

Date: 3 February 2021

Clerk to the Corporation
Granville Road
Sheffield, S2 2RL

Venue: Zoom (Online Meeting)

Tel: 0114 260 2620
Email
alison.shillito@sheffcol.ac.uk

Present: Beri Hare (Chair), college governor
Gwyn Arnold, college governor
Stephen Betts, college governor
Peter Brooks, college governor
Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive and Principal and college governor (except 09.30 – 10.00 for Ofsted meeting)
Kathryn Fulton, President of The Sheffield College Students' Union, and college governor
Sol Miah, college governor
Richard Moore, co-opted committee member
Seb Schmoller, chair of governors
Steven Spence, staff governor (left at 10.00 for Ofsted meeting)

In attendance: Andrew Hartley, Executive Director Commercial and Operations
Mark Hepworth, Head of Learner Recruitment (10.20 – 10.30)
Sarah Kettlewell, Head of Student Participation and Careers (from 09.45 – 10.00)
Anita Klich, Governance and Projects Officer
John Mothersole, college governor and Chair Designate (until 10.30)
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to the Governing Body.
Anita Straffon, Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal (08.30 – 09.30)
Elise Temple, Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment (08.30 – 09.40)
Jane Thompson, Head of Quality and Compliance, Apprenticeships, (08.30 - 09.40)
Rachel Topliss, Head of Employer Academy Partnerships & Work Related Activity (10.05 – 10.25)

Action
by **by**
whom **when**

21/1/1 Welcome, introduction and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair advised that the Ofsted monitoring visit had commenced that morning. Some of the staff due to present items to the meeting were involved in the inspection programme. Members would agree the next steps for this business.

21/1/2 Declaration of interest

- 2.1 The Committee noted the standing declarations of the Chief Executive and Principal (CEP), staff governor and student governor. The Committee agreed there were no interests requiring any action for the business on the agenda.

21/1/3 Minutes of the meeting on 2 December 2020

- 3.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting on 2 December 2020 as an accurate record, subject to one correction to the date of the next meetings (minute reference 20/5/21), which should be 3 February 2021 and 17 March 2021.

21/1/4 Matters Arising & Action Record

- 4.1 The Clerk presented the Action Tracker, including two actions from previous meetings that are still in progress:
- Minute 20/4/18.2, OfS regulations: the Clerk reported that she had circulated a report on compliance with the HE Governance Code to the Search, Remuneration and Governance Committee to consider at its meeting on 10 February and would report back to the next meeting of Teaching, Learning, Quality and Student Experience Committee (TLQSE).
- Minute 20/5/14.3, Higher Level Skills Strategy update: the Executive Leadership Team is approving a format for recording and monitoring multi-year plans. This included a consistent approach to assessing and scoring risk. The Committee agreed that the action to make the scoring of risk consistent be agreed as Complete and removed from the Tracker.
- 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.

21/1/5 Apprenticeship Update

- 5.1 Andrew Hartley, Executive Director of Commercial and Operations (EDCO) presented the report, supported by Jane Thompson, Head of Quality and Compliance, Apprenticeships and Elise Temple, Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment (APQTLA).
- 5.2 The main points highlighted in the presentation were:
- Progress on the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):** the college has implemented the structures and staffing to deliver the QIP, bringing the provision into one faculty with enhanced leadership provision. Minimum standards panels have reviewed every apprenticeship programme to agree run-out or an improvement plan. Teams have reviewed the curriculum of each programme to ensure appropriate sequencing of knowledge building and integration of on-the-job and off-the-job training.

Apprentice feedback: as requested by the Committee, the faculty has run a follow-up pulse survey with apprentices to check that they understand how to use Smart Assessor, and this has confirmed they do. Leaders and managers are using the feedback from the induction phase to improve apprentices' experience of induction and initial advice and guidance. The team is continuing to work on improving feedback from apprentices with the next cycle of apprentice voice survey launching in March.

Performance: cohort analysis of the performance data shows that newly recruited cohorts are making better progress than cohorts recruited in 2016-2018. This is despite the restrictions due to COVID-19 continuing to disrupt college and on-the job skills training.

