

## EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 1 November 2021 at 4.00pm

**Present physically:** J Wakelam, Vice Chair  
K Points, Observer  
N Savvas, CEO  
S Daley, Chair

**Present virtually:** A Maltpress, Observer

**In attendance:** A Hurrell, Group Head of Quality  
A Wright, Group Head of Progression  
C Durrant, Head of Pastoral Support  
C Marshall, Group Assistant Principal Supported Learning (part)  
C Shaw, Principal Sixth Form Provision  
D Barton, Assistant Principal Adult Curriculum  
D Coomes, Assistant Principal Sixth Form Provision Curriculum  
G Chittock-Nash, Group Vice Principal Student Support (part)  
G Jefferson, Assistant Principal Sixth Form Provision Curriculum  
J Robson, Head of Centre OSFC + Group strategic lead for EDI  
L Parish, Assistant Principal Strategic Growth and Partnerships Curriculum  
R Bamford, Group Vice Principal Data and MI  
S Gales, Governance Professional  
S-L Neesam, Group Head of Safeguarding

**Apologies:** None

The agenda was discussed in the following order: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 9, 8, 11

1. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Committee recognised Sue Daley as the Chair and Julia Wakelam as the Vice Chair of the Educational Excellence Committee for 2021/22, as appointed by the Corporation at their meeting on 9 July 2021.

2. **Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence**

No conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

No apologies were received.

3. **Minutes of the Standards and Excellence Committee meeting held on 14 June 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

4. **Matters Arising from the Standards and Excellence Committee meeting on 14 June 2021**

MA1 The Committee noted that there have been delays on the implementation on the new HR system. NSavvas confirmed that despite this, appraisals are continuing in accordance with policies. SGraham to provide a report to the Committee to give overview of the number of policies complete to date; and to share a draft appraisal report with the Committee, for feedback and comments.

MA2 CShaw noted that we have recruited 68 students to catering, which is in line with our planning.

MA3 PStittle to provide an annual report of employers' views to the Committee.

MA4 JWakelam confirmed the minutes of the meeting on 26 April 2021.

5. **Committee Terms of Reference and Committee Skillset**

Governors received, considered and **approved** the draft Terms of Reference and Committee Skillset provided.

6. **Update on Executive Structure**

NSavvas summarised the roles of the senior executive team:

**Action**

SGraham

PStittle

- Nikos Savvas, CEO
- Colin Shaw, Principal of West Suffolk College's Sixth Form Provision,
- Chris Meredith, Executive Dean of Higher Education, University Studies
- George Chittock-Nash, Vice Principal of Student Services and Admissions
- John Raffel, CFO
- Laraine Moody, Principal of Strategic Growth and Partnership
- Richard Stevenson, Group Director of Operations
- Rob Bamford, Vice Principal of Data and MI
- Simon Graham, Group Director of HR and Shared Services
- Suzannah Gales, Clerk and Governance Professional
- David Gartland, Principal of Abbeygate Sixth Form College
- Jake Robson, Head of Centre of One Sixth Form College

NSavvas explained that the Principals in the senior executive team also have responsibilities across the Group:

- Chris Meredith's direct line reports oversee learning resources centre provision across the Group.
- Colin Shaw's direct line reports oversees quality assurance, quality improvement, initial teacher training and CPD, supported learning and SEND provision across the Group.
- David Gartland's direct line reports oversee enrichment across the Group.
- Jake Robson's direct line reports oversee equality, diversity and inclusion and best practice sharing across the Group.
- Laraine Moody's direct line reports oversee partnerships, projects, escalator and marketing across the Group.

The staff in attendance also introduced themselves and summarised their roles.

SGraham to share structure chart with the Committee.

SGraham

## 7. **Self-Assessment Report (Analysis of 2020/21)**

Governors received and considered the draft Self-Assessment Report and 2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan.

AHurrell explained the process used to self-assess, including internal quality assurance measures - including learning walks, lesson observations, deep dives and internal quality reviews, and the external sources of quality scrutiny and validation - including mock-validations with Ofsted inspectors and SAR challenge sessions.

