

STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the VIRTUAL meeting held at 4.00pm on 15 June 2020

Present: A Maltpress, Vice Chair
K Points
N Savvas, CEO

J Wakelam
S Daley, Chair

In Attendance: A Adamson, Executive Director
A Hurrell, Quality Manager
A Wright, Head of Admissions
C Durrant, Head of Pastoral Support
C Marshall, Executive Director
C Meredith, Executive Dean
C Shaw, Principal Sixth Form Provision
D Barton, Head of Adult Skills

D Coomes, Executive Director
G Jefferson, Executive Director
L Moody, Managing Director EE
K Wilden, Quality and CPL Manager
R Boast, Director of Maths & English
S Graham, Group HR Director
T Elkin, Clerk

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

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Jugg, D Ruddy and E Lawrance.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 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.

4 Workforce Update

SGraham provided an update. Vacancies and inductions are being carried out. Turn-over figures cannot be updated from last 12 months due to the lack of access to data due to lockdown. The FE sector on average is 18% and the college is looking at 12.3% but staff turnover over the last few months has been very low.

Future reports will include benchmark figures in the report.

JWakelam expressed concern that there are people lagging behind on SpotLights. SGraham has requested that Executive Directors ensure that they are scheduled in. This will be addressed, as would like a figure of +90%. One-to-ones can be turned into SpotLights. SGraham will be writing to managers to request that every new starter has a SpotLights at the end of week 1 to understand their requirements and their requirements from the Trust. SDaley noted that the percentage has increased slightly.

SDaley welcomed that the mental health/ill rate has reduced. SGraham advised that the average for return-to-work last year was 21 days, this year it is approx. 9 days. SG outlined the action that has taken place as colleagues have been more pro-active.

NSavvas joined the meeting at 4.08pm

5 Staff Development Update Report

KWilden summarised her report. Teaching has been 'business as usual' and staff adopted quickly to a new way of working and have become innovative and creative. Colleagues are sharing good practice back into the college and innovative staff are being used as examples of good practice.

Action

Colleagues have established an ECG group to share good practice across all colleges. There has been training of colleagues from industry and we have secured 90 staff to access a digital teaching programme. Will be working with Place 21.

Targeted in house training continues and hundreds of external training opportunities are available. There are weekly webinars and Question & Answer sessions that have been well received. AMaltpress welcomed this, "There is lots of innovative stuff"

SDaley noted "There is a huge amount of work. How will you measure impact of such an amount of work?" KWilden confirmed that staff are currently reflecting on lessons learnt and looking at what could be done differently.

KWilden has been researching the difference between engagement and what learning is actually taking place – need to check what students have learnt and how they are doing this. It is clear that students have continued to engage during the lockdown, and it is evident that some students feel more secure sitting at a screen.

Will measure the impact on students on the next round of lesson observations. SDaley questioned how the college will get student feedback? There will be student surveys which will feed into the deep dive process.

DCoombes thanked KWilden and the team. SDaley thanked KWilden for a full report

6 KPI Report and Predicted Achievement

CShaw's team has been working hard on grading predictions, considering various criteria, such as previous attainment. Grading cannot disadvantage any student and support was put in place to ensure that every student gets the grade that they deserve.

CShaw highlighted that evidence is available for all the grading decisions and confirmed that teams have been strong and rigorous. In terms of potential appeals CShaw expects that awarding bodies will accept the gradings. The challenge will mostly be in Maths and English. "If we had continued to the end of the academic year, we would have seen most students do well in English. This is not the same in Maths, but there has still been a strong improvement"

CShaw outlined the processes for predicting GCSE grades.

Animal studies were graded as a 4 last year due to a number of issues, this year they have been graded as a 1. This is a strong team who managed the transition onto site and are now "seeing the fruits of their hard work" SDaley thanked everyone for their hard work, "Well done"

SDaley highlighted the 'red' on the grid, does this suggest no achievement in some areas? What has caused this? CShaw advised that governors should look at the figures in the 'predicted' column and provided background to some student performance. The trend arrow against prediction is going up. SDaley questioned whether there are any areas for concern. CShaw confirmed that Art and Design has had an issue but overall the predictions are positive and provided examples of success due to the support in place. The college is expecting some strong results.

LMoody agreed with CShaw's summary. Apprentices are predicting 75% achievement. There is a backlog in those waiting to go through end point assessment but LMoody is confident that learners will achieve their qualifications.

The committee appreciated the amount of energy and work which has had to go into the grading of students under these unusual circumstances and commended the obvious teamwork involved.

