

STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on Monday 8 February 2021 at 4.00pm

- Present:** A Maltpress, Co-opted
E Lawrance, HE Student Governor
J Wakelam
- K Points, Co-opted
N Savvas, CEO
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 Shaw, Principal Sixth Form Provision
D Coomes, Executive Director
D Tappin, Executive Director
G Jefferson, Executive Director
- L Moody, Vice Principal EE
K Wilden, Quality and CPL Manager
- P Stittle, Executive Director
R Boast, Director of Maths & English
S Gales, Board Secretary
T Elkin, Clerk
- Apologies:** C Marshall
- Absent:** D Jugg, FE Student Governor

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 CMarshall.
- 2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2020**
The minutes of the meeting held on 02 November were **agreed** as a correct record.
- 3 **Matters Arising from the Minutes 30 November 2020**
The matters arising were complete or else an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.

MA5SGraham to attend the next meeting to update on the implementation of new Appraisal system.

- 4 **Student survey outcomes**
AHurrell summarised that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the national Further Education Choices Student Surveys were cancelled for both 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years. The College made the decision to continue to run its internal Student Surveys, albeit remotely during lockdown. Using virtual platforms, we saw a sizeable improvement in responses compared to the previous year, in the May/June 2020 surveys. The Exit Survey saw a 18% increase (taking total response to 40%) with a similar trend for the On-Programme Student Survey which saw a 25% increase (taking total response to 37%). Despite seemingly low overall response rate, QDP Services observed that our response rate is higher than that within other Further Education providers.

2020/21 Induction Survey

62% of 16-18 students completed the survey which included additional questions on blended learning, healthy lifestyles, radicalisation, Living in Modern Britain and learning safely on-line. All areas ranked above the external benchmark and the majority of areas exceeded the College's target (90%) student satisfaction rating, showing a 3-year improving trend. 'Teaching and Learning' received a 94% student satisfaction rating and 'Student satisfaction with their learning experiences' received a 96% student satisfaction rating (both a 2% increase from 2019/20). 'Behaviours and Attitudes' received a 97% rating and the 'Overall Perception' rating was 94% (both an increase of 1% from 2019/20). 96% of students would 'recommend the College' (an increase of 2% from 2019/20 and of 5% from 2018/19 and 7% above external benchmark). 100% of students stated that 'they know how to stay safe online' and 96% of students stated they 'feel safe' at college. AHurrell explained the process for students to access

Action

SGraham

support if they do not feel safe and/or experience bullying and how this is monitored by the Executive.

Both the Exit and On-programme surveys show significant improvements in the understanding of Prevent, understanding issues associated with radicalisation and knowing what to do if they become aware of instances of radicalisation. AHurrell noted that, from September 2020, students will undertake a series of additional Pastoral and Personal Development sessions to further embed understanding of issues associated with radicalisation, working in modern Britain, Wellbeing, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and safety on-line;

AHurrell confirmed that SLT have discussed the areas where there was a decrease in student feedback and an action plan has been created to be overseen by Executive Directors and Curriculum Managers, and will continue to be monitored through the 2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan.

AHurrell to produce next report with the data presented in graphs, and to include a copy of the questions used for the surveys.

AHurrell

The Committee discussed that the Induction Survey's lower rating of Careers Advice and Guidance and noted that this is skewed by the timing of the survey, i.e. at the very start of the year, and that the data from the Exit Survey is more representative of true student feedback (90% student satisfaction in 2019/20 Exit Survey).

The Committee discussed how other stakeholder surveys are being undertaken. AHurrell confirmed that in March the mid-year Lockdown 16-18 student survey and parent surveys will be produced, and results collated. AHurrell is also working with the Adult Education team to survey those learners and is working with PStittle to survey the Apprenticeship students. PStittle confirmed that he is part of the beta testing group for the ESFA's national Apprenticeship student surveys so will bring this data, along with the Apprenticeship employers survey feedback to the next meeting.

PStittle

5 Curriculum Termly Update (16-19 provision inc. Apprenticeships)

The Committee commended the excellent content of these reports and the in-depth insight they gave into areas. The Committee asked that the Executive Directors discuss and agree the best format for future reports to support evidence for Ofsted of the intent, implementation, and impact.

Exec Dir.

