

**STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00pm on 9 March 2020**

<b>Present:</b>	Sue Daley (Chair) J Wakelam	Alan Maltpress (Vice Chair) D Jugg	Karen Points Nikos Savvas (Principal/CEO)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	L Moody, VP EE Colin Shaw, VP Q&LE Rachel Boast, M&ED K Wilden, PL (CPD) J Bridges, Clerk	Alison Hurrell, QM Cathy Durrant, HPC D Coomes, ED S Thompson, Interim HR Mgr	Andrew Adamson, ED S Appleby, Associate Dean G Jefferson, ED A Wright, Head of Admissions

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest to declare in relation to the items of this agenda.

**Action**

**1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from E Lawrance.

**2 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

**3 Matters Arising**

The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report and all actions reported had either been resolved or, where appropriate, an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.

It was noted that the task of measuring how close, or not, the College can be to Outstanding is difficult to predict at this time. There are lesson observations to complete and further Deep Dives to undertake which will give us a better idea. The impact of student achievement and intended destination will also be known in June 2020 and this will give us a clearer indication of where we are.

**4 Workforce Update (including Appraisal (SpotLight) Tracking**

The reporting capabilities of the workforce data has significantly improved, and the Data Compliance Officer in the HR team has overhauled, cleaned and improved the reports of the department. This is enabling the department to be far more responsive to staff needs where absence is poor for example or where working arrangements need to change to support staff welfare and wellbeing.

The College's wellbeing initiatives are aimed at supporting four wellbeing themes; physical, mental, financial and social wellbeing and the Committee was curious about take up. Do staff participate and how does this impact their health and wellbeing? The team are thinking about how these sessions can be promoted and published. Currently sessions are promoted by email, but this doesn't always attract all staff so other communication methods will be explored.

The report confirms that the College's Gender Pay Gap is below the national average with the overall GPG at 8.9% (compared to the national average of 17.9%). When taking a median average of gendered pay rates (as opposed to the mean) the pay gap falls even further to 6.19%.

The College now provides an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). The EAP provides staff (and their partners and dependants) with a 24/7 GP led helpline covering a whole host of information and emotional support services (counselling, family issues, bereavement, trauma, relationship issues, stress related conditions, tax information, medical information, money management and debt support to name but a few. There is also an online portal for staff to access containing four-week programmes, videos and webinars and access to the Health e-hub mobile app.

The HR Team continues to work with line managers to encourage the completion of SpotLight appraisals. There is confidence that although only 64.80% of staff have at least one officially recorded SpotLight review on their record, managers are holding regular one-to-ones with their line reports but are not using the SpotLights system to evidence this. It was noted that those in their probationary period would have a review meeting and these are not necessarily recorded in SpotLights. In addition the Committee felt it would be useful to also know and record how many of those new starters successfully, or not, completed their probationary period and this is something that the HR department are now starting to record.

SGraham

In summary, the Committee was content with the HR KPIs reported and were pleased to receive the level of detail showing a positive position. Notably that mental health absence is low and the workforce EDIM data evidences our positive approach to our workforce. It was noted that the College has achieved the Disability Confident Employer kitemark/accreditation.

The Committee was pleased to learn that absence due to self-isolation of a case of coronavirus would be paid. Staff in their probationary period are not eligible for sick pay so they would not be financially disadvantaged if they were susceptible to the virus.

There are some posts which continue to be difficult to recruit; Engineering for example where industry experience is essential.

S Thompson left the meeting at 4.35pm

## **5 Key Performance Indicators**

Overall attendance has dropped 1% for the 16-18 cohort from 89% to 88% since the last report but this is at the same position as this time last year. Attendance for 19+ students has remained the same at 89% and is also at the same position as last year. The analysis of attendance by level identifies that Level 1 attendance has been maintained at 85%, which is a 4% improvement on the same point last year.

It was reported however that there is an attendance gap that continues to exist between maths and English sessions and vocational sessions with a decline in attendance rates compared with the previous report. Attendance is roughly in line with last year for 16-18 students, but Adult attendance is variable.

In summary assessment progress in the vast majority of areas remains either on or ahead of target with all courses making excellent progress. Access to HE continues to be behind with MarkBook completion. This is an admin issue rather than a quality issue which the Associate Dean for this provision is trying to resolve.

Retention remains strong for both 16–18 and 19+ at 96%, which is a 2% decline since the previous report, but is in line with the same point last year. Course teams continue to support students to help them engage with their studies and to be successful.

Apprenticeship performance remains strong with a predicted achievement rate of 78%.

It was noted that last year we received the letter about our Applied Science provision last year which had a -0.97 value-added score and pleasingly this has now improved to average value-added score of -0.66.

## **6 Early Leavers and Withdrawals Report**

In total, 83 students (16-18s) have withdrawn from their programmes, this is 44 more since the last report in January 2020. These are students that we have tried to re-engage with no success. last year at the same reporting point, a total of 91 students had withdrawn.