7 Early Leavers and Withdrawals Report

CDurrant confirmed that there have been no withdrawals since lockdown, and that collection of data would normally cease at Easter. Liaison workers have visited student homes if there has been no contact, as a welfare check. Now the college is in a 'healthier' position than normal.

SDaley noted that a large number of the withdrawals were for 'positive reasons', such as employment or apprenticeships CDurrant advised that 'illness' tends to be mental health illness and provided background.

8 16-18 Maths and English Update

RBoast provided a Maths and English update. Pearson have suggested that any student achieving 50% in an in-year exam would have passed the end of year exam. This has helped with predicted grades.

Predictions for 16-18 skills - this should a significant improvement on last year:

English	Entry 3	80%
	Level 1	75%
	Level 2	57%
Maths	Entry 3	73%
	Level 1	58%
	Level 2	40%

Some students have taken time to get in touch with their tutor to say 'thank you', and some strong testimonials are coming back from students. Collaborative working has been very effective. The focus for the team now is about building a digital scheme of work. SDaley noted that students have performed really well this year and thanked RBoast for her report.

9 Adult Maths and English Update

DBarton provided an update and explained the challenge of collating data from out centres.

Estimated GCSE achievement rates (Grades 4-9) are based on submitted calculated grades: English 72% and 73% for Maths. Maths has increased 3-4% year on year. DBarton is confident that calculated grades submitted for English are fair. Students are disappointed that their results will not reflect all of their work. She confirmed that results will be published on same date as usual in August.

AMaltpress asked, "Is there a dialogue with the awarding body now?" DBarton confirmed that we will finalise and submit, and the exam body will respond with any questions. Quality Assurance on grades has been carried out. SDaley queried, what happens if the awarding bodies challenge the grades during staff holidays and they are required to present evidence to the awarding body? DBarton confirmed that as Quality Assurance has been done, there is evidence for sampled students that can be submitted to AQA. The college would have to contact staff if there are questions regarding students that are not part of the sample. RBoast added that evidence is logged on the system and this can be provided, therefore data is readily available.

There is an increased achievement rate for functional skills. English is on a par and Maths has seen a slight increase of 3-4%. The challenge has been the second cohort of adult students, who started their classes at the beginning of March, so there is little evidence to base a grade on and we need to ensure that students can continue in classes and do not feel 'short-changed'.

ESOL students who started in September have completed speaking and listening elements and have been engaged online to calculate their grades. DBarton highlighted that 3 new members of staff have been recruited in lockdown and provided a summary.

10 **Level 1 Improvement Report**

AHurrell summarised the improvement in outcomes. Work has been done on a percentage of engagement across the three campuses – approx. 94%. Students are engaging online, via emails and other communication tools. Some programmes report that they have had 100% engagement. Staff have kept daily logs to record attendance.

Constant daily contact has delivered engagement with students. Teams are continuing to prepare students for progression. The Princes Trust is still in touch with students to discuss job opportunities and prepare them for progression to the next stage.

SDaley noted that these improvements are across the board. AHurrell agreed and SDaley highlighted that the level of engagement is a testament to the teachers.

11 **Progress Reports**

i. Plumbing and Electrical Installation

DCoombs advised the committee that achievement and retention is higher than last year. DCoomes outlined the process of assessment and support and summarised her report further. WSC is the only college that has got Level 2's and 3's through before lockdown which has advantaged our students.

'Screen castamatic' has been innovative and successful. DCoomes explained how this operates and in response to a question from SD confirmed that this can be submitted as part of students' assessed work and will continue next year. There were virtual coffee breaks with the PTST team who have worked hard to communicate with students directly. Deep Dives across electrical and plumbing are very positive, and staff have embraced the new delivery style. It has been very motivating for the teams to reflect their hard work. New schemes of work will be uploaded for September. Staff have responded well to new teaching challenges and developments have had a positive impact on the teaching and learning and the results.

In terms of the future, there will be a new era of construction which will turn into a "massive" amount of business for the college and effective teamwork has helped to deliver this. SDaley asked if lines of communication have been kept open with employers and the response was that it's been a corporate college team that has helped with this.

DCoomes endorsed the WSC teamwork approach and SDaley paid credit to DCoomes on the work at the Milburn Centre which has seen huge improvement.

ii. Science and Automotive

GJefferson stated he was "massively impressed" with how teams have adapted to online delivery of learning. Gradings for science, engineering and computing are all now complete. Pearson's system for predicted grades was released early and has been easy to manage.

The challenge has been automotive, with IMI who are yet to decide what evidence they want for predicted grades. Students have completed their work to a good standard, however.

GJefferson is drafting pilot plans for September with students and is working with colleagues to establish their needs.