5i STEM

GJefferson provided an overview of the STEM departments:

- Assessment completion is ahead of this point last year, so we forecast strong achievement, with some lag in assessment completion for Automotive due to lockdown affecting the practical element, but the team are working to rapidly catch up after lockdown.
- Attendance overall is strong except for Progression to Automotive Engineering (74%) and Light Vehicle Maintenance Level 1 (65%) which are being closely monitored with prompt, positive intervention where required.
- Retention is strong, with only three courses below our target of 95% which are: Engineering Level 3 Year 2 (93%), Bio Medical Science Level 3 Year 2 (88%) and Forensic Science Level 3 Year 1 (91%); predominantly for mental health reasons or needing to find employment. GJefferson noted that mental health and wellbeing of Science students has historically been a concern and remains so, so the Head of Department is working closely with Student Welfare to further develop techniques to identify and support student need as early as possible.
- Recruitment for next year remains strong, with particularly strong growth within Science and Automotive.
- Planning for T Levels in Computing and Science is well underway in readiness for September 2021. Automotive and Engineering are currently developing their applications for T Levels in readiness for September 2022.
- The STEM team are working with the Partnerships and Escalator team running STEM-tastic21 (during the British Science and Engineering week) from 5-14 March 2021 with a full schedule of events with leading industry partners such as CERN.

- The College has been accepted as an Accredited Provider as part of the National College for Nuclear (NCfN), delivering high quality employer-led qualifications for the nuclear sector. With Sizewell and Bradwell in our region, both with ambitious plans, it will open the door to high value, secure employment for those completing our National College for Nuclear programmes.

5ii **Built Environment**

DCoomes provided an overview of the Built Environment departments:

- Assessment completion is predictably low in these areas due to the impact on lockdown, meaning these practical vocational courses cannot complete the practical elements and assessments of their course remotely.

Overall assessment completion in Construction Crafts is 32%, in Electrical Installation is 54% and in Plumbing and Heating is 41%. The following courses are of particular concern:

- Carpentry and Joinery Level 2 (32%),
- Construction and the Built Environment Extended Diploma Level 3 Year 1 (10%),
- Construction and the Built Environment Extended Diploma Level 3 Year 2 (18%),
- Brickwork Diploma Level 1 (22%)
- Electrical Installation Technical Certificate Level 2 (36%)

However, the team have put actions plan in place to rapidly deliver and assess practical skills at the end of lockdown to catch up assessment completion. These action plans vary due to the maximum numbers of students possible given social distancing measures (Construction Crafts - 8 week plan, Electrical Installation - 5 week plan and Plumbing and Heating - 6 week plan).

Following long term staffing absence in Electrical Installation, the team have identified gaps in learning and have utilised the tuition fund to support Level 2 and Level 3 students.

Despite lockdown, Bench Joinery Level 2 students have completed their End Point Assessments and a further 11 Carpentry Level 3 students are due to undertake their End Point Assessments in March.

- Attendance is varied across the departments. Electrical Installation courses average at 91% attendance, Plumbing courses average at 88% attendance and Construction Crafts averages 85% attendance. Level 3 Year 1 and 2 Construction Built Environment attendance is a concern (81% and 74% respectively) as is Level 1 Plumbing (88%), and this is being monitored on a weekly basis with the team exploring use of tuition fund to support these at-risk groups
- Retention is strong overall, with the majority of withdrawals due to progression to Apprenticeship or employment or another course and with one student withdrawing but due to re-enrol next academic year when remote learning will hopefully be over.
- Recruitment is looking strong for next academic year, with increases compared to last year.
- We continue to work with employers to enrich teaching and learning and to support work experience and progression opportunities. Of particular note is partnership working with Bury Town Trust, Morgan Sindall, the National Trust and Anglian Water.

AHurrell noted that all courses in this area are trades which require physical classes to practice their trade, so the students' progress is even more impressive given the impact of lockdown on their learning. The Committee asked for information at the next meeting, to show how assessment grades will be calculated and evidenced.

