

Minutes



Meeting	Quality and Standards Committee		
Date	Wednesday 31 January 2024	Time	17:00
Venue	Google Meet		

Attendees:	Jenny Worsdale (Chair); Jason Austin; Katie Asgari; Heather Barnett; Donna Clifford; Katie Curtis; Sally Gillborn
In attendance:	Tracey Mace-Akroyd (Deputy Principal/CEO); Lucy Barnwell (Director of Learner Recruitment and Marketing); James Godsell (Director of Business Development and Apprenticeships); Cheryl Martin (Director of Quality and Academic Standards); Laura Reid (Director of Safeguarding and Student Support); Mark Ryan (Vice Principal Curriculum); Dan Stanbra (Director of Adult Education and Contracts); Sarah Connerty (interim governance advisor and minute taker)

The Deputy CEO showed the Committee a video at the start of the meeting, written and produced by the T level childcare students promoting the great things the students do. It has had 37k hits and some positive comments about the course and the College.

<https://www.tiktok.com/@northnottscoll/video/7322476074309405984>

		ACTION
1.	Declaration of interests in any item on the agenda There were no declarations received and standing declarations were noted.	
2.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence Chair to welcome. The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. Katie Curtis has resigned as staff governor and apologies received from Heather Barnett and The Director of Safeguarding and Student Support. The Deputy CEO reported on the Director of Safeguarding and Student Support's report at item 6.	
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2023 AGREED: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of discussions.	
4.	Actions outstanding and matters arising from the minutes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single PDF format for quality reports – this action is pending 2. The Chair asked for a breakdown of the adult results without subcontracting and distance learning to see the impact of reduced subcontracting – The Director of Adult Education circulated the results, noting that the levels of subcontracting and distance learning are a national trend and that the Group strategically is doing a good job at responding to employers. Subcontracting does enable the Group to engage with a lot of stakeholders that otherwise it would not be able to meet needs for. 3. Updates to the SAR – the SAR was updated and approved by the Board in December 4. HE full report – covered under item 5 	Deputy CEO/ Gov advisor

	<p>HE Self-Evaluation Document (SED) The Director of Quality and Academic Standards explained that the HE SED is the equivalent of the Group SAR and there is a requirement for approval by the Board. HE numbers are declining which is a significant area for development, but the report is based on outcomes and learner satisfaction which are positive. The document has been scrutinised by SLT. ACTION: The NSS survey is still open and final results will be reported back to the Committee.</p> <p>One governor noted the poor scores for IT and library services in the NSS survey and asked what plans are in place to improve. The Director of Quality and Academic Standards noted that in the induction, exit survey, focus groups and feedback from the HE achievement coach who visits all classes, all students speak highly of the learning resources. The resources are highlighted in the HE prospectus, posted in google classroom, and students are signposted to university online journals and libraries.</p> <p>Governors questioned how well used the library is and it was noted that from a book perspective spaces aren't well utilised and work is going on about re purposing the libraries to digital hubs and learning spaces for future learners so that may address low responses. It was agreed it is important to understand the issue and that looking in detail at the survey there are some questions that score above the sector average.</p> <p>The Deputy CEO reported that the Group had listened to feedback from students and invested money into self-service library services so there is access at any point rather than set opening times. Learners are using this service and it is working.</p> <p>It was noted that the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) would go in and look at resources and make a judgement. That doesn't happen with the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).</p> <p>The Chair asked about provision for minority groups and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards pointed the Committee to the overview of the Group's HE provision on page 4. A third of HE learners declare a disability (132) which is 4% up this year. Overall performance is 5% below. Work is ongoing with the Directors of Campus and Curriculum Managers to identify why that might be. Some factors include data being reported on in different ways, it is the final year of learners who were on roll for Covid, and attendance. Achievement is based on the whole cohort so this will include withdrawals and the proportion of learners that pass is those retained.</p> <p>The Committee referred to the Office for Students Teaching and Learning Excellence Framework (TEF)¹ silver grade <i>The student experience and student outcomes are typically very high quality</i> which is an excellent achievement. The framework evidence relies on NSS results and results used to inform the TEF weren't very high as it used one particular cohort of computing students where there were issues. This is compared to last year's NSS results which were excellent. The panel members are not known and are made up of experts from universities and colleges and includes Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>An update on the market research project is covered under item 10(iv).</p>	Dir of Q&AS
6.	<p>Safeguarding, PREVENT and EDI The Deputy CEO reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The arrangements for safeguarding are effective • There is an almost 100% completion rate for staff reading Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 	