AMaltpress asked, do you think teaching will be different from September - will there still be exciting change? GJefferson confirmed that this is an opportunity to push forward with a digital strategy and that 90% of teaching can be delivered online. SDaley questioned whether students will want this? GJefferson outlined the discussions and plans considered.

JWakelam questioned whether this remote learning would be the best solution for vulnerable students and those who need interaction? GJefferson outlined the challenges of rural transport and therefore the support for vulnerable students – these issues apply to many students. NSavvas added that the college is looking at an opportunity to introduce flipped learning and expanded further. Teachers can communicate simultaneously to much larger groups and follow up with individuals and smaller groups. KWilden added that guest speakers and employers can also engage with students using virtual conferencing and provided an example.

GJefferson was confident that predicted grades have been thorough and its expected that students will do well in all departments.

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

AAdamson endorsed comments from colleagues. With this new way of delivering teaching, staff have adopted some innovative teaching, and this will help to make the college “more outstanding – there have been real collaborations and team spirit has helped staff to come together even more”

In performing arts and music colleagues have worked even harder and students have put on an end of year show, despite not having a need to do it. AAdamson highlighted the end of year exhibitions.

Animal Studies – AAdamson expanded further on their success, going from a SAR grade 4 last year to a Grade 1 this year, a real achievement.

Childcare was initially a concern, but they have also had an excellent year.

Sport and Public Services – AAdamson summarised the launch of new programmes and the launch of the degree programmes.

AAdamson shared the document showing courses, with only one course which would sit under the national rate. All other courses are above or significantly above the national rate.

SDaley commented that the three areas above would no longer need to be the focus of specific monitoring by the committee and commended in strong terms how well they had all performed this year, thanking all the teams involved.

12 2019/20 Quality Improvement Plan Update

AHurrell confirmed that the preparation for Ofsted is still continuing with Quality Assurance audits. Have completed all performance review boards and all were excellent. Innovation coaches have worked closely with teams across curriculum areas and have focussed on standardising schemes of work for September.

Leadership and Management – online ‘contigo’ training has been completed and there is more planning for online delivery.

SDaley welcomed being able to see the evidence for the quality of education, which is key in the achievement of an outstanding Ofsted grade.

13 Virtual Lesson Observations, Learning Walks and Deep Dives

Two deep dives have taken place and the team has observed virtual lessons - all were good to outstanding. SDaley wondered if Teaching and Learning across the whole piece is now outstanding. AHurrell confirmed that following observation, there

are many areas of good practice. AHurrell provided more detail of what had been observed in online learning.

14 Gatsby Benchmarking

AWright summarised the monitoring of progress towards the careers standard. Evidence has been submitted for stage 1 and she is currently awaiting final destination data. There are some external assessments that need to be achieved.

The careers team have delivered live Question & Answer sessions for students. Governors asked about the status of the UCAS process? AWright explained the process of going through applications with students.

The Association of Colleges Beacon Award winners were announced recently and WSC now needs to submit applications for next July. Next year's award focus is on how colleges have continued to deliver careers programme during lockdown and proposed that the college submits an application.

15 HE Withdrawals and Retention

CMeredith summarised the headlines and advised that the withdrawals of students is approx. 4% approx. the same as last year. There are no 'spikes'. Looking at non-continuation at Level 4 as well as at the usual retention rate will bring WSC in line with UoS's practices and give another dimension of data.

CMeredith explained further the process operated by the University of Suffolk and the different types of withdrawals. SDaley asked about our non-continuation rate at approx. 40% which is concerning. CMeredith explained that the figure may drop by reviewing how the data is compiled. Need to review how students continue into level 5. CMeredith agreed to report further following further investigation.

CMeredith

16 HE Student Experience

CMeredith summarised the report. Key point is that on 1st July NSS data will be available. There are a few student complaints but they are in hand.

17 Complaints and Compliments

An information paper was circulated to colleagues prior to the meeting.

18 Stakeholder Survey Reports

i. Student

AH highlighted key points – 61% of students completed the survey and most areas were above 90%. FE Choices survey was cancelled during the lockdown, but departure surveys have still been carried out and students are still responding. SD noted the high level of parent response.

ii. Parent/Carer

This was not reviewed further.

iii. Employer

LMoody summarised the data in the report, but the college has done well, and students are being guided to the apprenticeship service.

19 External Verification Activity Report

AHurrell summarised the report. Moderation visits have been carried out and teams are doing robust Quality Assurance

20 Any other business

SDaley thanked all colleagues for their papers. "It was good to feel the team spirit. which has been clear, this is a real cultural success"

Date of next meeting

Monday 1 November 2020 at 4.00pm.

The meeting closed at 6.01pm.