Constraints: apprentices are continuing to experience disruptions due to COVID-19. The college has adapted programmes, where necessary, to support learners on a break in learning and to continue knowledge building while campuses are closed. Around 900 apprentices have experienced some delay to their learning, functional skills exams, or end point assessments due to COVID-19 restrictions, of these 307 are due to complete this year. The team is working to mitigate this making plans to get apprentices back to campus for skills training and assessments as soon as it is safe to do so.

Interventions: the new faculty has agreed standards for assessors and staff are undergoing Continual Professional Development (CPD) to ensure they understand the standards and reporting. This is supported by observations to make sure assessors' work is consistent and effective. Where data identifies under-performance, the Quality Team run a deep dive to identify the issues and work with managers and staff to make rapid improvement. The impact of this is demonstrated by the Business area. The Deep Dive into Business in 2019/20 resulted in an increased percentage of high grades and retention.

Regulation: the college has met with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to review progress against its plan for addressing minimum standards. ESFA regional officers welcomed the thoroughness of the plan and have given positive feedback on its implementation within the current constraints.

Leadership: the college has recruited a new Vice Principal for Apprentices, who is due to join the college in March. Pending their arrival, the APQTLA, who has extensive experience of apprenticeship work, is providing additional support.

Next steps: as above, the faculty is planning the sequence and timetable for apprentices to return to campus for skills training and assessment as soon as possible. Leaders and managers are reviewing induction and initial advice and guidance to build in more technical guidance at the start of the programme and to involve the apprentice's line manager to ensure a consistent and high-quality start to the programme. The "Assessor on a Page" dashboard is under development and will also launch this term

to support observation and monitoring of teaching and learning quality.

5.3 Members considered the report and the main points of the discussion were as follows.

- **Presentation format vs. data table reports:** several members commented that they preferred the data table reports presented in October and December 2020 which had highlighted performance data rather than the presentation which tended to detail activities. They queried whether a presentation could cover the detail that members needed to be assured on progress, limiting factors and remedial actions. The EDCO said that the presentation was a periodic overview of the QIP for apprenticeships, which had been approved before some members joined the board. The talk had included detailed data to back the statements in the slides. Managers take seriously members' request for fuller, more impactful information on apprentices. In 2020/21, the committee's cycle of business includes separate reports on apprenticeship data. Managers are relentless in tracking the number of apprentices on furlough or who are at risk of not achieving or not completing in a timely manner and reporting this to TLQSE. The use of the presentation for this meeting was intended to enhance governors' understanding and their opportunity to have a positive impact on the action the college is taking.
- **Pace of improvement:** a member commented that it is important for governors to understand why progress in improving outcomes seems to be slower for apprenticeships compared to other provision, how the college is gripping this and the limiting factors. Are there factors other than COVID-19 that are constraining the pace of improvement? The EDCO said that the slow progress was due to the disruption of COVID-19 restrictions. Apprentices are being more heavily affected by COVID-19 than other provision because it is disrupting essential on-the-job training as well as campus-based skills training. Leaders and managers are working on plans to recommence campus-based assessment for apprentices after half-term. Staff are frustrated by the pace at which apprentices can return to skills training on campus and how this is limiting the pace and number of apprentices achieving their qualification and progressing to the next stage in their career.
- **Using the data to drive improvements:** it was commented that it would be useful for members to see the link between activity data and quality improvement for example the number of apprentices using Smart Assessor and how assessors are using that data to intervene to prompt action and support progress, and the link between CPD and improvement in the quality of induction and assessor interactions with apprentices.
- **Curriculum and portfolio mix:** a member asked if the long term data on performance by year from 2015/16 had been affected by portfolio changes. The EDCO said that there had been more subcontracting in 2015/16. The subcontracted

provision tended to be short programmes for adults, which had high success rates. The college had moved away from subcontracting deliberately as part of the 2018-21 College Strategy and for public policy reasons. The move to Apprenticeship Standards is having a positive impact on completion but that improvement has slowed with the impact of COVID-19.

