

Minutes of the Learning & Quality Committee Meeting held at 2pm 04 October 2023

Present: Prue Amner (chair), Tim Jackson, Lyndsey Mason (staff governor) & Mike Stoneman (left the meeting at 4pm)

Apologies: Mark Cooper & Shirley Nellthorpe

In attendance:

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| Daisy Agathine-Louise | Interim Director of Quality |
| Chris Caddemy | VP Information Services |
| Tess Cole | VP Foundation & Adult Learning |
| Matt Phelps | Deputy Principal & Deputy CEO |
| Paola Schweitzer | Director of Governance |
| Jo Shankland | VP Student Experience & DSL |
| Sarah Warren | VP Vocational Learning |

Minutes

Prue introduced the purpose of the meeting which was to:

- Scrutinise and challenge the performance and enrolment data
- Scrutinise and challenge the progress of quality improvement
- Receive reports on College matters for which the Committee was responsible (Safeguarding Report, Careers Report, Skills Update, Complaints Report & EED&I Targets).

91 Attendance and Participation

Shirley Nellthorpe & Mark Cooper sent their apologies.

92 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

93 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2023 were **Agreed** as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Minute 86: HE Access & Participation Plan: OfS had advised the College was required to submit a statement, not an APP, and this had been done.

Minute 87: HE Self-Assessment on Management & Governance: HE students would be represented through the two existing student governor places on Corporation.

94 2022/23 Results Summary

The report outlined results for Level 3, A Level and GCSE provision as published in August 2023 and compared to 2019 (the most comparable year).

Level 3 highlights:

- The percentage achieving a pass rate at A level was 95.6% (95.3% in 2019)
- A Level results were below the national average (NA)
- Overall pass rate at the Sixth Form (including mixed programmes with smaller vocational qualifications) was 97%
- Sixth Form vocational pass rate was 99% (17 subjects achieved 100%)
- Highbury & North Harbour pass rate was 94.3% (23 subjects achieved 100%).

GCSE highlights:

- English: 22% of students achieved grade 9-4 (24% in 2019). Pass rate was 0.9% below the NA but 1.4% above the 2018/19 COPC pass rate.
- Maths: 16.1% of students achieved a grade 9-4 (19% in 2019). The pass rate was 1% above the NA but 1% below the 2018/19 COPC pass rate.
- Pass rate for other GCSEs for adults was 90%.

Governors **Noted** level 3, A Level and GCSE results including Maths and English.

95 Quality Improvement Plan (paper 473/23/L&Q)

The report provided a term 3 quality improvement plan (QIP) update on areas for improvement identified in 2021/22. Reasonable progress had been made but work remained to consolidate, strengthen and quicken the pace of improvement to ensure all students benefitted from a consistent and good learner experience. Most areas would be carried over to 2023/24 QIP. Three areas held the College back: insufficient timely sharing of data enabling informed decision making, weak management capacity and processes. These issues had been addressed although it was too early to report on impact. In response to a question Matt stated that the issue with work experience appeared to be about recording it as opposed to students not undertaking it. Processes had now been centralised and there were additional staff to support this activity. Jo confirmed that H&S maintained oversight of students' off-site activity to ensure they were safe. There was a discussion about the change of App to support maths learning, with Tess stating that the College was keen to use a single system with a broad functionality. Governors **Noted** the Quality Improvement Plan.

96 Quality of Education Strategy & Update (paper 474/23/L&Q)

This report provided an update on the effectiveness of quality of education activities and included a summary of the 2022/23 departmental SARs, activities to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the Behaviour & Attitudes Position Statement. There was a discussion about the apprenticeship induction process and the improvements made. Prue would shadow teaching & learning observations, with Huw doing the same for apprenticeships through his link visits. Governors **Noted** the main activities that had taken place to support the College's drive to improve the quality of education across all curriculum areas.

97 Careers Report

This report provided an update on activity in 2022/23 and progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks. These benchmarks provided a framework to support careers programmes and to ensure the College met its legal requirement to provide independent careers guidance to students up to the age of 18 (25 with an EHCP). The

benchmarks were linked to actions in the QIP and there was a focus on areas where there had been a drop in achievement.

Governors welcomed the positive 2022/23 destination data:

- Positive progression for FE students into FE: 35% (in line with target)
- Positive progression for FE students into HE: 36% (exceeded target by 11%)
- Positive progression for FE students into apprenticeships/employment: 23% (exceeded target by 8%)
- Apprenticeship progression into employment: 62% (exceeded target by 42%)
- Apprenticeship progression onto next level of apprenticeship or further relevant training: 22% (exceeded target by 2%).