Of the 83 students who have withdrawn, the main reasons for 70% of these students (58) were due to employment (29), Apprenticeships (20) and illness (9). Those who have moved into employment or an apprenticeship are tracked and supported and those withdrawn due to ill health are encouraged to get well and perhaps then return to their studies next year.

Within the 19+ cohort of students, so far, 12 have withdrawn. This is 5 more since the last report. Of the 5 new withdrawals, 4 of these were due to financial reasons and the fifth due to personal reasons. At the same reporting point last year, a total of 16 students (19+) had withdrawn.

It was noted that students on Business and Management are moving into apprenticeships and/or are moving away from the area (i.e. back to their country of origin in the case of East Europeans). This also appears to be the case in Engineering.

## **7 16-18 Maths and English Update**

Whole College attendance at maths and English remains stable at around 79/80%.

In total, 40 students have withdrawn from Functional Skills and 35 from GCSEs (maths and English). These students have withdrawn from their main qualification so are beyond the control of the maths and English team yet this impacts on the retention and achievement data at the end of the academic year. The worst impact to date is Level 2 maths functional skills where best case achievement due to withdrawals has now dipped to 90%.

It was noted that two more passes at GCSE re-mark have raised the high-grade achievement to 38% maths and 37% English.

It was reported that condition of funding is now at 4.5%, which is an improvement on the 13% reported in December 2019.

N Savvas left the meeting at 5.00pm

## **8 Level 1 Improvement Report**

Progress made against the Level 1 provision as at the February half term was shared with the Committee.

Attendance overall (at half term) was 85% across Level 1 provision which is an increase of 4% on the same reporting time last year. Level 1 teaching staff are undergoing training on how to deal with low level disruption within teaching sessions.

Deep Dives and learning walks have taken place across the provision and this is driving a consistent approach and improvement to the quality and delivery of education.

N Savvas joined the meeting at 5.05pm

Areas for improvement include further work in some curriculum areas to improve attendance and student progress, sharing of best practice where exemplary practice has been found, identification of the Professional Learning needed to drive the quality of education of this provision and spring performance and review boards to analyse the data and student progress (MarkBook).

## **9 Progress Reports**

### **i. *Plumbing and Electrical Installation***

Plumbing students have now all taken mock tests. Innovation Coaches are supporting the team (across the Built Environment) and have enhanced ways to support marked work, provide positive feedback and reference to character strengths. Resources have been updated on Moodle and homework is also being set using this platform. The development of this digital resource is helping students build upon their knowledge skill and understanding.

Attendance on Level 1 and Level 2 Plumbing has improved and is now 85% Level 1 and 86% Level 2. Retention on Level 1 is positive at 93% and 95% on Level 2. Attendance on Yr1 and Yr2 Adult Plumbing is still an issue (77% and 65% respectively). It was noted that MarkBook completion has also improved with Level 1 now at 55% and Level 2 at 47%. Task completion for Level 2 however is 68%.

Attendance on Electrical is now 85% on Level 1, 88% on Level 2 and 97% on Level 3; an increase in Level 2 and Level 3 attendance but a slight decline on Level 1 due to a student with health concerns who is now on a personalised timetable.

Retention on Level 1 is 93%, Level 2 is 88% and Level 3 is 100%. Two students have withdrawn from Level 2 due to health reasons and one student is finding the course difficult. MarkBook completion rates are on track; Level 1 at 62%, Level 2 at 84% and Level 3 at 70%. Synoptic exams will complete the stats.

Further support and development is being provided by the Innovation Coaches who are working with teams (across the Built Environment) and individuals on their course delivery, written feedback and assessment practice.

### **ii. *Science and Automotive***

During term one, the Automotive assignment completions fell behind target and attendance was poor. The poor attendance continues to be addressed, with student action plans developing leading to an improved attendance rate and positive impact therefore on assessment progress. Attendance has

stabilised at 82%, retention is 98% and assessment completion has increased from 14% and is now at 51%.

Poor performance with both Level 2, and first year level 3 Science cohorts of students has placed this area at risk. MarkBook progress is being closely monitored and is already showing steady student progress with additional support measures in place. Assessment completions have increased from 25% and is now at 54%. Attendance has stabilised at 84% and retention is currently at 98.7%.

iii. ***Sport, Public Services, Animal Studies, Healthcare and Early Years***

Sport and Public Services have been split into respective areas with dedicated Head of and Subject Leader posts to take responsibility. Early indications show a positive improvement on key performance indicators with attendance, retention and MarkBook completion.

Staffing levels in Animal Studies have increased, timetables have been reshuffled and additional resources, practical teaching spaces and a wide and diverse range of animals are positively enhancing the student experience. Student numbers on these courses have also notably doubled. Positively it was noted that Attendance on Level 3, Yr2 Animal Management has improved over the past 6 weeks. The Animal Care Diploma Level 1 course changed Awarding Body after the October 2019 half term and they appear to be behind on their assessment completion. It was noted that Deep Dives have identified that retention on Animal Studies is exceptional and likewise attendance on their English is on par with their main qual attendance.