- 5.4 The Committee received the presentation and commented that although members had expressed reservations about the format it had stimulated a lot of useful discussion. It had also been useful to schedule this item earlier in the meeting to ensure it received proportionate time for discussion. The committee agreed:

ACTIONS:

TLQSE meetings to ensure that there is sufficient time given to and focus on the apprenticeship progress report.	Clerk/ Chair	17/3/21
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Chair of TLQSE to meet the EDCO to discuss the issues the chair was raising in the meeting including to look at lessons learned from the detailed data reports considered in October and December 2020, which members had complimented as clear and impactful on data.	EDCO	17/3/21
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Anita Straffon and Angela Foulkes left the meeting at 09.30 to meet Ofsted inspectors.

21/1/6 Careers and Guidance presentation

- 6.1 Sarah Kettlewell, Head of Student Participation and Careers joined the meeting at 10.05 to give the presentation on this area of strength for the college.

Intent: initially the intent of the careers and guidance service had been to implement the National Careers Strategy, achieve the Gatsby benchmarks for provision and provide learners with a great service. The team had achieved the benchmarks in June 2020, before the national deadline of December, and had achieved the national Quality in Careers Standard. The team now aspire to be the lead organisation for careers in the region and a leading service nationally. This will ensure that learners and employers in the city region benefit from access to excellent careers advice and guidance that raises aspirations and helps people understand how to achieve their aspirations.

Implementation: Careers works with partners and alumni to provide a comprehensive careers service to learners and enquirers. The service is now fully remotely delivered. Learners can access careers help and information via SharePoint and a dedicated YouTube channel, which contains bite size/60 seconds videos giving guidance for key points of the student journey. Learners benefit from the online UP Fest (an annual week long showcase of progression routes and careers options) as well as other themed weeks on apprenticeships, Higher Education (HE) and national careers week.

Impact: following investment in staffing, the team have increased the number of individual appointments, sessions delivered to groups and engagements with programme teams. The raising aspirations work has resulted in more students applying to HE and more applications to selective universities and courses. Since moving appointments online, the team has seen an improvement in the feedback after the careers intervention with more learners reporting that after the appointment they are more confident that they know their options, what they need to work on and feel confident they can do this.

External recognition: as well as the above achievements, in 2019/20, the service achieved re-accreditation of the Matrix Standard for high quality information, advice and guidance provision and in 2020/21 achieved commended status and was a finalist in the AoC (Association of College) Beacon Award for innovation in careers and enterprise.

- 6.2 Members considered the presentation and welcomed the high quality of work reported, particularly the focus on employment and enterprise. A member asked how the team manages external speakers and work experience while fulfilling its responsibilities for keeping young people safe. The Head of Student Participation and Careers said that the team uses college policies for checking employers' suitability for offering work experience. For external speakers, the team vets speakers using the college External Risk Assessment process and they see all resources before anything is shared with students. The college always hosts the session, and a member of staff is always present (remotely as well as for on-site speakers).
- 6.3 The Committee received the presentation and members welcomed the contribution that the service is making to raising students' aspirations and career goals.

21/1/7 Employer Skills Academies

- 7.1 Rachel Topliss, Head of Employer Academy Partnerships & Work-Related Activity, gave the presentation, highlighting the following.

Intent: Employer Skills Academies are intended to create an academy environment where students work on business projects and benefit from direct engagement with the employer/sponsor. The employer engagement it generates is intended to support the college's aim for all students to benefit from work-related activity or employer interaction.

Implementation: since the launch of the Employer Skills Academies in September 2019, the number and range of academies have grown faster than the original targets, driven by interest from employers and demand from students. The high profile of academies has generated leads to other types of engagement such as Sponsor a Student, work experience and external speakers. Depending on the academy, Employer Skills Academy students benefit from projects, visits and

demonstrations as well as working with employer mentors on projects.

