



TEACHING, LEARNING, QUALITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
CONFIRMED MINUTES

Date: 11 October 2023

Venue: Boardroom, City Campus

Clerk to the Corporation
Granville Road
Sheffield, S2 2RL
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Present: Gill Alton (Chair)
Peter Brooks
Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive and Principal and governor
Sam Giove
Sol Miah (by videoconference)
Kam Grewal Joy
John Mothersole
Paul Senior
Leo Wilcox, Student Governor (by videoconference from item 4 onwards)
Phil Wymer, Staff Governor

In attendance: Shaun Cook, Vice Principal Technical Education and Skills (VPTES)
Daniele Palacios, Vice Principal Apprenticeships (VPApps) for item 9 only
Mark Pearson, Executive Director Strategy and Systems Improvement (EDSSI)
James Smythe, Vice Principal Student Experience (VPSE)
Dave Trounce, Deputy Principal, (DP)
Petra Williams, Vice Principal Quality and Standards (VPQS)
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to Governing Body (GAC)
Emma Lake, Executive Assistant (note taker)

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

23/3/1 **Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 There were no apologies for absence. The meeting was quorate.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Dave Trounce, new Deputy Principal, and Leo Wilcox, TSC Students' Union President to their first meeting of the committee.
- 1.3 It was noted that there had been a delay in uploading the draft college Self-Assessment Report 2022-23 (SAR). Members confirmed that they had been able to review the report prior to the meeting.

23/3/2 Declaration of interest

- 2.1 The committee noted the standing interests of the staff governor, student governor and Chief Executive and Principal and a new interest from Paul Senior that he was advising a private training provider (Portland) on developing a NVQ (National Vocational Qualifications) for construction industry staff.

The committee agreed that no action was required for this meeting.

23/3/3 Minutes of the last meeting

- 3.1 The committee confirmed the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2023, subject to a correction to the attendance list to add Sol Miah.

23/3/4 Matters Arising and Action Record

- 4.1 The Governance Advisor & Clerk (GAC) presented the action record. The committee noted that all matters arising from the last meeting had been included on the action tracker. All actions had been completed, except the following.

Minute 23/2/5.7 Safeguarding update: in response to a request from members, the GAC was arranging a 30 minute online Safeguarding update for governors on 15/11/2023. The update would focus on the Board's responsibilities and would be an opportunity for members to ask any questions arising from the annual update on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

- 4.2 The committee approved removal from the action record of the actions marked or agreed as completed.

23/3/5 Student Experience

- 5.1 James Smythe, Vice Principal Student Experience (VPSE) presented the annual report on safeguarding, student behaviour and student voice for 2022-23. The VPSE highlighted the following points:

Safeguarding: based on the evidence and assurance presented in termly reports to TLQSE, college safeguarding remained effective in 2022-23. As agreed by the committee at its last meeting, the Safeguarding Policy had been updated to ensure it covered the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Student Positive Engagement and Behaviour: in 2022-23 a higher proportion of behaviour incidents were dealt with through the engagement stages of the policy compared to 2021-22. There were no permanent exclusions in 2022-23 and the number and scale of behaviour interventions were similar to pre-pandemic level.

Student voice: in 2022-23, the rate of student participation in surveys and satisfaction rates were the highest recorded since the introduction of the current Student Voice framework in 2018. The high participation rate increased the confidence the committee could

place in the results. The induction survey for new entrants in 2023-24 was in progress and the participation rate had increased further, including the participation of adult students.

Work-related activity and Employer Skills Academies: in 2022-23, 890 students had engaged in work placements of 315 hours, well above the target of 482. The number of students engaging in some form of work-related activity also increased.