¹ <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-tef/about-the-tef/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group is fully compliant with the PREVENT Duty and works closely with agencies. ACTION: Adjustments to the PREVENT action plan will be shared alongside the safeguarding report going forward • The filtering and monitoring software for the Group has been updated and Smoothwall products are implemented. There is a quick response identifying comments and websites which are passed to the safeguarding team and also to curriculum in terms of behaviour • Partnership work is being carried out with external safeguarding organisations including the Violence reduction unit • Trauma informed practice remains an area of focus. The Group has been approached by the Local Authority to extend work to working with managers in communicating with students • Support for learners is good. 824 learners have been supported during 23/24 by the Student Support Team resulting in 1204 unique interventions. Mental health continues to be the largest area of concern with 173 interventions, with family issues (99), anxiety (73) and peer on peer (58) high areas which will be monitored. • The College has 63 Looked after Children, 28 Care Leavers, 14 previously Looked After and 33 Young Carers across the group. Extensive work is being carried out with learners, guardians and services by the Designated LAC Lead to support transition. The Group are seeing a continued increase in unaccompanied asylum seekers, which the ESOL department are trying to accommodate, working with 17 Local Authorities to support this vulnerable cohort. • Vocational curriculum and personal development delivery promote equality and celebrates diversity. Learners are seen to be respectful and appreciative of different cultures. • The latest retention and attendance data show no significant gaps between most of the EDI categories. <p>The Chair passed on thanks for a clear report with lots of information in.</p>	Deputy CEO/ Interim Gov advisor
7.	<p>Applications and Enrolments 2024/25</p> <p>The Director of Learner Recruitment and Marketing was pleased to report that actions from the Marketing Strategy from August 2022 are almost completed. The TikTok video from the Childcare students is an example of one of the last areas of implementation and is going well reaching out a much wider cohort of young people. There is still a focus on all other areas of marketing for different audiences.</p> <p>Applications are good at Rotherham and North Notts. There are some concerns at Dearne Valley and work is underway to address this. Surveys have been sent out to see why people aren't applying. Initial thoughts are that there are a lot of multiple applications as young people aren't decided on what they want to do and are edging their bets; schools careers advice is minimal and the team are going into schools to support this. There is a continued focus to get students on the right courses.</p> <p>One governor asked about the low applications for DVC and whether people are choosing other institutions, apprenticeships or are NEET. The Director of Learner Recruitment and Marketing noted that a very small amount of data is available which shows that people are choosing other institutions including Sheffield and Doncaster, there are low rates for apprenticeships and the remainder are unemployed. ACTION: A fuller report will be available in two weeks and any key trends will be reported to the Committee.</p> <p>HE numbers and recruitment is an area of focus and a lot of work is taking place. A campaign is launching on 6 March #mytime focusing on getting people back into education. Research shows that most women have taken a Level 3 and then went into a job, marriage, and childcare and may now want to come back to learning.</p>	Dir of LR&M

