

**Date:** 2 December 2020

**Venue:** Zoom (Online Meeting)

Clerk to the Corporation  
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**Present:** Beri Hare (Chair), college governor  
Gwyn Arnold, college governor  
Peter Brooks, college governor  
Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive and Principal and college governor  
Kathryn Fulton, President of TSC Students' Union and college governor  
Sol Miah, college governor  
Richard Moore, co-opted committee member  
Seb Schmoller, chair of governors  
Steven Spence, staff governor

**In attendance:** Andrew Hartley, Executive Director Commercial and Operations  
Anita Klich, Governance and Projects Officer  
John Mothersole, college governor and Chair Designate (until 10.20)  
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to the Governing Body.  
James Smythe, Assistant Principal Student Experience (08.30 – 09.00)  
Anita Traffon, Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal (until 10.40)  
Elise Temple, Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment (08.30 – 09.40)  
Robin Webber-Jones, Vice Principal HE and Academic Studies (09.25 - 10.00)

**Action**

**by whom      by when**

**20/5/1      Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Steven Spence, a newly elected staff governor, to his first meeting of TLQSE Committee.
- 1.2 Stephen Betts sent his apologies.

**20/5/2      Declaration of interest**

- 2.1 The Committee noted the following standing declarations:
  - Angela Foulkes as Chief Executive and Principal (CEP) and a director of the college's wholly owned subsidiary companies;
  - Steven Spence, newly elected staff governor, as a college employee;
  - Kathryn Fulton as the President of the Students' Union (sabbatical role) and a member of college staff.

The Committee agreed that the above declarations did not require any action in relation to specific agenda items.

### **20/5/3 Minutes of the meeting on 14 October 2020**

- 3.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting on 14 October 2020 as an accurate record.

### **20/5/4 Matters Arising & Action Record**

- 4.1 The Clerk presented the Action Tracker, including three actions from the last meeting that are still in progress:

Minute 20/4/9.1 refers, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy: the AP QTLA is finalising the schedule of virtual visits and will invite the Chair of TLQSE.

Minute 20/4/11.3 refers, KPI targets for 2020-21: the Clerk had circulated FE KPIs, which members had agreed but the version circulated lacked some of the new demographic targets. Therefore the boardpack includes a full version. The Committee agreed to mark this action as complete.

Minute 20/4/18.2, OfS regulations: the Clerk reported that she has added this to the agenda for the February meeting of Search, Remuneration and Governance Committee. The Committee agreed to amend the due date to the March 2021 for a report back to TLQSE.

- 4.2 The Committee agreed:
- that all the actions arising in the minutes of the last meeting had been included in the action record;
  - that the actions marked as complete, or agreed as such in the meeting, should be removed from the tracker.

### **20/5/5 Safeguarding Termly Report: Term 1 2020-21**

- 5.1 James Smythe, Assistant Principal Student Experience (APSE) presented the report, summarising the numbers and types of safeguarding disclosures received from 1 August to 31 October 2020 and action the college is taking to ensure effective safeguarding of students and support for staff. The APSE said that the number of disclosures had been roughly the same as in 2019/20 but with a lower number from Olive Grove. Ofsted Inspectors at the recent interim visit had expressed satisfaction that the pattern indicated that the college's processes remained effective in the context of blended learning. The Committee noted that the procedures for responding to a student death had been invoked in the period and had worked effectively.
- 5.2 The Safeguarding Link Tutor reported that she meets regularly with the APSE and Head of Safeguarding, she is satisfied that the Safeguarding Board is being effective in keeping under review how the processes are working and in identifying and taking action on new concerns emerging. The college is continuing to innovate and keep a strong focus on online safety

during remote learning. For example, the work with a software developer to develop the “Safeguarding 24” app on the Google platform. This app offers another route for students to contact Safeguarding staff to seek help or information.

- 5.3 Members considered the report and the main points of the discussion were as follows.
- **Long term trends:** a member commented that there appeared to be a significant decrease in the number of disclosures in autumn 2020 compared to the same period in 2017/18 and 2018/19. The APSE said that previously, for new students, the college had logged details of safeguarding incidents sent by schools. These had appeared in the data as new disclosures. This had been unhelpful in using the data to track trends and demand for college safeguarding. The data presented in this report does not include “historic” disclosures.
  - **Speed of response:** a member asked how quickly the college responded to a new disclosure. The APSE said that the routes for disclosure are monitored daily and every message received is immediately allocated to a member of the safeguarding team to follow-up. The Head of Safeguarding monitors progress on follow-up. The time taken to resolve a case varies widely depending on the nature of the issue.
- 5.4 The Committee received the report and commented that it was a good report with lots of evidence for the Committee to report positive assurance to the Governing Body on the implementation and impact of the college’s safeguarding arrangements.