- 5.2 The committee considered the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

Impact of interventions to improve access to safeguarding: members welcomed the progress made in closing the gaps in disclosure rates between male and female students and between white students and those from different ethnic groups. The fact that the college had identified the gaps and put effective interventions in place to make safeguarding accessible to groups with previously low disclosure rates was positive assurance that the college was using data effectively to advance equality and safeguard students. The VPSE said that the college was being asked to lead several sector and City initiatives on Safeguarding and this also demonstrated that college practice was regarded as sector leading.

Work placement: members noted the increase in work-related activity and students taking-up placements and commented that this was good evidence that the college would be able to meet the work placement needs of its new T Level programmes. It was also evidence that the college was engaging with employers and ensuring that college provision is relevant to skills needs.

- 5.3 The committee received the report and congratulated the VPSE on a strong year for safeguarding, student engagement and student voice. This was a good platform for setting ambitious targets for engagement and satisfaction in 2023-24.

23/3/6 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

6.1 College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022-23

Petra Williams, Vice Principal Quality & Standards (VPQS) presented the draft college Self-Assessment Report 2022-23, highlighting that:

- this first draft was presented for comment
- all elements were graded as good, in line with the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection, although there had been further progress since the inspection
- the SAR had been developed from academy level SARs and there were to be further meetings with academies to ensure the validity and consistency of the data and moderate self-assessments.

Members were asked to consider if the picture in the SAR reflected their views of the college, the reports they had received during the year and other experience in the college.

6.2 The committee considered the draft SAR and the main points in the discussion were as follows.

Validity, members said that the self-assessment reflected the data they had received during the year and triangulated with the improvements the college had made in student outcomes in 2022-23.

SAR structure and use of evidence was aimed at meeting the needs of Ofsted but made the report long and less accessible to other readers. The committee agreed that the college should make the SAR shorter and punchier. In 2023-24, termly reports needed a sharper focus on the top priority actions for quality development and the evidence of their impact.

ACTION: reduce the length of this year's reports by

- reducing or removing the narrative on those things the college is doing well, this can be shown in the data
- in the SAR, summarizing the overall effectiveness of the college in no more than a page and a half
- sharing with the committee the high-level Quality Development Plan against which college managers will report to the committee for assurance.

6.3 Teaching and Learning Quality update

The committee received the report and commented that 91% of observations rating good or better was high and asked what additional assurance the quality team could provide to support the accuracy of ratings. The VPQS said that all observers were trained and accredited using an externally assured process. New observers shadowed an experienced observer before doing observations on their own and gradings were triangulated with learning walks and classroom visits. For 2023-24, the Quality Team had replaced "deep dives" with the Spotlight Process that focused quality enhancement activity on academies or programme areas that needed to improve and cross-college improvement themes.

The committee received the report for assurance and approved the proposed quality measures and targets.

6.4 English and Maths Strategy

The VPQS presented a summary of the year's work on the English and maths strategy and the outcomes of the 2023 summer exam series. The main successes had been making the strategy more visible and ensuring that the whole team (including exams support) worked together to improve student attendance at exams and that eligible students received their exam support. This had led to an overall improvement in the pass rate for GCSE English and GCSE maths. The college had maintained high grades rates similar to 2021-22, despite national changes to grade boundaries.

6.5 The VPQT said that the priority for 2023-24 was ensuring consistently high-quality teaching and learning in classes to improve high grades rates. To achieve this, English and maths teaching quality was a cross-

college Spotlight theme. The spotlight process would generate relevant improvement actions for every academy and every member of staff. There would be new continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities in Mastery in Maths and, from June 2024, the BASE programme for English teachers to support staff to meet their targets. There would be observations of English and maths classes in academy and programme spotlights as well as cross-college.