Governors discussed the significance of Covid-19 statements within the SAR to provide the context for these achievements.

### 7.i. **Quality of Education**

AHurrell noted that we are self-assessing as Grade 1 and summarised the main points.

Governors queried what is meant by the term 'historic national rates'. CShaw explained that due to the pandemic national rates have not been published. DBarton added that for Adult maths and English results the qualification has reformed and so it is benchmarking against the previous comparable national rate.

Governors queried how maths and English students who prefer online study will be able to access examinations and be included within the quality assurance process. DBarton confirmed that we are working with the awarding bodies to provide online examinations for these students.

Governors queried how Covid-19 and lockdowns impacted the assessment and achievements of Apprenticeships. LParrish confirmed that it did impact particularly on the availability of End Point Assessments however we developed new ways of working to support online Apprenticeship assessments and its quality assurance.

Governors queried when national rates will be published. RBamford confirmed that Ofqual have confirmed that this year will act as a “transition year” to reflect the recovery period and grade boundaries will be set by exam boards at a “midway” point between 2021 and 2019, the last time exams were sat before the pandemic. Grades are expected to return to normal by 2023.

Governors queried why the Child Development and well-being Apprenticeship performance was poorer. AHurrell confirmed that this has now changed as the data has been updated and shows an improved position.

Governors checked their understanding of the SAR that Level 3 Electrical Instillation, Levels 1 and 2 Adult Functional Skills, and 16-18 Level 2 Maths are the main areas for development.

AHurrell summarised the *Key areas for further enhancement and refining* and the *Key areas for improvement*.

Governors commended the strength of the performance and reporting, and noted that overall there is comparable progress across protected characteristics.

JRobson feedback from recent equality, diversity and inclusion training, that whilst the ambition to decolonise the curriculum is correct, we need to create milestones for us to measure our progress against.

Governors queried whether this self-assessment is a fair reflection of each area of the college. CShaw confirmed that it does reflect the typicality of quality of education across the college.

Governors confirmed their support with the self-assessment Grade 1.

#### **7.ii. Behaviours and Attitudes**

AHurrell noted that we are self-assessing as Grade 1 and summarised the main points.

AHurrell summarised the *Key areas for further enhancement and refining* and the *Key areas for improvement*.

Governors commended the work of staff to continue to support and engage with students throughout the pandemic.

Governors confirmed their support with the self-assessment Grade 1.

#### **7.iii. Personal Development**

AHurrell noted that we are self-assessing as Grade 1 and summarised the main points.

AHurrell summarised the *Key areas for further enhancement and refining*.

Governors commended the work of staff to continue to support and engage with businesses to support students with careers advice and guidance and work experiences throughout the pandemic.

Governors queried what is meant by PAR week. AHurrell answered that this is ‘Progress and Review week’ which links the curriculum and student support teams, to feedback to students about their progress to support personal development.

Governors questioned whether the executive feel confident that the college is adequately supporting all students to access appropriate careers advice and guidance in order to progress. AWright confirmed that we feel very confident in this and feel like this confidence has been externally verified with the department being awarded an AoC Beacon Award and achieving its Matrix accreditation.

AHurrell

Governors questioned how we can further enhance student governors and student voice. AHurrell confirmed that since returning to college, after lockdown, we have seen a significant uptake in and involvement in student reps. We are also working to provide a year-long induction and training for the new student governors to support them in their role. We have also created wellbeing ambassadors to support students.

Governors confirmed their support with the self-assessment Grade 1.

#### 7.iv. Leadership and Management

AHurrell noted that we are self-assessing as Grade 1 and summarised the main points.

AHurrell summarised the *Key areas for further enhancement and refining* and the *Key areas for improvement*.

Governors queried if we explain our ability, adaptability and capacity to improve in the self-assessment. AHurrell confirmed that it is but agreed to strengthen this section further.