	<p>The Group are looking at a skills passport for September. Focus groups with businesses about the skills they want show that employers are looking for resilience, adaptability and good communications. The Group are working with the D2N2 region, putting a project together to ask about skills employers want. The aim is to have 10 digital certificates that learners can complete to demonstrate skills to employers.</p>	
8.	<p>CEIAG report including progress towards Gatsby Framework</p> <p>The Group has a strategy of intent, implementation and impact for CEIAG to support the progression of all students and apprentices into next steps and destinations.</p> <p>The Group has realigned the CEIAG team across the campuses with advisors based at a specific campus, which has CEIAG leader, managing across campuses. Impact has displayed a consistent approach on campus for staff and students, advisors liaising/aligning with curriculum.</p> <p>The careers Lounge at each campus has been developed to incorporate opportunities of support for skills, next steps, PT employment, right course right student, support for next steps e.g. CV, Application forms and job postings.</p> <p>Gatsby Benchmarking has been conducted for December 2023, which shows significant development and improvement. The Group works with Compass and Rotherham Council to provide evidence of what it is doing to meet benchmarks. Since 2023 this information has been published. Every programme of study and area has developed curriculum maps which is another tool to provide employer engagement and enrichment for each of the campuses. The Board has a CEIAG link governor – Shirley Collier.</p> <p>The Group is working with The HE Progression Partnership South Yorkshire² (HeppSY) who include Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield University, Sheffield College, Barnsley College, to support students in progressing and raising their aspirations. The Deputy CEO explained that it is a consortium of the main universities and a number of colleges which up until now was funded through the Office for Students (OfS). It has been used to fund a couple of posts focusing on careers guidance with students to progress to HE. There is no longer any external funding but work and signposting will continue with them. It has a targeted audience around gifted and talented and first person in a family to go to university.</p> <p>The Deputy CEO reported that SLT have reviewed the strategy and updates are being made to make it more pertinent to adults through ESOL. The Adult career coaches are now part of the central team. ACTION: The updates will take place after the Board meeting so the Deputy CEO will update verbally at the meeting.</p>	Deputy CEO
9.	<p>Risk Report (including key QIP aspects and underpinning reports)</p> <p>Attendance remains a risk because it has not hit the 90% target (Overall attendance (including English & maths) is 82.96%, 16-18 82.43% and adults 85.30%. Overall 16-18 attendance has slightly dipped but adult attendance slight improved since R04.) There is an overall improvement to last year for all age groups.</p> <p>Interventions are having an impact with a focus on 1443 students. Managing issues for students around mental health and other outside pressures is a priority.</p> <p>English and maths attendance has dropped slightly to 72.48% and remains higher than last year. A lot of interventions are in place with a new E&M model rolled out in January. There is a focus on individual needs and group-based models of delivery appropriate to life and work. Maximum class sizes are 25 streamed by ability. For challenging areas there is the flexibility for teams to deliver in different areas - at Dearne Valley a lesson on gear ratios with construction and motor vehicle learners for students with low attendance was well received. It seems to be working and is a centralised approach working closely in partnership with vocational teams.</p>	

² <https://heppsy.org/>

	<p>The third stage of Attend to Achieve meetings are underway and still maintain the focus that estates moves are not impacting the quality of provision and making sure there is accessible education. It is working really well with the contractors on site.</p> <p>The Personal Development Programme is included as a risk. The number of activities has increased a lot but there have been no big headline events this year and that is the focus for the team going forward.</p>	
10.	<p>Quality of Education Reports</p> <p>(i) 16-18 (including High Needs)</p> <p>The VP Curriculum noted that curriculum teams are constantly working with stakeholders to ensure what is being delivered can flex and be adapted to meet needs. The Chair asked for assurance around the statement in the report that employers are fully immersed in the planning process and whether this was the case across all areas. The VP Curriculum confirmed that each curriculum area has worked with multiple employers and employers are influencing the design of the curriculum. Further work is taking place at North Notts around Business and Marketing. Employers are being brought in to look at the opportunities around T Levels.</p> <p>All areas, with the exception of digital at North Notts, have industry placements with one learner to one employer. T Level work is underway developing modules alongside parents and employers with students completing a weekly journal. Work is always focused and ongoing to improve TLA and to create a consistent approach to engage students and move them forward into careers and skills for the future.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there are no areas where further work needs to be done. The VP Curriculum explained that there will always be ongoing work with TLA and this is a focus. It is about creating a consistent approach for exciting engagement in teaching to move students into careers and skills for the future. This links to progression, retention and progress through years.</p> <p>The Deputy CEO reported that the Attend to Achieve meetings have identified any large groups of students who have not had the experience they wanted and managers are working on key risk areas to look at what staffing is needed in these areas.</p> <p>The next stage after February will be reviewing student attendance and progress to ensure they are on track to achieve. Student support teams will provide specialist support. The Spring and summer term reviews are key to ensuring students and staff are in the best place to ensure students have the skills to progress.</p> <p>ACTION: The Chair suggested including areas for improvement and actions in place in the report going forward.</p> <p>(ii) Adults (including subcontracting)</p> <p>The Director of Adult Education and Contracts noted that all students remain on track to achieve. Attendance remains an area of concern and interventions continue towards the 95% achievement target. There is a broad range of personal development and the offer continues to be developed across full time, part time and online provision. This is a challenge and there is a diverse approach which maximises opportunities for engagement. There was discussion around a comment in the report that attendance is not on target but does not affect achievement. The Director of Adult Education and Contracts explained that year on year adult provision has seen high levels of achievement, with a small dip last year, and remains consistently above national rates and one of the highest achievement areas in the Group. The main risk to the Group for adults is achieving the enrolment numbers predicted for each campus in January. Currently is a positive picture financially.</p> <p>Increasing enrolments in year in January leads to an improvement in achievement rates and attendance. This offsets any drops in retention from September starts. The more people that join on shorter courses the better the picture gets and distance learning can offset any drops.</p>	VP Curriculum