6.6 The committee considered the report and the main points discussed were as follows.

- **impact of new improvement actions**, members asked how managers would be able to assess if the interventions were being successful. The VPQS said that they would be tracking the results of in-year assessment and mock examinations, which would also inform committee reports and projections. There would be more students resitting GCSE in November 2023, compared to last year, and the outcomes would give an early indication of the impact of improvements. Class attendance was another indicator, and this was already higher than at the same point last year
- **grade-boundary reset** members asked if there would be further downward pressure on grades in 2023-24. The VPQS said that the message from Ofqual was that grades in England had been aligned to pre-pandemic levels. Grade boundaries changed each year depending on the demands of the assessment but they were likely to be maintained around the same level as in 2023. It was commented that lower grade boundaries had increased the number of students nationally who needed to re-sit English and maths GCSEs. The Chief Executive and Principal said that the college was responding to the demand by running additional classes and accommodating more students on Level 2 provision.
- **Comparison between 2023 and pre-pandemic results**, a member asked how this year's outcomes compared to the pre-pandemic profile. The VPQS said that the 2019 results profile was higher than that in 2023 and this reflected the uneven impact of lost learning on the college's students. The college had a higher than average proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and national analysis of exam results showed that students from disadvantaged backgrounds had been more badly affected than other students by disrupted learning during the pandemic. The college forecast in May 2023, was based on the information available at the time.
- **What interventions would make the most difference?** The VPQS said that students experiencing consistently engaging and productive learning in the classroom would be most likely to encourage good attendance and enable more students to achieve high grades
- **Progress measures**, the committee asked about progress between grades 1 to 3. The Deputy Principal (DP) said that

even if students did not manage to achieve a high grade, it was important to recognise an improvement in their score. The college was analysing the data to obtain this information as it would be helpful to teachers, motivating for students and would give a fuller picture of the impact of the strategy.

6.7 The committee received the report on the progress of the English and maths strategy and looked forward to receiving the monitoring data on the impact of the 2023-24 development plan.

6.8 **Complaints annual report 2022-23**

The VPQS presented the annual report and said that the main difference compared to last year had been that case managers had resolved more complaints at stage one. This had been achieved by agreeing the outcome with the complainant before finalising the outcome letter. This increased efficiency and resulted in few complaints at Stage 2. There were no common themes identified in the complaints. It was noted that some categories were broad and therefore for 2023-24, the communications category would be broken down to make it easier to identify common themes.

The committee received the report and was assured that the Complaints Policy was being implemented effectively.

6.9 **Periodic Policy Review: Teaching and Learning Policies**

The committee received the following policies.

a) **College Complaints Policy and Procedure**

The committee noted the annual review and approved the minor updates to the policy.

b) **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Development Policy 2023-24**

The committee approved the updated policy including the change of title and inclusion of the Spotlight Process.

c) **Spotlight Process and Guidance 2023-24**

The committee endorsed the new quality enhancement process and asked if it would also be applied to support departments. The VPQS said that the focus of the process was on academies being accountable for their student experience and outcomes. However, the root cause analysis might spot common issues in support departments and would prompt college leadership team managers to work together to resolve these.

23/3/7 Technical Education & Skills

7.1 Shaun Cook, Vice Principal Technical Education and Skills (VPTES) presented the report which included updated student outcomes compared to last year's results and the most recently published National Rates (NR). The data was analysed by student age group and by different subject areas/levels, to highlight which aspects of

provision still needed to be improved. The report also included the outturn KPI outcomes for 2022-23 and proposed targets for 2023-24.

- 7.2 The committee considered the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

KPI targets for 2023-24: members welcomed the continued improvement in student outcomes in 2022-23 but achievement for young people overall was just below the latest National Rates. The committee supported that the target be set for a further improvement of at least +2 percentage points (pp) continuing the upward trajectory of the college's achievement over the last 5 years. The committee agreed that the proposed 2023-24 targets were realistic except the target for percentage of young students making progress in English and maths. It was agreed that this should be set at 80% of students making at least one grade progress to make it realistic.