Exec. Dir.
AHurrell

5iii **Arts, Health, Humanities**

AAdamson provided an overview of the Arts, Health and Humanities departments:

- Assessment completion is varied. With overall higher completion rates in Health and Social Care, Business Management and Tourism, Music and Media, Policing and Public Services and, Sport and Public Services than the same time last year; and comparable completion rates in Art and Design and, Animal Studies. However, as noted above practical courses such as Hairdressing Beauty and Holistic Therapies, Culinary Arts

Academy and Conservatoire EAST are behind target and last year, due to the impact of lockdown. The following courses are of particular concern:

- Early Years Practitioner Diploma Level 2 (30%)
- Caring for Children Diploma Level 1 (26%)
- Children's Play Learning and Development National Extended Diploma Level 3 Year 1 (33%).
- Beauty Therapy Technical Certificate Level 2 (24%)
- Professional Chefs Advanced Diploma Level 3 (38%)
- Patisserie and Confectionary Diploma Level 3 (35%)
- Creative Arts Business and Enterprise Professional Diploma Level 4 (25%)
- Working in Sport and Fitness Industries Level 3 (40%)
- Animal Nursing Assistants Certificate Level 2 (37%)

However, the team have put actions plan in place to rapidly deliver and assess practical skills at the end of lockdown to catch up assessment completion.

- Attendance overall is strong however there is variation within the department. With concerns in: Caring for Children Diploma Level 1 (74%), Health and Social Care Extended Diploma Level 2 (84%), Foundation to Health Science and Care Industry 80%, Working in the Health and Care Sector Level 3 (84%), Travel and Tourism Extended Certificate Level 2 (79%), Foundation in Business and Service Industries (78%), Business Extended Certificate Level 3 (75%), Art and Design Diploma Level 1 (84%), Fashion and Textiles Extended Diploma Level 3 Year 1 (82%), Animal Care Diploma Level 1 (84%), Public Services (Uniformed) Extended Diploma Level 3 Year 2 (81%).and this is being monitored on a weekly basis with the team providing additional support for these at-risk groups
- Retention is strong overall, with the majority of withdrawals due to progression to Apprenticeship or employment.
- Recruitment overall is looking strong for next academic year, with increases compared to last year, with good applications for the Education and Childcare T Level. However, it is worth noting the arts, travel and culinary courses are seeing a decrease in applications, the Committee noted that this is likely as a result of lockdown and resulting declines in these sectors, meaning students are considering these sectors more cautiously as progression routes. The team continue to work with the school engagement team, marketing and using social media to reassure students of the predicted rebound of these sectors.
- Edmunds has been re-awarded the 2 AA Rosettes and following a recent 'deep dive' teaching and learning in the Culinary Arts Academy was noted as outstanding.
- We continue to work with employers to enrich teaching and learning and to support work experience and progression opportunities.

5iv **Apprenticeships**

DTappin and PStittle provided an overview of the Apprenticeships:

- Assessment completion (ahead or on target with their planned progress) is at 79%. Qualification Achievement Rates achieved year to date are at 58% of leavers, this will continue to build throughout the remainder of the year. We currently have a best case scenario of 81% Achievement Rate for the year but expect, in the current climate, that it is likely to be closer to 73% due to not all apprentices being able to go through EPA, because of restrictions, not being in work and or progress not being where it needs to be by the planned end date. Any Apprentices unable to achieve this year will continue into 2021/22 and we will work with them until they do achieve.
- We have maintained our 99% contact record with Apprenticeships from 2019/20.
- Currently we have 125 apprentices on a break in learning; with almost half of those due to Covid-19 and being employed in hospitals/GP practices.
- Withdrawals are 10% below the same point in 2019/20 and of those the majority have withdrawn out of the Health and Social Care sector, left employment or withdrew due to personal commitments.
- Recruitment remains strong for 2020/21 and is 5% ahead of the same point last year (vs. 28% national decline).

- Despite the challenges of remote End Point Assessment (EPA), over 110 Apprentices have undergone EPA this year and achieved their Apprenticeship. A further 469 Apprentices are planned for completion between now and year end. There are, however, some Awarding Bodies that have not adapted or introduced EPA flexibilities e.g. Hairdressing and Barbering which is causing concern for the learners. We continue to lobby the Awarding Bodies and ESFA to resolve.

6 **Key Performance Indicators**

AHurrell summarised the report:

- Overall attendance for 16-18 (90%) and 19+ cohorts (92%) has increased 2% and 3% respectively vs. this time last year; and continues to be closely monitored by course teams and support put in place for students where required. Attendance by level:
 - Level 1 – 16-18 - has decreased by 2%; due to mental health issues and struggling with online learning.
 - Level 1 - 19+ - remains at 91%
 - Level 2 - 16-18 - has improved by 2%
 - Level 2 - 19+ - has improved by 7%
 - Level 3 – 16-18 - has improved by 2%
 - Level 3 – 19+ - has improved by 4%

The Committee discussed how attendance is monitored in a virtual learning environment and how this methodology has improved throughout lockdown.