Impact: the academies are popular with potential applicants looking for alternatives to staying on at school. One of the newest academies received 70 applications for 25 places. Once accepted onto an Employer Skills Academy programme, students have a significantly higher rate of attendance and retention than the college average.

- 7.2 Members considered the presentation and the main issue discussed was the potential for Employer Skills Academies to help the college to improve the experience for all our learners. The Head of Employer Academy Partnerships & Work Related Activity said that there are three academies open to all students to participate alongside their main study programme. Membership of the Chamber of Commerce academy is open to students. Student members benefit from workshops on enterprise, employability skills and fortnightly guest speaker talks on careers in different sectors. Attendance at guest speakers' sessions has increased during remote learning and the feedback from students is that it is motivating and inspiring as well as giving practical information on career routes..
- 7.3 A different example of the positive impact of Employer Skills Academy partnerships was the Laptops for Kids project. This project started with students in the WAN Disco Data Academy and had developed into an opportunity for all computing students to get involved in servicing donated laptops for families in need of devices for home schooling. This shows how bringing employers into the college for a long term sustained engagement can generate (unplanned) opportunities for many more students.
- 7.4 The Committee received the presentation and welcomed the success of the Employer Skills Academies in engaging employers in a productive long-term relationship with the college. Students participating in the Employer Skills Academies are benefiting from this the academy ethos and experience. Governors welcomed the action the college is taking to ensure that skills academies also generate opportunities and benefits for the wider student community.

21/1/8 Policy Review: Recruitment, Selection, and Admissions Policy

- 8.1 Mark Hepworth, Head of Learner Recruitment joined the meeting to present the rationale for the latest updates to the Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy and answer any questions. Members noted that the policy updates were detailed in the Change History on pages 2-3.
- 8.2 The committee considered the changes to the policy and asked for clarification on the following.
- Late applications:** the Head of Learner Recruitment confirmed that the college follows the same procedure for deciding on

applications irrespective of timing but the timing may affect the offer the college is able to make to an applicant.

Applicants re-applying after expulsion or exclusion: the Head of Learner Recruitment said that all applicants are treated the same in deciding whether to offer them a place. Where an applicant has previously been expelled, the college may attach conditions to the offer, such as learning contract, to ensure that the applicant can return to study successfully and safely.

8.3 The Committee approved the updated policy.

21/1/9 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Employability

9.1 The presentation was postponed as the staff due to present this item were meeting Ofsted inspectors. Members noted the slides in the board pack and agreed to receive the presentation to the next meeting.

21/1/10 Impact of Deep Dive Process: Inclusion

10.1 The presentation was postponed as the staff due to present were meeting Ofsted inspectors. Members noted the slides in the board pack and agreed to receive the presentation to the next meeting.

21/1/11 Access and Participation Plan (APP) Annual Impact Report

11.1 Members noted that Robin Webber-Jones, Vice Principal Higher Education and Academic Studies (VPHEAS), who was due to present the item, was meeting Ofsted inspectors.

11.2 Members supported the substance of the report and commented that most of the queries they wished to raise concerned drafting. The Committee agreed

ACTION: members to email their comments on the draft to the VPHEAS and the DCE/DP as soon as possible and that the CEP should sign off the final report for submission to the Office for Students (OfS) by the deadline of 28 February 2021.

VP
HEAS 28/2/21

21/1/12 OfS Consultation on HE Quality and Standards

12.1 The Committee noted the report and that the outcome of the recent consultation on quality and standards would be likely to have implications for all providers, including the college. The proposal for interventions based on minimum thresholds, if adopted, could have more impact on smaller HE providers, where an issue with one course may affect the overall data.

ACTION: keep the results of the consultation under review and update governors on the impact of the new scheme, once announced. The deadline would be dependent on OfS publication of its proposed scheme following the consultation.

VP
HEAS tbd

21/1/13 Review of meeting and closing remarks

- 13.1 Members expressed support for the conduct of the Ofsted Monitoring Visit.

21/1/14 Date and time of next meeting

- 14.1 Wednesday 17 March 2021 08.30 -11.00
Wednesday 16 June 2021 08.30 - 11.00