## **20/5/6 Positive Engagement and Behaviour Annual Report 2019-20**

- 6.1 The APSE presented the report commenting that behaviour on campus is generally excellent. This is a result of setting clear expectations for behaviour and having an effective Duty Manager present at each campus. In the period, 97% of incidents had been dealt with informally to support good attendance and promote effective learning behaviours. In only three cases had action escalated to formal disciplinary action.
- 6.2 Members considered the report and the main points of the discussion were as follows.
- Differences between faculties:** a member queried the apparent differences between the use Positive Engagement Plans (PEPs) by different faculties. The APSE said this could be a function of the different rates of attendance in different areas. The higher intervention rate may be where on-site attendance is required and the PEP is being used to target and increase attendance. Olive Grove has fewer interventions, students tend to learn in small groups, sometimes in a workshop setting with a high degree of monitoring.
- Action to reduce cases:** it was noted that the rate of interventions is unchanged from 2019/20 and a member asked if

the college should be taking action to reduce this. The APSE said the policy is intended to prompt early action to identify students who would benefit from a PEP. It is additional support to set expectations and foster effective learning behaviours and attitudes rather than a punishment. It was noted that although there appears to be a relatively high use of PEPs in FO5, they do seem to be effective in supporting more students to stay on course and succeed. The Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal (DCE/DP) said that the policy is a student focused approach that is highly effective in supporting students to understand exactly what they need to do to succeed and to coach them through target setting and feedback.

- 6.3 A member asked if there are parallels between the student behaviour policy and the approach to developing under-performing staff. The DCE/DP said that the college continues to invest heavily in staff development, as reported through the reports on the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (QTLA). However, the approach to nurturing effective learning behaviours in students is rightly different to setting and monitoring high expectations for professionals.
- 6.4 The Committee received the report with members commenting that they could see the impact of interventions on improved outcomes for students.

#### **20/5/7 Self-Assessment Report 2019/20 and Achievement Rates 2019/20 (including diversity indicators)**

- 7.1 Anita Straffon, DCE/DP, presented the annual self-assessment report (SAR) for 2019/20, commenting that the SAR is an accurate evaluation of the college's FE and training provision in 2019/20. It is written against the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) using the language of the EIF. Since writing the draft, the DCE/DP had received feedback from the Ofsted visit and the FE Commissioner's Diagnostic Assessment team commenting that the draft SAR does not fully reflect the commitment and impact of the improvements that they observed on their visits. The team intends to address this in a mid-year SAR.
- 7.2 Members considered the SAR and the main issues discussed were as follows:

**Education Inspection Framework (EIF):** members acknowledged that the evaluation is written against the criteria in the Ofsted EIF and informed by the judgements from the visit in September 2019. This judgement came at the start of 2019/20 when the college was still collecting achievements for 2018/19. The SAR mid-year update should be bolder about what the college has achieved across all indicators in 2019/20 and into 2020/21, including those aspects of provision that are pushing to be outstanding.

**Targets:** members wanted to know if the targets in the SAR are realistic and that managers and staff have the resources to

achieve them. The DCE/DP said that they are realistic and the ELT has planned resourcing to ensure they are achievable.

- 7.3 The Committee agreed that the evaluation was accurate and agreed to approve the SAR on behalf of the Governing Body. Members supported the proposal for a mid-year SAR in 2020/2021 and hoped that document would address the college's achievements such as the rapid development of digital learning.

#### **20/5/8 Complaints Termly Report: Term 1 2020-21**

- 8.1 Elise Temple, Assistant Principal Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (APQTLA) presented the report on the operation of the complaints procedures in the first term of 2020/21. Members were pleased to note that the increase in complaints about engineering admissions in September 2019 had not reoccurred this year, following a successful overhaul of the online application and admission process.
- 8.2 Members welcomed that formal complaints appeared to be reducing but wanted to be satisfied that this is not due to remote learning making it more difficult for students to complain. The APQTLA said that the complaints process has been online for around 18 months and is now well-embedded. Learners receive information about how to raise and resolve complaints during application and induction, with periodic reminders through the year. In her view, the reduction in formal complaints is due to leaders and staff being more confident in resolving issues locally and quickly.
- 8.3 The Committee received the report, commented that the student centred informal and formal complaints process is an area of strength for the college. To reflect this, assurance reporting could possibly reduce in future to KPI level reporting.

