



**MINUTES**  
**of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee**  
**held on Wednesday 17 June 2020 held remotely**

Present: - Laura Johnston (Chair)  
Igor Andronov  
Sally Cassels  
Debbie Lambert  
Jeremy Nicholls  
Ian Peake (Principal)

In attendance: - Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)  
Jo Ricketts (Deputy Principal)  
Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)

The meeting was quorate as six Members were present. The meeting was held remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair proposed focusing on the impact of COVID-19, particularly on the quality of provision.

**Action**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Laura Johnston declared an interest regarding her appointment as Chair for 2020/21.

**3. I. Approval of the Minutes of the last Meeting**

The Committee agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2020 as a true and accurate record.

**II. Matters arising from the Minutes**

The summary of the self assessment for teaching and learning was incorporated in the KPIs.

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

**4. Student Outcomes and Student Experience**

The Deputy Principal presented the reports.

- I. Retention 2019/20 for all qualifications and ages is slightly better than last year at 95%. A breakdown of retention by faculties, 16-18 and 19+ was provided. Due to COVID-19 it was expected that practical qualifications with occupational competences could have slightly lower pass rates because students have not been in College and may not be able to complete programmes.

- II. Attendance 2019/20 was not reported due to the lockdown resulting from COVID-19.
- III. Student progress 2019/20 showed a breakdown of students working below, on or above target by each faculty. There was discussion about student engagement during lockdown noting that this had impacted on some students' ability to engage fully in learning which was reflected in progress data. This would be moderated. Performance for BTEC, Pearson and Functional Skills was predicted to be marginally above last year's outcomes. GCSE English and maths results would not reflect the improvements the College had implemented to teaching and learning this year. ESOL students had followed Functional Skills English previously but no longer take this qualification which could have a negative impact on results this year.
- IV. Apprenticeship 2019/20 overall and timely achievement was provided by faculty and age range. COVID-19 will negatively affect the timely achievement rate for some apprentices; c30% have been furloughed or lost their jobs and will be unable to obtain timely achievement. Apprentices will continue to complete their apprenticeships; however, these will be unfunded which will be a sector wide issue. Practical assessments and end point assessments are required for some apprenticeships. There is a potential risk on completion of programmes resulting from COVID-19.
- V. A report on courses identified in serious concern outlining enrolments, retention, pass, achievement and value-added scores where applicable was provided. COVID-19 has created some additional risks. Centre assessment grades have been calculated for programmes which will be subject to moderation.

The Committee agreed: -

To note the reports

## **5. Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

- I. Observation of teaching, learning and assessment was provided which had focussed on planning, delivery, the learning environment and personal development. Landex paired observations had been conducted at the start of year which showed the observation team had awarded slightly generous grades. Areas identified for support are dovetailed into staff development and addressed with support from learning mentors.
- II. OTLA guidance for 2020/21 was presented with changes highlighted. This will focus on four themes covering planning, delivery, the learning environment, and assessment and student progress, the latter to replace personal development. An individual review will replace self assessment of TL&A. Teachers could be rated as highly effective, effective or provide opportunities for development. Governors agreed the guidance was clear.
- III. COVID-19 had significantly impacted on the delivery of teaching and learning. The delay in clarification of approach for awarding qualifications in Summer 2020 has created additional issues for

teachers who have engaged positively in remote delivery of teaching and learning. This included guidance that students' work completed before 20 March would not be counted for assessment or grade purposes. Courses with occupational competence require students to complete practical assessments which has not been possible during lockdown. These have recently commenced with an extended schedule to 31 July and delivery taking account of social distancing. The College is prioritising Level 3 students who complete studies this year. Then Level 2 and Level 1 courses. There is a risk that some students may not attend College to complete their assessments. It is anticipated that there will be a reduction in the number of apprentices recruited in 2020/21.

The Deputy Principal reiterated staff have worked extremely hard to support students during the pandemic with appreciation recorded for their dedication and hard work to enable students to achieve positive outcomes. A Governor asked how much teachers have been able to access campuses which was minimal and only with prior agreement by the College COBRA Committee.

The Committee agreed: -

- To note the reports and acknowledge the significant amount of work undertaken by the Deputy Principal meaning that students should achieve positive outcomes.