Governors noted the 2023/24 priorities, which were in line with the College's Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) policy and strategy and included establishing a strong careers presence across all campuses and a more uniform careers programme, develop and implement bespoke careers transition programmes for Level 1 to Level 2 and Level 2 to Level 3 students and increase employer engagement to ensure the careers programme was responsive and relevant to local and national skills gaps/needs. Matt confirmed that the number of unsuccessful UCAS applicants was broadly in line with the sector average and that some of these students were likely to have been successful through clearing. Governors **Noted** the 2022/23 careers report.

98 **Safeguarding Adults & Children & Young People Annual Report (paper 476/23/L&Q)**

The report provided an overview of safeguarding disclosures/referrals in 2022/23 and updates on systems, audit, e-Safety, training and Prevent.

Safeguarding referrals increased by 68%. There was now greater staff awareness and more effective use of the tracking and monitoring system. Monitoring enabled the identification of emerging themes enabling early interventions. In line with the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance, monitoring and filtering software was in place with a total of 111 concerns being flagged since March 2023. Safeguarding training was mandatory for all staff and governors. In response to a question about the College's pre-16 cohort, Jo confirmed that additional measures were required and she was meeting with colleagues the following day to check everything was in place. Jo confirmed that the Single Central Register (SCR) included contractors coming into the College. Mike asked about safeguarding across the campuses and the level of training for teams. Jo confirmed that each campus had a safeguarding team and that they undertook training by local and national providers. Finally governors noted the safeguarding priorities for 2023/24 which included reviewing safeguarding and prevent training for students, staff and governors, implementing MyConcern and training all staff, reviewing current resources and activities to address high number of safeguarding cases including online linked harassment and bullying and reviewing safeguarding and prevent procedures for pre-16 cohorts. Governors **Agreed** to recommend the Safeguarding Adults & Children & Young People Annual Report to Corporation for approval.

99 **Complaints & Accolades Annual Report (paper 477/23/L&Q)**

This report provided a summary of the complaints received and their outcomes.

38 formal complaints were received in 2022/23. Of these, two outcomes were appealed, with one partially upheld and the other not upheld. Most complaints were from students, apprentices and parents/guardians. Some students raised concerns about their course. Most complaints were responded to within the required timescales (a holding letter was sent where this was not possible) however the complainant was not always contacted by the manager within five working days. Where there were emerging themes around complaints in 2023/24, leaders/managers would be asked what actions had taken place to ensure issues did not reoccur. Matt noted that only formal complaints were recorded but the number and nature of complaints was broadly in line with a College of this size. Governors asked that an additional column be added to indicate complaints where resolution was pending. Governors **Noted** the complaints and accolades 2022/23 annual report.

100 Stakeholder Voice & Skills Update (paper 483/23/L&Q)

This paper provided details of how curriculum areas worked with external stakeholders and the impact of this work, how Ofsted formed its judgement on a college meeting local need and how the College would monitor progress.

The audit concluded that whilst there were some areas of good practice, there was limited contribution to meeting skills needs as there was a lack of documented impact and little evidence on how partnerships influenced or informed curriculum design and implementation. Matt noted that this audit was the starting point and further work was required to capture the entirety of stakeholder engagement and to enable all staff to access this information. The College would then develop its strategic engagement to enable leaders and governors to act more effectively on behalf of the College. In response to a concern that impact was limited, Daisy stated that the ongoing SAR validation meetings were indicating that more activity was taking place than had been disclosed previously and that curriculum areas were able to articulate that. Governors **Noted** the external stakeholder audit and the impact of this activity.

101 Impact of Enrolment Numbers on Curriculum Offer (paper 478/23/L&Q)

This report provided an update on the latest position regarding 16-19 student enrolment for 2023/24 entry and the impacts on the curriculum offer.