Ambition: being a leader in technical education meant that the Board wanted to see student achievement results in the top 10% of English colleges by the end of the current strategy. Members asked if the college was on target to achieve top decile results across the college. The Chief Executive and Principal said that some areas were already producing results in the top decile. All academies had the capacity to achieve results in the top quintile. Setting ambitious targets would ensure that all academies continued to focus on quality enhancement and staff development. Achieving consistently high-quality provision for all students was ambitious and realistic

Improvement: the quality team would be implementing the new Spotlight Process with those areas. Reviewers would adjust the intensity of scrutiny depending on the starting point and needs of each area. In some cases, a whole academy was under the spotlight whereas in other academies, improvement action was at programme level. Academy directors had scorecards that went beyond achievement, with targets for improving student participation in enrichment, work related activities and equality and diversity measures to ensure no student is left behind

Board level KPI: it was noted that each committee had detailed KPI for their remit, but it would be useful for Governing Body (GB) to reconsider the headline indicators for a "great" college including:

- Student participation in enrichment
- equality measures, to identify and close gaps
- student voice outcomes to triangulate the information about what students are enjoying and getting out of their college experience.

- 7.3 The committee approved the proposed KPI measures and targets for 2023-24, subject to a change to the target for Young People making at least one grade progress in English and maths to 80%

ACTIONS:

- | | | | |
|------|--|--------|---------|
| (i) | Amend the targets for 2023-24 as agreed and | VP TES | 6/12/23 |
| (ii) | include on the agenda for the next Governor Strategy Event early consideration of the 2024-25 GB level indicators and targets. | GAC | 18/1/24 |

3/3/8 Higher Education

8.1 Mark Pearson, Executive Director Strategy and Systems Improvement (EDSSI) presented an update on university-level provision and the draft Self-Evaluation Document (SED) for 2022-23. The report highlighted the following points:

- **Continuation rates** had decreased compared to 2021-22. The reasons students withdrew varied but for 2023, the HE Team had put in place additional support to identify students at risk of withdrawing and support them to continue. The HE team would be reviewing the impact of the changes and progress against the target during the year
- **Access and Participation Plan (APP):** in 2022-23, students from Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnic backgrounds who lived in the most disadvantaged postcodes had been more likely to withdraw from their college HE course than students from “white” backgrounds. The gaps for the other APP targets had reduced. HE group sizes meant the indicator was affected by a small number of students. The EDSSI said that early intervention to support students at risk of withdrawal would also help close the emerging APP gap. Support would be tailored to help overcome barriers to participation
- **Key Performance Indicators and targets 2023-24,** the report included the outcomes against KPI for 2022-23 and draft measures and targets for 2023-24.

8.2 The committee considered the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

- **KPI targets:** it was noted that the target for students achieving a “good” honours degree for 2023-24 was 15pp higher than the rate achieved in 2022-23. Members asked if this was a realistic target. The EDSSI said that the target was based on staff knowledge of the performance of continuing level 5 students. Staff judged the good honours target to be ambitious and achievable
- **Benchmarking:** given the college’s demographic data, a member asked if there were more appropriate groups of HE providers against which the college should be benchmarking. The EDSSI said that the college was participating in a national group of HE in FE providers and this might be a route to identifying more appropriate comparators. The new HE

leadership team would be continuing to develop the KPI scorecard

- **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF):** the HE Link Governor congratulated the HE Team on achieving a silver TEF award. This was a great platform for the college to continue to develop its university-level provision. The offer would be further strengthened by the college commitment to provide work placements or work-related activity. The HE Link Governor said that work experience was an important factor in attracting applicants and preparing graduates for employment. Successful progression to a positive destination was a critical measure, which was now assessed at 15 months after graduating instead of 6 months
- **National Student Survey (NSS):** it was noted that scores for 2022-23 had improved compared to 2021-22. The HE Link Governor advised caution about comparing current NSS results with 2021-22 data due to changes to the questions and methodology. The EDSSI said that the college was pleased with the high participation rate and was responding to the feedback. To address feedback on learning resources, HE tutors were working with partner universities to provide induction training on the university resources available to college HE students in Sheffield and online and how to use them. The college was also investing in new onsite learning resources and spaces as part of its capital investment programme
- **Progress on the Higher-Level Skills Strategy:** the EDSSI said that the HE Team were continuing to review the portfolio in the business planning process. The college had been successful in winning a grant to develop more Higher Technical Qualifications, the college's extensive relationships with employers and its ambition to increase the number of work experience opportunities would enable the college to develop a distinct technical HE offer targeted at the regional skills priorities.