AHurrell

Governors queried the meaning of the wording 'responsive and improving' about the performance management of staff. AHurrell confirmed this is about developing the systems rather than an issue within the staffing body. AHurrell to amend the wording to clarify.

AHurrell

CShaw added that within this section, we note the strength of our safeguarding provision. KPoints and JWakelam, as Safeguarding Leads in 2020/21 supported this self-assessment as safeguarding is a strength of the college.

Governors confirmed their support with the self-assessment Grade 1.

#### 7.v. Overall Effectiveness

AHurrell noted that we are self-assessing as Grade 1 overall.

Governors discussed the SAR overall and commended the college's student support and engagement with the community.

Governors queried whether we refer specifically to SEND students enough. AHurrell noted that generally SEND students are included within 'all learners' and where appropriate, we have added additional sections specific to SEND students. AHurrell also provided assurance that when we had external validation of our SAR, they identified that systems and processes in place to support of SEND students was a strength area of the college. CShaw also confirmed that, unlike many providers, we support over 50% of SEND students to access mainstream provision, appropriate to their needs. AHurrell to review and strengthen as appropriate; and to reference our sponsor relationship with SENDAT.

AHurrell

Governors asked AHurrell to reformat the Executive Summary of the SAR to list the key strengths and key areas for improvements as bullet points.

AHurrell

Governors confirmed their support with the overall self-assessment Grade 1 and commended all the staff for their outstanding performance in support of our students.

#### 7.vi. 2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan

AHurrell summarised the developments against the 2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan and noted that there are no red ranked actions remaining and, where areas remain amber these will be carried onto the 2021/22 Quality Improvement Plan.

Governors noted the significant progress made against actions and **approved** the 2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan.

### 8. Update on progress in 2021/22:

#### 8.i. Student Support inc. Induction

Governors received and considered the progress report provided. NSavvas noted that we are seeing the impact of several years of austerity which limited the amount of NHS and local authority funded welfare support; and the impact of lockdowns and Covid-19, which added stress and has caused students to have to relearn their social skills.

GChittock-Nash to provide a further update of the report at the next meeting.

GChittock-Nash

## 9. Plans for 2021/22

### 9.i. **Data and MI**

Governors received and considered the progress report provided and RBamford summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including reviewing the systems, processes, data metrics and alignment of reporting across the Group where applicable and appropriate, and sharing best practice to support efficiency and compliance across the data and examination administration teams.

Governors commended this approach and the strengthening and aligning of KPIs.

### 9.ii. **Quality Assurance**

Governors received and considered the progress report provided and AHurrell summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including reviewing and aligning the quality assurance platform, systems and processes for reporting across the Group where applicable and appropriate, and sharing best practice across comparable programmes of study across the Group and amongst the quality teams and the Ofsted inspectors in the Group. We are also looking to align the templates and format for SARs, QIPs, quality reviews, stakeholder surveys, etc.

### 9.iii. **Quality Improvement and Professional Learning**

Governors received and considered the progress report provided. CShaw summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including reviewing and linking appropriate research to our teacher CPD.

### 9.iv. **Student Support**

Governors received and considered the progress report provided. S-LNeesam summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including strengthening the safeguarding, pastoral and welfare teams' capacity and sharing best practice to support students across the Group.

### 9.v. **EDI and Best Practice Sharing**

Governors received and considered the progress report provided and JRobson summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including creating additional best practice sharing groups, recontextualising the curriculum, further embedding British values, and using (and growing) our internal EDI champions and external EDI training to continue to promote, value and support EDI across the Group.

## 10. Policies

### 10.i. **Student Disciplinary Report**

Governors received, considered, and **approved** the FE Student Disciplinary Report provided, subject to amendments to reword 'Positive Behaviour Plan' to read as a 'Positive Performance Plan'.

CDurrant

## 11. Any Other Business

### - **Committee Training**

Governors commended the Inspection Readiness training, the recording, notes and resources of which are available to access on GovernorHub. SGales added that further training for the Committee is planned for later this year once the Student and Staff Governors have been appointed.

The meeting closed at 6.07pm