

Notes of the Learning & Quality Committee Meeting held at 5pm on 24 November 2021

Present: Prue Amner (chair) & Tim Mason

Apologies: Mark Cooper & Mike Stoneman

In Attendance: Simon Barrable	Principal
Graham Morley	Interim CEO
Paola Schweitzer	Director of Governance
Tim Jackson	Governor

Notes of Meeting

Mark Cooper and Mike Stoneman sent their apologies. Prue welcomed Tim J to the meeting as an observer, noting that Search & Governance Committee would shortly consider his membership of the Committee.

Prue noted that the meeting was inquorate. However, governors agreed that there was still value in discussing the latest iteration of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and reporting this discussion to Corporation.

Governors confirmed they did not have any declarations of interest relevant to the agenda.

Self-Assessment Report

- **Overview:** Destination data was still being finalised. UCAS data was being analysed. Simon believed some internal progression data would be available for Corporation's next meeting but noted the College needed to improve data collection in this area. Tim J noted that destination data was a key part of demonstrating impact and it was important to be clear about what the data revealed. Destination data would be considered at the Committee's next meeting.
- **HC key strengths:** Simon would check if 34.6% achievement in GCSE Maths was in the upper quartile and if so, the SAR would state this. Governors noted the importance of using published ESFA data (all providers) rather than AoC data (GFE colleges).
- **HC key strengths:** The College needed to be careful not to overclaim strengths eg governors did not believe national average retention rates represented a strength..
- **HC key strengths:** Need to focus on learner impact eg *questioning techniques to check learner understanding and progress* needed to be amended to a statement around ensuring learners had understood.

- **PC key strengths:** Include ALTS scores as they were evidence of added value. The statement would need qualification in the light of CAGS/TAGS assessment vs exams.
- **HC areas for improvement:** The data needed explanation/elaboration.
- **Behaviours & Attitudes:** Simon would cross-reference actions appeared in the QIP.
- **Teaching & learning:** More concrete evidence was required to support teaching and learning statements. Explicit areas for improvement/action were required in the QIP for all curriculum areas with poor outcomes.
- **Teaching & learning:** Some actions in the previous version of the SAR weren't in this version eg actions 6 and 10. Prue believed action 10 was of particular importance.
- **Safeguarding:** There needed to be reference to the Prevent agenda. As part of the SAR validation process Liz and Prue had interviewed numerous students none of whom understood the issue of radicalisation and what they would do about it. This hard evidence needed to be reflected in the SAR (possibly alongside British Values under personal development) with QIP corresponding actions (possibly as part of the tutorial process)
- **Leadership & Management:** Modify statement that an '*experienced Chair was appointed in November 2020*' so as not to detract from previous Chairs' experience.
- **HC/PC areas for improvement:** Tim J wondered if the statement that learners understanding of British values was accurate, given that it was covered in the tutorial curriculum on the former HC campuses. British values were cross-mapped against the curriculum at the Tangier Road Campus but the absence of a cross-College tutorial system was a weakness and this was addressed in the QIP. Graham noted the importance of supporting learners in the post-Covid world and the role the tutorial system played. Whilst a tutorial system could be instigated from 2022/23 onwards, it would be difficult to address the matter in-year.

Quality Improvement Plan

- Prue noted that the QIP was the College's key driver for improvement within the College and it was crucial that it identified clear actions and targets.
- The SAR and QIP needed to be cross-checked for consistency eg marketing, schools liaison, University of Portsmouth links and IT were in the QIP but didn't appear to be the SAR.
- Tim J questioned whether learner conduct was poor (although there were some behavioural challenges following the pandemic) and wondered if rewriting the code of conduct was a matter of housekeeping rather than an area for improvement.
- Tim J believed that *local curriculum delivery across campuses* was a forward-looking strategic plan milestone. As it did not result from a deficit in 2020/21 he wondered if it was an appropriate QIP action.

Tim J asked if each curriculum area would have its own QIP and if so, it was important key items were copied over. Graham confirmed this was the case and that the data would feed into the balanced scorecard which would be a performance management tool for governors and staff. The College currently had at least three quality processes and this was a weakness. The College was not where it should be with the SAR and QIP but further work on the documents would not improve learner outcomes and it was therefore important to draw a line under them and focus on improving quality processes etc.

Prue noted that the QIP was a high-level document containing 16 areas for action, each of which was complex and had multiple actions. She asked if it would be expanded to a greater level of detail so that progress against actions could be monitored effectively. Simon stated

this was the case and it was agreed that the detailed QIP would be scrutinised by the Committee, with Corporation receiving the high level QIP.

Governors then turned their attention to the proposed **SAR grading**. Tim J believed the grades for the overall categories from the Education Inspection Framework framework looked fair but wondered if the numerous curriculum area SARs which were identified as *Requires Improvement (RI)* areas could be graded further into A, B or C to indicate how close they were to *Good*. He believed this would probably be a comfort to governors when the SAR overview was presented to them, as an expression of the quality of Teaching, Learning and student achievement for the last year and the scale and time period likely to ensure every Curriculum area was *Good* or better and none were RI. Whilst this was done at Portsmouth College previously, Simon did not believe it possible to do this formally now the validation process had finished instead, this could be raised at Corporation if appropriate. Graham assured governors that the SAR process was rigorous and the judgements accurate and appropriate. His concerns were around the infrastructure (processes/procedures and experience/expertise) supporting the production of the SAR and QIP. Tim M stressed the importance of bringing best practices from both colleges into the College's processes.

Notwithstanding that the meeting was not quorate, Tim J, Prue and Tim M agreed to recommend the draft SAR and QIP, including grading, to Corporation.

The meeting ended at 6.15pm