Enrolment had been taking place since 25 August and 3265 16-19 students were currently enrolled (2736 at the same point last year). The College would continue to support new students wishing to transfer from another provider and existing students wishing to change options until October half term as well as continuing to work with stakeholders to support those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Final numbers would be confirmed at the census point. There had been changes to the College's curriculum offer as a result of enrolment with either groups added due to increased conversion rates or provision closing due to low numbers. The spiky GCSE grade profile was having an impact and there were an additional 440 enrolments for Maths and English GCSE. It was the first year that enrolment for provision at a different campus was possible at each campus: a direct benefit of the merged College. Governors were heartened to see the College responding to the needs of the city and offering more level 1 provision but saddened that journalism was no longer offered. Katy stated the College needed to be clear about curriculum intent to ensure the offer served industry needs. Governors **Noted** the impact of enrolment numbers on the curriculum offer.

102 L&Q Dashboard (paper 479/23/L&Q)

This report presented student numbers, attendance, education and training and apprenticeship qualification achievement rates (QARs) and apprenticeship accountability measures for 2022/23. Key data included:

- Current overall achievement rate was 76.1%. The projected achievement rate was 84% (forecast to be above the 83.1% national average)
- Overall retention was 90% (0.4% lower than in 2021/22)
- Current overall achievement apprenticeship was 33% (forecast to be 48% which was below the national average but higher than 2021/22)
- Overall attendance was 82.2% (84.9% in 2021/22). Attendance was below the College target but in line with the sector.

Reasonable progress had been made but work remained. Mike confirmed local schools were reporting a similar attendance trend and asked what the College was doing to address the issue. Matt stated that a huge amount of work had taken place to embed clear monitoring processes supported by data, alongside clear expectations of staff particularly new managers and attendance had already improved from last year. Governors noted that achievement rates would be finalised when the 2022/23 Individual Learning Record (ILR) had closed and initial 2023/24 data was available and would be brought in the next meeting. Governors **Noted** the L&Q dashboard.

103 EED&I Targets (paper 480/23/L&Q)

The College's Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EED&I) Policy identified five themes: leadership, student outcomes, teaching, learning & assessment, workforce development and developing an inclusive and anti-discriminatory culture. The report invited governors to review the proposed draft targets underpinning these themes, with finalised targets brought to the Committee's next meeting. Governors believed the targets were clear and sensible, but light with regards to the curriculum. Governors **Noted** the draft EED&I targets for 2023/24.

104 Quality Cycle (paper 481/23/L&Q)

This report provided the updated quality cycle in line with the revised management structure. Training had taken place to ensure that Assistant Principals and Curriculum Managers understood their roles in quality assurance and improvement. Additional quality processes/practices would also be implemented alongside other changes including space to innovate which set a six week reflect and implement CPD cycle and deep dives in areas to support improvement and to share good practice. Governors suggested the map include the points at which feedback was assessed and noted that link governors would be invited to attend Quality Review Meetings (QRMs) as well as student voice meetings. Tim noted that the College had invested in staff through the management restructure to better serve learners and the community and asked that the updated quality cycle and underpinning quality activity leads were shared with governors. Governors **Noted** the updated quality cycle.

105 Staff Development (paper 482/23/L&Q)

This paper provided an overview of staff development activities in 2023/24 including Professional Development Days (PDD) for all staff, management training, teacher training support, learning communities and learning coach activities. The report also

set out the quality of education cycle to support staff to develop their pedagogy. Daisy noted the plan provided a good starting point for activity but the impact in driving quality and supporting student outcomes and experience was key. Lyndsey asked how staff development linked to staff morale, to which Katy responded that this featured as a focus for improvement in the corporate dashboard. Governors **Noted** staff development in 2023/24.

106 Curriculum Development Update – T Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications (paper 484/23/L&Q)

This paper provided an overview of curriculum changes following post-16 reforms and progress made in developing new qualifications. The defunding and redevelopment of new alternative academic qualifications would require a range of solutions. The College had started the delivery of T Levels in September 2022 and would continue to develop T Levels to replace defunded courses until 2025/26. New Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) were planned for January 2024. Governors welcomed the College's long-term vision and asked how this activity linked the curriculum strategy, to which Matt responded that it supported the higher-level apprenticeships element. Lyndsey asked how the College would accommodate this student cohort and the increased numbers of lower level students. Katy stated that ensuring the curriculum plan met local need was a strategic issue and would be discussed at the next Corporation meeting. Katy also stated that the College needed to prepare for the forthcoming level 2 reform. Governors **Noted** the potential impact of post-16 reforms and the College's progress in addressing the changes.

The Committee reconsidered its meeting date/time in the light of the fact that it had not met the 80% attendance target in 2022/23. After a brief discussion it was agreed to retain the meetings on Wednesdays at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 4.25pm