



MINUTES

Standards & Quality Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday 18 June 2024
Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Boardroom

Present:

Dr Sue Lomax (Chair)
Andrew Fawcett
Dr Bill Webster (Principal)
Chris Ball
Tom Martin
Claire Garth
Ming Fong
Gulnaz Brennan
Debra Woodruff

In Attendance:

Deborah Bradburn (Clerk)
Mark Burgoyne (Deputy Principal)
Tracy Clarke (Assistant Principal - Curriculum Design, Information and Technical Services)
Catherine Langstreth (Assistant Principal – Curriculum & Stakeholder Engagement)
Karen Westsmith (Assistant Principal – Curriculum & Quality)
Jill Hebden (Minute Taker)

1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

1.1 Welcome To Members/Officers

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, which commenced at 2.01pm. Ms Debra Woodruff was welcomed to her first meeting as a co-opted member of the Committee.

1.2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Adeeba Gulzar and Gill Smallwood.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interests in relation to any item on the agenda.

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were received.

1.5* Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held 13 March 2024 had been previously circulated to Members for consideration.

Agreed: that the minutes are approved as a correct record and authorised for publication.

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1.6 Matters arising from the previous minutes

The action progress log was presented. It was confirmed that all actions from the previous meeting had been completed or were included on the agenda.

1.7 Minutes of the Task & Finish Group meeting held on 16 May 2024

The Deputy Chair provided an overview of the discussions from the Task & Finish Group meeting, noting that regular meetings continued to take place, which reviewed each element of the Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) with reasonable progress made against some difficult challenges.

2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

2.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Quality provided an update on teaching, learning and assessment, with the following points highlighted:

- There was a focus was on engagement, knowledge and behaviours and raising learner aspirations and standards within the classroom and workshop sessions. It was ensured that the education, health and care plan targets for learners with high needs were taken into account when teaching plans were formulated.
- The annual teaching, learning and assessment conference would bring together and solidify key focus areas from the start of the next academic year.
- The BLUE system was a means of self-identifying development for teachers and would be further developed next academic year to streamline the activity.
- The staff and student voice would be included within the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) timeframe to allow Board members the opportunity to be involved in the process.

Governors Questions/Comments:

- *There needed to be more input from Board members at 'deep dives' and other activities.*

The Senior Management Team will create a termly calendar of events in order to provide Board members with sufficient advance notice of activities taking place at the College.

- *Is aspiration raising for teachers or students?*

It refers to students and their aspirations. This was something that was raised with Ofsted; that it was ambitious for our students to improve from a Grade 2 to a Grade 3 in their GCSEs and the MIDES scores show our students improvements.

This could also refer to staff and being aspirational in vocational areas in terms of career opportunities. This is being further explored through the BLUE system and self-reflection. There has been some feedback from the staff voice in that they would like to have some form of formalised feedback as part of their observations. We are trying to get the balance right.

- *Feedback can be constructive to help teachers to reflect.*

Absolutely, it's the balance that we want to get back.

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RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment update. The Committee noted some colleges combined a final summative SAR panel with a scheduled Board meeting that the College may want to consider.

ACTION:

Termly event calendar to be produced for Board members.

2.2 Applications, Enrolment & Progress Report

The Assistant Principals presented the Applications, Enrolment and Progress report noting the following key points:

Applications:

- The College had changed the approach taken with applicants. Applicants were provided with an automatic conditional offer which they were requested to accept. There had been 518 acceptances to date for young people.

Young People:

- The recruitment target had been exceeded with 2513 recruited across all programmes. The recruitment target for next year was 2510. T Level recruitment was at 56%, which reflected the national picture.
- There was a reduction in attendance to 89.2%, which was typical at this time of year following exam completion.
- A decision had been made not to run the construction T Level next academic year due to the staffing inconsistency that continued within the area.

Apprenticeships:

- There were 315 new starts against a target of 370 with ongoing recruitment. The current best-case achievement was 72.9%

Adults and Community Learning:

- Recruitment was at 98% of funding with courses still to commence; there was confidence that 100% of funding would be met this academic year.
- Community learning was 470 enrolments short of the 3727 target.
- AEB would be renamed as Adult Skills Fund from 1 August 2024.
- Links with the Job Centre had improved in terms of stakeholder engagement.

Higher Education:

- Attendance was 85.7%, a reduction of 1% from the previous report.
- There were currently 43 apprentices on higher level courses.

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English and Maths:

- Maths attendance:
 - Apprenticeships = 90.6%
 - Adults = 79.6%
 - Young People = 72.4%
- English attendance:
 - Apprenticeships = 74.5%
 - Adults = 81.3%
 - Young People = 76.1%
- Curriculum areas and link teachers continued to work together to improve attendance. Inconsistencies with teaching staff in Terms 1 and 2 had resulted in a negative impact in attendance rates.
- A review was to be undertaken to consider Educas as an alternative maths exam board compared to AQA and whether this may support increased attendance. Educas had fewer exam papers but had longer exam duration times. A working group has been established to compare the two exam boards and identify the advantages and disadvantages of both.