- Assessment progress in a high majority of areas progress is either on or ahead of target. Courses with practical assessments show lower completion vs this time last year, due to Covid-19 restrictions. Executive Directors have action plans in place for courses where assessment progress is significantly behind target and these are being reviewed on a regular basis.
- Retention is strong for both 16–18 (97%) and 19+ (96%).
- Withdrawals have been mainly due to mental health issues, Apprenticeship, or employment. Course teams continue to support students to help them engage with their studies and to be successful.

The Committee discussed how the college measures engagement as well as attendance, and KWilden summarised how this is picked up in lesson observations, 'deep dives' and teacher training so that lessons are constructed to encourage student interaction to promote learning and to sequence lessons to build on learning throughout the curriculum.

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

RBoast summarised the report:

- GCSE resit achievement results:
 - 62% Grade 4+ achievement in English (36 students achieved)
 - 57% Grade 4+ for Maths (50 students achieved)
- The English reading Function Skills resit achievement results:
 - 64% of the Level 1 cohort (112 students) entered of which 75% achieved pass (of those who failed, 70% were within 3 marks of the pass mark which is crucial if the situation again reverts to calculated grades since Pearson will automatically consider those a pass)
 - 72% of the Level 2 cohort (87 students) entered of which 52% achieved pass (of those who failed, 50% were within 3 marks of the pass mark).
- Overall attendance remains significantly below vocational course attendance but is comparable to last term despite the lockdown (English 78% in February vs. 80% in the Autumn Term, maths 73% in February vs. 80% in the Autumn Term). The Committee discussed the factors that have impacted upon maths & English attendance, such as impact of lockdown on wellbeing and personal motivation as well as personal situations (e.g. caring responsibilities, adverse home environment for studying, etc.) and that increasingly students are taking up paid employment which is interfering with college studies. RBoast confirmed that her team continue to work very closely with Executive Directors, Curriculum Managers and Course Directors to improve attendance.
- RBoast has been approached by ETF to share best practice in engagement and from London South East Colleges Group following a recommendation from our auditors.

2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan Update

AHurrell summarised the developments against the 2020-2021 Quality Improvement Plan:

- **Preparations for Ofsted:**

- 'check and challenge' meeting with a former HMI, governors and managers.
- Autumn Performance Reviews focused on curriculum strengths and areas for improvement in line with the Education Inspection Framework.
- Deep Dives resumed with a clear focus on the model used by Ofsted
- Students are being prepared for a visit through deep dives and Student Reps.
- Embedding Fundamental British Values, Prevent and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, within TL&A and Pastoral and Personal Development sessions.
- 'what is working well in remote learning' and local interim reports have been discussed by managers, leading to identification of gaps in learning and action plans to address knowledge and skills gaps, and to support learners' well-being.

AHurrell notes that short and full inspections will resume in the Summer term, with Performance monitoring visits (PMVs), support, and Assurance remote visits will in the Spring term focused on 'What progress are leaders and those responsible for governance making to ensure that staff teach a curriculum and provide support to meet learners' needs, including the provision of remote/online learning?' The impact of Covid-19 will be taken into account in the findings and progress judgement. AHurrell noted that ECG Quality and Ofsted Best-practice sharing group has met twice and discussed a range of topics related to quality and Ofsted, and are planning to provide an Ofsted update session for governors, on the current picture regarding Ofsted activity; how we are to be inspected and how inspections have changed under the Education Inspection Framework.

- **The Quality of Education:**

- The Quality of Education is monitored through 'deep dives' monitoring the impact of blended learning, understanding and knowledge of Fundamental British Values and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion through the student voice, compliance, student progress and highlight areas of best practice.
- Student engagement is being monitored through assessment completion, attendance, register compliance, weekly reviews between Executive Director's and Heads of Department, and regular dialogue with students.
- Effective scaffolding, relentless routines and memory building has been observed through development observation and 'deep dives' to ensure students have embedded key concepts in their long-term memory and can apply them fluently and consistently.
- Developing excellence in TL&A through high quality, targeted CPL for staff, including a monthly e-newsletter including links to training, how to guides and digital hot spots; etc.
- Support has been put in place for students to support online learning both in terms of accessibility to learning and increasing their capacity to learn effectively. Students who are struggling are identified and invited into College to ensure they have access to appropriate resources and support.
- A variety of different approaches are being used to support individual Supportive Learning student needs. Managers have observed outstanding best practice remote teaching which has continue to be shared across teams.
- A digital steering group has been established to coordinate the development of high quality digital learning resources, to engage and inspire students; including the use of breakout rooms, practical demonstrations being recorded and uploaded to You tube, Padlet resources and embedded video presentations.
- Character Strengths are being further developed across the curriculum to support 'The Three Pillars' through a quality audit and the appointment of a Character Strength ambassador.