	<p>(iii) Apprentices</p> <p>The Director of Business Development and Apprenticeships reported that end point assessments are being booked in early. Remedial actions are in place with Functional Skills boot camps to move learners forward. Employers are kept up to date and to encourage their apprentices to come in for the boot camps. A maths catch up coach will work with learners 121 and provide the support needed. Learners are consistently attending and progress is gradual but positive. There has been an Apprenticeship conference and a stakeholder tool for dealing with employers is in place. All team meetings will be attended to ensure staff have a consistent approach to communicating with employers and this will be monitored going forward. All areas of work are going well with the team working closely together. Further work is taking place to improve the curriculum input on Onefile. Out of funded learners currently stands at 126; 58 are due to go in January 2024 if they get to end point and finish timely so there may be an increase at this point.</p> <p>The Committee praised the hard work to keep students engaged and the Director of Business Development and Apprenticeships reported that students continue to make an effort and attend interventions. Many have had a break in learning and are keen to get finished. Different strategies are being used including a different type of coach who can go out to the workplace.</p> <p>(iv) HE</p> <p>The Director of Quality and Academic Standards noted that retention is below target but this is based on a three-year trend and in year retention is 100%. HE attendance continues to improve and is the highest in the Group. Student satisfaction remains high with a 5% improvement on last year and a higher participation rate in the survey. Good progress is being made establishing the HE Strategy Group. Curious Edge have been appointed to take forward the market research project with a completion date of May 2024.</p> <p>(v) English & Maths</p> <p>The Director of Adult Education and contracts noted that E&M continues to be an area of risk and is short of the attendance target. Extensive actions to improve have been taken. Attend to Achieve meetings have supported improvements. An SLT task group was set up at the start of the year to look at emerging concerns and there have been significant actions and the implementation of a new E&M model from January 2024. This is an exciting new approach to move away from 3 hour groups to 1.5 hours on hot topics to achieve a grade 4, revision focused on acknowledging previous learning, and a 1.5 hours workshop model on a rolling carousel model to prepare and equip students for the exam period. There has been a lot of hard work to roll out the implementation as a streamed approach. It is early days and to date there has been consistently positive feedback, indicative areas for further improvement and staff continue to work on attendance.</p> <p>E&M does remain an ongoing challenge and the Group is continuing to invest in E&M specialists, looking to give a different approach and investing heavily in staff CPD schedules. The plans are for a new head of department and three new deputy head posts for the area with permanent staff interviews taking place in February and agency staff phased out. Some agency staff are high quality and have moved into positions. ACTION: The Committee asked for an update to the next meeting and the Director of Adult Education and Contracts noted that the task group has an action plan so will provide a headline update against the plan.</p> <p>The Deputy CEO noted that E&M attendance is consistent with some of the local colleges. The Deputy CEO reported that while she was on duty this week one of the math's tutors had a class running right up until 21.00 with students engaged and learning.</p>	Dir of AE&C
11.	<p>TLA Report (including Term 1 Deep Dive outcomes)</p> <p>The Director of Quality and Academic Standards and VP Curriculum updated on the TLA report which outlines the activities and judgements of teaching, learning and quality at this point of the year and the activities to test that.</p>	

The quality of TLA is good and ongoing improvements take place.