Healthcare and Early Years have also been split into two distinctive subject areas; Health and Welfare Studies and Early Years. The teams have been tasked to forecast worst case scenario and identify the action plans for individual students. It was noted that nearly all students who had not been retained did achieve positive progression into Apprenticeships and/or Employment. It was also pleasing to note that Students are on track to complete the Caring for Children Level 1 by May half term. Retention continues to be closely monitored and addressed at student level.

**10 Gatsby Benchmark Progress**

The DfE published the Careers Strategy; Making the most of everyone's skills and talents, back in December 2017, and this was followed up by further guidance specifically aimed at FE Colleges.

The Strategy places the Gatsby Benchmarks at the heart of the careers provision and formalises the expectation that all Colleges should have a programme in place to build a culture of all 16-18 full-time and 19+ EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) students having the right advice, in the right place, at the right time, backed up by the experiences with employers and educators that make a difference. This should be led and coordinated by a designated Careers Leader; A Wright, Head of Admissions.

It was reported that the College has made significant progress to successfully achieve the full eight Gatsby Benchmarks and to use these as a platform to identify the three Ofsted I's; Intent, Implementation and Impact, of our careers provision. The actions to date were shared with the Committee together with the actions still to progress. Links with Schools and Employers is paramount to this work and we are leading and supporting them to ensure

that students of the future recognise their progression opportunities and are work ready.

The Committee will receive an update on our progress toward achieving all 8 of the Gatsby Benchmarks and were content to support the Quality and Careers Standard and sign the letter of commitment.

SDaley

#### **11 2019/20 Quality Improvement Plan Update**

Good progress has been made against the QIP since September 2019 and this was shared with the Committee.

The Committee was pleased to note that there are no red flag targets to report this year and where flags are amber this is because work is in progress rather than of a notable concern.

The Quality Manager, A Hurrell, provided a summary of the progress and improvement that has happened since the last report to the Committee; including managers attending Ofsted conferences and professional updates; guidance documents being shared. On the quality of education three deep dives have been carried out; key areas of those deep dives are being addressed; training is in place with Innovation Coaches addressing improvement themes; and sharing of good practice is in place.

Under behaviours and attitudes metrics such as level 1 attendance, student progress, students at risk and student absence are all being closely monitored and addressed through a range of interventions to keep students on track. Under Personal Development Work Placement Officers continue to work with Course Directors to track student plans and ensure students are up to hours. In Leadership and Management improvement in Deep Dives has particularly identified the ongoing training needs of staff and Professional Learning and support requirements are known and are being addressed.

#### **12 Lesson Observations, Learning Walks and IQRs**

Since the last report there have been three further 'Deep Dives' carried out by the Quality team; 16-18 maths and English; Science; and Animal Care provisions.

In addition to the deep dives, academic line managers have planned and carried out an annual schedule of developmental observations. These have included co-observations in order to verify observation judgements, plan feedback to tutors, write clear judgements/Observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) reports, identify developmental targets for Spotlights, and identify referrals for support from Innovation Coaches. Overall, it was reported that line managers are making sound judgements about the quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

At the time of writing the report over 110 observations have been completed to date across deep dives and development observations and overall teaching, learning and assessment is good/outstanding, and there are more observations still to report.

#### **13 HE Withdrawals and Retention**

The UoS has failed to provide us with the latest withdrawal and retention report which the Committee found unacceptable. They have changed their systems so monthly reports are no longer generated. In the meantime, the



estimated retention rate (as at December 2019) for degree students was 95.5%, against the 96% target. The Associate Dean will establish if we are able through our own systems to report on this attendance data.

SAppleby

It was noted that 2 students are to intercalate next year, and two further students are close to withdrawal but HE teams are working closely with these individuals to encourage and support them to stay on programme.

#### **14 HE Student Experience**

A student voice meeting was held in February where the new HE structure was explained, developments and opportunities for students were shared and concerns and queries were expressed by the students.

Student enrichment is a priority with the HE team and a new enrichment programme for delivery from September 2020 is being developed.

NSS is now underway with 56% of eligible students having completed the survey. The NSS closes at the end of this month and we will encourage further participation in the coming weeks. The ISS started on 3 March 2020 and participation has been actively encouraged.

SAppleby

#### **15 Any other business**

MMulvihill, Director of Service Industries will be leaving the employment of the College. He leaves us on 3 April 2020.

SAR meetings are being convened for June 2020. Governors are to be invited to attend and the Clerk will share the dates of the slots with governors.

JBridges

The Chair thanked and congratulated the team for the quality and standard of reports and contributions to the meeting.

#### **Date of next meeting**

Monday 27 April 2020 at 4.00pm. Room TG1.16

The meeting closed at 6.00pm.