- **Behaviours and Attitudes**

- Teams continue to monitor students' engagement with the English and maths through robust reporting and communication between English and maths team, Course Directors and Personal Support Tutors, and progress monitoring through mark book, milestones, and SharePoint tracking. Attendance letters are sent to students where necessary and English and maths is being effectively

- embedded into the curriculum through online projects to further support engagement.
 - Induction meetings have been completed with all new students to discuss welfare, IT, and wellbeing issues. 99% of students have had a progress review meeting with the Personal Support Tutor. Student Welfare are continuing to support students as normal.
 - Online safety guidance training has been completed and student have completed online learning contracts setting clear boundaries and expectations.
- **Personal Development**
 - Grofar system training has been completed with the Princes Trust team and Access to HE team. Work Placement Officers are in place across all curriculum areas.
 - Following the successful accreditation of the Quality in Careers Standards, further newsletters, Moodle, 'I can be' and Online Job Shop resources have been created and shared, so students can access progression information.
 - A dedicated 'progression to Higher Education' officer has been appointed, to support students wishing to progress.
- **Leadership and Management**
 - Quality Assurance has continued to take place through, deep dive activity, virtual lesson observation, Autumn Performance Review meetings and KPI reporting, to enable early interventions mid-year.
 - Managers continue to review the curriculum to ensure that the curriculum intent and implementation meets students' needs to support progression.
 - Managers continue to effectively communicate with their teams ensuring that The Quality of Education is being driven.
 - The student voice and deep dive supports leaders and managers to effectively measure the impact of sessions ensuring students are able to clearly articulate Fundamental British Values and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in modern Britain.
- **Covid-19 Response**
 - Leaders and managers continue to monitor Covid-19 response to blended learning through the regular observation of remote teaching sessions and sharing best practice across curriculum areas.
 - Teams regularly scrutinise DfE and Awarding Organisations guidance and implement as appropriate.
 - The robust induction period provided an excellent start for students, ensuring they were on the appropriate course and course level, and gaps in learning were identified.
 - Tuition catch up funds are being utilised where necessary to support student achievement.
 - Careers Job Shop resources, CD time careers, future ambitions discussions and online engagement with employer events is providing students with employability skills and industry knowledge.

9 Staff Development Update Report

KWilden summarised the steps taken to obtain robust and measurable records from staff development and training sessions:

- During the session, formative feedback evidenced through the chat function of the live session
- At the end of the session, through live Q&A.
- After the session,
 - reflection and feedback is collated directly from the staff and indirectly through their feedback to managers.
 - a digital feedback survey is sent, following a standard template to measure quality, impact and improvement over the academic year and to improve/inform CPL strategy planning.
- As part of the deep dive process, questions are posed via the staff voice focus groups to capture impact of subject specific training, impact of core/professional training and training needs of team.

- As part of the appraisal process, staff self-identify and discuss training needs and courses undertaken.

KWilden also summarised 'CPL picnic' to support staff to access training as well as support from the innovation coaches. Visitors to this site can be monitored as another useful metric. Similarly, monitoring of 'views' to the professional training and digital training e-newsletters provide another useful metric. KWilden noted that the next step is to monitor and measure the correlation between staff training and the impact this has had on student experience and learning. Research and monitoring into the direct link from staff training to student impact is a harder measurement of quality, however, evidence can be analysed from the student voice survey and measure against previous years trend data.

KPoints left the meeting at 5.56pm

10 Any Other Business

- **Association of Colleges Beacon Award**

The Committee congratulated AWright and her team for winning a Beacon Award for Innovation in Careers and Enterprise.

- **Staff team's resilience during lockdown**

The Committee and CShaw commended all the staff for their incredible resilience and dedication to the students during lockdown

- **Farewell to Katie Wilden**

The Committee thanked KWilden for everything she has done for the students and the College overall, and wished her every success in her next steps.

- **Governors observation of live lessons**

CShaw to work with AHurrell to arrange for Governors to observe live lessons.

Date of next meeting

- Monday 26 April 2021 at 4.00pm.

The meeting closed at 6.03pm

CShaw
AHurrell