#### **20/5/9 Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy update 2020-21**

- 9.1 The APQTLA gave a presentation on how managers are implementing the QTLA Policy to continue to drive improvements in teaching, learning and student outcomes. The presentation highlighted the following.
- Changes approved by TLQSE in October had been implemented including the introduction of supportive online reviews and online learning visits.
  - There is high demand from staff for individual online reviews, strong engagement with EdTech support and, collectively, high participation in TeachMeet and similar events.
  - For physical observations, faculties have been paired up to limit the number of staff contacts and thereby manage the risk of classroom observations spreading COVID-19.
  - The Learning Visit programme is focusing on particular thematic enquiries to share best practice.

- Deep dive activity had commenced with Inclusion curriculum group and the APQTLA would present an update on the findings and impact at the Committee's February meeting.
- This year's programme will also be considering how well areas are sustaining the improvements reported from interventions in previous years.

9.2 The Committee received the presentation and commented that members would welcome seeing some examples of the impact of this activity in the presentations to the February meeting.

#### **20/5/10 Further Education KPI update 2020-21**

10.1 The APQTLA presented the report, commenting that the retention rate (99%) is strong across all areas. There are emergent gaps in the attendance rate of different groups of students and this is a strong focus for action, particularly improving attendance at GCSE English and maths classes. Attendance at face-to-face sessions is good and therefore managers are arranging to provide more English and maths classes on campus. In addition, a deep dive into English and maths GCSE attendance across all faculties is planned ensure that the most effective practice is embedded across all modes.

10.2 The Committee received the report for assurance, expressing support for the comprehensive and accurate report about the College's progress towards the KPI targets and the impact of continuous quality improvement and performance management activity.

#### **20/5/11 Students' Union Annual Report 2019-20**

11.1 Robin Webber-Jones, Vice Principal Higher Education and Academic Studies (VPHEAS) joined the meeting and presented the annual report. The Committee noted that in 2019-20, the Students' Union had been active in local and national initiatives developing and promoting good practice in college students' unions. Some activities had moved online during lockdown however engagement had remained high notably for activities fostering good mental health.

11.2 The Committee received the report.

#### **20/5/12 Student Voice Term 1 Update**

12.1 The VPHEAS presented the report, which provided an update on Student Voice activity relating to FE students during term one of 2020-2021 and specifically the outcomes of the Term One Induction Survey.

12.2 It was noted that the response rate to the induction survey had doubled and respondents had given high approval ratings for key questions. The survey also gave students an opportunity to feedback on their concerns about attending campus (or not)

during the pandemic. This feedback had informed the COVID-19 risk assessment and enabled the college to align its support and messaging around re-opening.

- 12.3 Members welcomed the increased response rate and asked about the students who did not respond to surveys. The President of the Student Union said that class and faculty reps are elected, trained and have a remit to gather feedback from the whole class. To get all views heard, the survey data had been followed up with meetings of focus groups and class and faculty student reps to reflect on the feedback and raise any other issues.
- 12.4 The Committee received the report and agreed to report positive assurance to the GB that the College has embedded arrangements for obtaining the views of students for oversight of college activities.

#### **20/5/13 Higher Education KPI and CIP update Term 1 2020-21**

- 13.1 The VPHEAS introduced the report, which provides data for members to monitor progress against targets and assurance to members that managers are effectively implementing the measures in the HE College Improvement Plan (CIP).
- 13.2 The Committee received the report.

#### **20/5/14 Higher Level Skills Strategy update 2020-21**

- 14.1 The VP HEAS introduced the report, updating the Committee on the ongoing work to create an implementation plan, following governor approval of the Higher Level Skills Strategy on 9 September 2020.
- 14.2 Members considered the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.
- Operation vs. strategic planning:** a member asked how feedback from a recent institutional re-approval visit would be reflected in the HE work plan. The VP HEAS said that the implementation plan for HLS Strategy is for the longer term development of HE. Any action required in response to the findings of the institutional approval visit would be scheduled into operational work plans to enable the college to respond by the agreed due date.
- Risk rating:** members asked about the rationale underpinning the risk ratings and suggested that operational risk registers should adopt the same scoring system as that used by the Strategic Risk Register. The CEP agreed that it would be helpful to use the SRR risk scoring consistently across the college.