## **6. Leadership and Management**

- I. The equality and diversity report showed learner performance data which reflected student retention to date with comparisons by protected groups. Some groups had small numbers which needed to be taken into account. There was minimal difference in retention by gender and age. Total retention by ethnicity was 95.4% which included a wide category of learners with some significant variation in sizes of groups. There was a marginal difference between students with learning difficulty, disability or health problems. Looked after children had a 5.7% variance; the College provides high levels of support for LAC students. A Governor asked if there were any LAC children in residential accommodation at Walford Campus; there are three students. Vulnerable students are recorded on MyConcern with a minor gap in retention which evidenced support is effective. There is only a minor difference compared with the socio-economic background.

The Director of Personnel explained that students are continuing to be supported during the COVID-19 lockdown with staff using MS Teams. Regular advice and guidance is being provided for students and staff to support positive wellbeing during lockdown.

- II. The child protection and safeguarding report outlined safeguarding arrangements in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. MyConcern continues to be used to log concerns. Meetings are continuing with external agencies using Zoom and MS Teams to ensure safeguarding is maintained for students. The College is also attending the children's safeguarding boards in Herefordshire and has a link with the one in Shropshire. Students due to commence courses in September who have been identified as vulnerable have been invited to visit

campuses to meet some staff. Annual reviews for students with EHCPs have continued. Staff training and development is available remotely which included safeguarding training.

A breakdown of incidents showed 114 incidents logged since 21 March 2020 which are mainly categorised as anxiety, wellbeing and mental health issues. Students are continuing to be referred to external agencies as necessary. A Governor asked if the numbers of entries had reduced during lockdown noting that these remain at the same level. It is possible that when students return more issues that have been previously unreported from staying at home could be identified.

### III. Quality

- a. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) had been prepared incorporating the impact on progress of COVID-19. An online enrolment process has been launched at the College and students will be invited to campuses in August in line with Government guidance. The Strategic College Improvement Fund project end dates have been extended due to lockdown with an additional three months to complete the project after reopening. The majority of actions relating to this had been completed before lockdown. EBS dashboards have been updated for reporting with issues being addressed. It is anticipated that live reports will be available in future.
- b. The Self Evaluation Document for HE had been revised since the last meeting. The structure of the SED required improving to ensure a coherent oversight of HE provision as opposed to individual reporting for each course. There was a comment that key themes in the action plan and completion of progress would be useful. Graduate outcomes did not include any distinction grades; the Deputy Principal had challenged this and requested the distribution of grades for further analysis.

#### The Committee agreed: -

- To note the reports and thank managers for preparing these
- To approve the Self Evaluation Document for HE

### **7. Annual items for Committee**

#### The Committee agreed: -

- To appoint Laura Johnston as Chair of the Committee for 2020/21
- The Committee self assessed its performance concluding that it was effective and adequately met the requirements of its terms of reference
- A change was proposed to the terms of reference 6.5 to state that Governors challenge targets as opposed to set targets. In addition, Governors request progress reports including English and maths

### **8. Any other business and comments**

- I. The Deputy Principal referred to a request from a Governor to investigate tracking apprenticeship progress reviews on EBS. She confirmed that progress is being made with electronic signature software purchased to enable the College to obtain signatures from students, assessors and employers.

- II. Governors reiterated appreciation to CMT, staff and students for their contribution during the COVID-19 pandemic which was evidenced by fantastic teamwork and excellent results.
- III. The Chair outlined a summary of critical issues to continue to monitor from a governance perspective. These included support for vulnerable students, moderation by awarding bodies (which was outside of the College's control), ESOL results, Timely completion of apprenticeships and recruitment of apprentices next year and courses in serious concern.
- IV. There was discussion about the role of Governors during lockdown whilst operating remotely without being visible to staff or making visits to campuses to validate reports with evidence of practices. The College is following Government guidance which is currently to stay at home. The College has implemented some gradual changes with student assessments recently beginning to take place on campus. It was agreed that Governors should continue to operate flexibly to support the College.

**9. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 25 November 2020 commencing at 3.15 pm.

**Signed as a true record of proceedings**

**Chair:** ..... **Date:** .....