committee noted the issues raised and staff were thanked for their hard work in achieving overall enrolment numbers.</p>
14		Quality Improvement Plan 2023
		<p>Joanne Williams addressed the first iteration for monitoring of the Quality Improvement Plan, for the Corporation to consider and approve. This would be populated with action and achievement throughout the year and monitored by the Committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the plan triangulated with the results and actions being reported to members through the meeting.</p>

		The Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee having considered the College Quality Improvement Plan for 2023 recommended it to Corporation for approval.
15		Current year 2022/2023 – Annual Plan Actions/Targets
		<p>Members noted the current year plan and targets against which information would be supplied across the remaining meetings of the cycle.</p> <p>It was noted that, as discussed, the additional target measuring student progress against targets would now be added.</p> <p>In relation to the broad and inclusive curriculum, members were updated on the Skills Accelerator 2 project aligned to the Local Skills Improvement Plan regarding the health skills deficit.</p> <p>Members were also updated on the bid for the Multiplier Project , which was for people who received universal credit and could be delivered in bite sized pieces through a blended learning approach.</p> <p>Exceptional teaching and learning outcomes were also further considered, with joined up drive to add value for all, including the most able students, with an aspirational culture supported by activities through course level, Careers and staff development.</p> <p>The plan and targets report were received.</p>
16		HE Fees Review
		<p>The Committee discussed the HE Fees which needed to be considered in preparation for 2023/2024 student intake.</p> <p>While there was room to increase fees slightly, the general consensus was that fees needed to remain below the maximum level to remain affordable and in line with other local providers.</p>
17		Quality Policy and Strategy
		Joanne Williams reported that the Quality Strategy remained under review each year and was provided as part of the assurance that systems were in place to support continuous improvement.
		The Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee approved the revised Quality Policy and Strategy.
18		Any Other Business
		Student Conduct Policy
		<p>Members discussed the embedding of the revised approach to support student conduct. While it remained difficult to compare data at this juncture, the simplified approach supported clarity for both students and staff, which in turn should continue to build confidence.</p> <p>The new approach was being embedded to support consistency and to have positive impact. However, it was noted that each year behaviour challenges were different, often a result of at which stage the cohort experienced Covid.</p>
		The Students, Curriculum and Quality Committee approved the revised Student Conduct Policy.

19	Date of Next Meeting
	The next meeting of the Students' Curriculum and Quality Committee is at 6pm on 15 March 2023.
	The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Actions from the meeting held 15 March 2022		
Action 5.1a	Overview of Progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (2) Members requested that future monitoring reports be specific to take account not only of what had been achieved to date but also what future actions would be undertaken, rather than recording as ongoing.	JWi June 2022 Closed June 2022
Action 5.2a	Courses Under Notice (2) It was agreed that the report should also include numbers as well as percentages for future iterations.	JWi June 2022 Closed June 2022
Action 7.2a	Curriculum Strategy It was suggested that the number of learners engaged in Higher Education curriculum should be articulated within the document.	JWi June 2022 Closed June 2022
Action 8.a	Update on Apprenticeships It was agreed that a report on Apprenticeships would be provided as appropriate.	JWi June 2022 Closed June 2022
Actions from the meeting held 15 June 2022		
Action 5ca	Target Monitoring Review of providing high level aggregated data on student attainment would be instigated by the Principal, with Joanne Williams and Gail Rothnie to meet to consider data and reporting to the Committee for the 2022/2023 academic year (to allow for greater granularity of in year performance against target grades, trend comparison and sector benchmarking).	ADo June 2023
Action 8a	Careers Education and Guidance Policy The Committee proposed that the Curriculum governor lead be a member of the Students', Curriculum and Quality Committee.	JSu July 2022 Achieved July 2022.
Action 9a	Review of Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business That Careers Strategy be added to the review of committee terms provided for the Corporation.	JSu July 2022 Achieved. July 2022

Action 9b	Review of Committee Terms of Reference and Cycle of Business That Assistant Principals be invited to attend meetings where appropriate and that names of staff be included in the annual cycle of business.	JSu September 2022 Ongoing
<i>Actions from the meeting held 16 November 2022</i>		
Action 12a	Update Report on Apprenticeships It was agreed that the Committee would continue to monitor Apprenticeships reports as appropriate through a standing item on the agenda.	JSu/JWi Ongoing