Learning Walks are scheduled through the year and are effective and outcomes included:

High Expectations & Induction 85% of learners rated their induction as good or better; 95% understood the high expectations of college life; 90% felt welcome on their first day at college and 92% understood their timetable and where their classes were going to be taught

Quality of Learning Support 92% of Learners with High Needs rated their experience of learning support as good or better; 92% stated initial assessments enabled them to understand their starting points and make good progress and 92% were on the right course and enjoying their time at college. LWs completed at the beginning of the academic year identified some learners awaiting Additional Learning Support assessments, in particular those that had not declared SEND support needs during the enrolment process. This information was swiftly shared with, and actioned by, the Director of Student Support & Safeguarding.

Freshers & Personal Development 1030 learners participated in Freshers and Personal Development Activities during Freshers week (25th – 29th September). Whilst participation was low across all sites (317 DVC, 280 NNC and 433 RC), % participation was the lowest at RC. LWs found almost all learners would have liked a broader range of activities along with freebies or items to take away. SLT are reviewing the format and scheduling of Freshers and Induction Week for September 2024.

Careers & Swap Don't Drop 98% of learners agreed they were on the right programme to enable them to achieve their long term career goal; 89% had received useful Careers Information, Advice & Guidance whilst at College; 87% knew how to contact a Careers Advisors and 70% had already attended at least one careers related talk or event. Almost all learners were able to identify and discuss their long term goals and were aware they could transfer to another programme or area if they felt they were on the wrong programme.

Learner Satisfaction - The majority of learners are happy with their learning experience. The induction survey showed 94% were happy with their induction experience; 95% were treated fairly and respectfully; 93% agreed the course content and teaching were meeting their expectations; 94% were completing work and receiving useful feedback; 97% knew how to keep themselves safe; and 97% they knew the importance of developing their work skills further. This high satisfaction correlates with the 2022/23 exit survey as well as the NSS survey for HE students which have been previously reported on.

Deep Dive Activities - Deep Dive Activities are aligned to the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) A total of 13 Deep Dives were completed in term one and found learners were making good progress; evidence of ambitious curriculum design; staff setting high expectations and effective support and detailed verbal. Most areas reviewed were identified as making a reasonable or strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

Key areas of focus

- Ensure E&M plans bring about sustained improvements in the quality of TLA and performance in this area
- Continue to improve the quality of TLA with advanced practitioners in curriculum teams and digital and AI innovation task groups. 50 AI licenses have been bought and small working groups are going to pilot them. The view is that this could save staff up to 7 hours a week on admin. These will be rolled out at the upcoming training and development day with small working groups to help support teachers and managers
- Recruit and retain high quality staffing within curriculum areas
- On the 9 February the Group is holding a TLA event at DVC and a Health and wellbeing event at NNC, the TLA event will be the second face to face conference since Covid and

Dir
Q&AS

	<p>is a springboard to the next TLA CPD. ACTION: Governors are invited to drop into the events. The Director of Quality and Academic Assurance to send through details</p> <p>The Committee asked if there has been a deep dive on subcontracting. The Director of Adult Education and Contracts explained there are deep dives each year and he works closely with the Quality team. The historic risks with performance have moved on and there are really positive experiences this year and no causes for concern.</p> <p>There was a discussion on subcontracting learner numbers and the Director of Adult Education ran through allocation, Lifeskills have 482 students and the allocation has been hit for the year.</p>	
12.	<p>Any other items of urgent business There were no items raised.</p>	
13.	<p>Date of next meetings: Wednesday 20 March 2024 Tuesday 7 May 2024 Monday 24 June 2024 All at 17.00</p>	

Meeting closed 18.37