- 14.3 The Committee received the report and agreed:

**ACTION:** next iteration of HLS Strategy plan to be included in papers for January Governor Strategy meeting and to use the same approach to categorising risks as Strategic Risk Register.

VP  
HEAS

20.1.21

**20/5/15 HE Student Outcomes (Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) data**

- 15.1 The Committee received the report, noting that the OfS had not yet published the LEO and TEF data for the college's HE provision and therefore the report covered the actions the College is taking to improve graduate outcomes and continue to meet the provisions in its approved Access and Participation Plan.

**20/5/16 Higher Education Student Voice Update (Induction Survey)**

- 16.1 The VP HEAS introduced the report on the results of the college's induction survey of new HE students. The approach and questions were informed by relevant sections of the Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code and the findings had been explored via the HE Student Forum and in meetings of HE Representatives.

- 16.2 Members considered the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

**Action-focus:** members welcomed the assurance provided in the next steps and stressed the importance of feedback leading to improvement action, which is clearly communicated to students.

**Cross-college reporting:** a member asked if the termly report could take a cross-college view of the student voice. The CEP said that how HE students and apprentices experience the College is different to that of FE students. The Committee had been alive to the danger of student voice activities being geared to needs and attendance patterns of large numbers of FE learners and had therefore moved to receiving distinct reports for different categories of learners. Managers would look at how to build in reporting on common themes and follow-up action. The VPHEAS said that the student participation team does look for common themes across all the feedback, whilst recognising that different learner groups might require a different improvement action.

- 16.3 The Committee received the report, welcoming the assurance that the college has a systematic approach to obtaining feedback on the HE student experience and taking action to make improvements. Members supported the next steps outlined in the report to continue to improve student satisfaction.

**20/5/17 Apprenticeships KPI update**

- 17.1 Andrew Hartley, The Executive Director of Commercial and Operations (EDCO) presented the report highlighting the concerns about delays in apprentices being able to complete their programme due to the continuing impact of COVID-19. In the period up to 31 October 2020, the overall achievement rate is ahead of that at the same time in 2019/20. The number of

apprentices on a break in learning is higher than anticipated although much lower than in June 2020.

- 17.2 The Committee noted the cluster of business and management apprentices on a break in learning and asked if there were particular reasons for this. The EDCO said that most of the affected apprentices worked in either healthcare or hospitality settings. Apprentices in business support roles in the NHS had been temporarily reallocated to other roles to support the response to COVID-19. Apprentices in the hospitality sector had been furloughed due to the impact of COVID-19. Staff are maintaining contact with all apprentices on a break in learning and their employers with a view to re-engaging them once the furlough or temporary redeployment ends.
- 17.3 The Committee received the report and noted that the college had submitted an action plan to the ESFA, as agreed at the last TLQSE meeting. Managers would be meeting the ESFA shortly to discuss progress against the plan.

#### **20/5/18 Apprentice Voice update**

- 18.1 The EDCO presented the report on the induction survey administered to new start apprentices in October 2020. Members noted that the small cohort size is due to the phasing of apprentice recruitment in 2020/21. The main action from the survey is to provide more training for apprentices on using smart assessor software early in the programme. This was ongoing and the impact would be tested with next cohort of new starters in early 2021.
- 18.2 The Committee received the report and recommended **ACTION:** it would be good practice to do a pulse survey with the current cohort of new apprentices to check that their understanding of how to use Smart Assessor had been addressed.

EDCO 3.2.21

#### **20/5/19 Recruitment**

- 19.1 The DCE/DP presented the report, commenting that the numbers had been submitted to the ESFA so were no longer confidential. The report indicated that the college is above target for 16-18 year old students on study programmes, on target for adult learners and close to target for HE. Apprenticeship recruitment is on target for August-October 2020. With continuing disruption to business due to COVID-19, some employers are being cautious about plans for 2021. The college is seeing large employers pushing apprentice recruitment further back in 2021. The college had adjusted its curriculum plan for this.
- 19.2 The Committee received the report.

#### **20/5/20 Review of meeting and closing remarks**

20.1 Members commented as follows:

- The Committee had received a lot of information and members felt that they had been able to gain a good understanding particularly on those aspects of teaching, learning and the student experience that are seeing the continuing impact of COVID-19 and what the College is doing about this.
- There was a strong feeling that the next iteration of the Self-Assessment Report should convey the things the college is doing well. There is a danger that we take this for granted and fail to convey these points to people outside the college who are scrutinising the provision.

**20/5/21 Date and time of next meeting**

21.1 Wednesday 10 March 2021 08.30-11.00