Governor Questions/Comments:

- *Is it the same situation in the North West regarding T Levels?*

The messaging is causing some confusion, the trust with T Levels is not there yet.

- *Will T Levels remain?*

They may likely change with the increase in 16 – 18-year-olds and the numbers of learners coming into college without English and maths GCSE's, which will have an impact on the numbers being able to progress onto a T Level course. There is flexibility in the entry requirements however due to the size of the course it would be impossible to do both English and maths GCSEs alongside a T Level. The bigger issue is the lack of national campaigns for T Levels. T Levels still remain to be the right thing to do for the College.

- *How effective are projects?*

This is their first year, attendance decreased but not greatly at 82.9%. The planning for T Levels dropped to 34 weeks; 36 weeks in the first year and 36 weeks in the second year.

- *Is there a way that funding streams could be combined for joint funded projects in providing a job and training experience?*

We are working on this, the GMCA hold the funding and we continue to report the need for top level coordination. Restructures across different organisations have caused issues with the contacts that were previously in place, such as the Council and Job Centre Plus.

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- *Do we still work with Seddons?*

We have recently regained contact and are building up that relationship. We currently have five students with them as a result.

- *What has happened with the group of overstayers on the electrical programme?*

The majority have completed and we are still working with ten, which are historic 'out of funded' apprentices due to staff changes and changes in employer etc. We have paused electrical apprenticeship recruitment.

- *Is there any risk to the College as a result of Bradford College no longer having the HE computing qualification?*

No, our course is different to the one delivered at Bradford College.

- *Are we able to obtain attendance information from schools?*

We do not receive this as a one-off upload but we are trying to find the appropriate person that manages the data to discuss this further. Schools have had a significant slump in attendance since COVID-19.

- *What was the uptake in revision classes before the GCSE exams?*

We ran three different types of revision sessions; the uptake was ok but for most students they decided to only attend one or two sessions instead of the full twelve.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Applications, Enrolment and Progress Report.

2.3 'Deep Dive' Report

The Quality Consultant provided an update on the 'Deep Dive' Report highlighting the following key points:

- 62 observations were undertaken through the 'deep dive' activities. From these observations
 - Four sessions were found to be 'inadequate' with two staff members dismissed and two supported through a monitored improvement process.
 - Stretch and challenge was seen as a weakness in eleven sessions.
 - There was very little 'outstanding' teaching, learning and assessment observed.
- Learners felt that they were supported and were engaged and curious about their learning
- Staff members felt that there was the need to streamline online systems (including BLUE) and a need for protected staff development time.

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Governor Questions/Comments:

- *What was the staff feedback from the 'deep dive' process itself?*

They initially saw it as another thing that they needed to do and a process overload. As they continued staff viewed it as a helpful developmental process. When they are completed each year and it gradually becomes embedded as a process, this will formalise the activities taking place.

- *There are four FTE vacancies in English. What percentage is that in terms of staffing? This would give governors an idea of how much of an issue it is compared to previously.*

This is detail that can be provided in a future report. A paper on staffing will be provided at the next Standards and Quality Committee in October 2024.

- *Was there anything further raised in relation to the BLUE system?*

A significant cause of concern was the logistical issue and teachers having to come out of class to undertake the required activities. Some felt that they did not understand the process and wanted a more formative assessment on how they were performing.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the 'Deep Dive' Report.

ACTION:

Provide a permanent staff to agency staff comparison to include information per curriculum area and the overall staff percentage.

2.4 Marketing Update

The Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Stakeholder Engagement presented the Marketing Update that focused on partners and partnerships. The marketing team activities undertaken over the academic year and the improvements made to communications with students, parents and employers were acknowledged.

Governor Questions/Comments:

- *Do we have employer networking events?*

On 2 July 2024 we have an employer event, a business breakfast for all stakeholders. The College will promote the sustainability continuing professional development activity, with employers providing assistance on course design and industry updates.

- *Are we making enough of the University Group offer?*

Yes, we have good communication in some areas which ensures that our Group provision is complementary. The relationship with Alliance Learning has strengthened and we ensure that their training provider short courses is circulated to our employers. There are other opportunities to progress across the Group.



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RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the Marketing Update and that the marketing strategy was good and appealing to young people and their parents. The Committee suggested that it would also be beneficial to see the Bolton progression route included in the marketing.

2.5 Self-Assessment Report Timing

The Chair emphasised the need to provide Board members with the dates for the SAR panels scheduled to take place at the start of the next academic year in order to maximise Board member attendance.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that further discussion would take place and a SAR timeline would be provided at the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the SAR timing discussions.

ACTION:

Self-Assessment Report timeline to be provided.

3. SECTION C - UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS - FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

None.

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 Meeting Evaluation

Members agreed that they felt they were able to contribute as and when required and that the Senior Management Team received the challenge and support needed.

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 22 October 2024 at 2.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 4.41pm

Chair's Signature:

Date: 22 October 2024