8.3 Annual Self-Evaluation Document (SED)

The committee received the report and expressed assurance that:

- there had been a thorough annual self-assessment of the year's HE performance data
- the college had effective processes for taking action to improve areas identified for quality enhancement
- the college was maintaining compliance with the Office for Students' Conditions of Registration and its obligations to students.

The committee recommended approval to GB that the Board adopt the SED for 2022-23.

ACTION the committee would review the targets and benchmark data for HE once the new HE leadership team had taken a view on what data would be most useful to the academy and the board TLQSE 6/12/23

23/3/9 Apprenticeships

9.1 Daniele Palacios, Vice Principal Apprenticeships (VPApps) and Andrew Hartley, Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) introduced the update highlighting the following.

- **Outcomes 2022-23:** apprenticeship completion rates were 5pp above the most recent national rate and the number of apprentices past planned end date (PPED) had reduced by 24% since the last report
- **Progress against Quality Development Plan for 22-23:** the Apprenticeships+ team were using the upcoming college staff development day for whole team development on achieving and sustaining the quality improvements in the plan
- **KPI and Targets 2023-24:** were presented for approval including the additional apprenticeship starts in priority skills areas included in the Accountability Statement 2023-24.

9.2 The committee considered the report and the main issues discussed were as follows.

Non-completion: members asked about the reasons for apprentices leaving without completing their apprenticeship and what the college was doing to address this. The VPApps said that there had been delays in the availability of End Point Assessments (EPA) which had affected completion data for 2022-23, as PPED numbers included apprentices awaiting an EPA. For some programmes, the technical qualification taken by the apprentice rather than the EPA, enabled them to secure a permanent job or promotion. The college was working with awarding bodies to reduce delays, maintain communication with apprentices awaiting an EPA and prepare apprentices to do well in their EPA at first attempt

Vacancies: members asked why there were vacancies even though applications had increased. The VPApps said that there were more applicants this year who had not met the entry requirements including English and maths GCSE grades. The college referred unsuccessful applicants to other programmes, but it meant some apprenticeship vacancies took longer to fill

Learning support: members welcomed the work the college was doing to assess and provide additional support for neurodiverse apprentices. The VPApps said that the college was working with an external service provider to assess new entrants prior to starting their apprenticeship, agree learning support where needed and then track their progress through their programme.

9.3 The committee received the report and approved the key performance indicator measures and targets for 2023-24.

23/3/10 Learner Recruitment

- 10.1 The DCE presented an updated enrolment position which reported that recruitment numbers for young people and adults were on target; higher education was just below target and apprenticeship recruitment was around 80% of the target for the quarter.
- 10.2 The committee considered the report and commented that it was pleasing to see strong recruitment in Engineering and Health provision, in line with the college's skills priorities. The shift in grade boundaries at GCSE had meant that more students had entered level 2 courses and members asked how the college was adapting for the change in profile. The Chief Executive and Principal said that most lecturers taught across levels 2 and 3 so the college had been able to adapt the timetable quickly. Enrolment had run smoothly, and induction had provided a good start to the year.
- 10.3 The committee received the report and were assured that the college was addressing the operational issues arising from the changes to the profile of the new student intake.

23/3/11 Review of meeting and closing remarks

- 11.1 The committee was satisfied by the assurance received on the outcomes for 2022-23 and the new quality enhancement procedures. In the coming term, the challenge would be to make reporting even more sharply focused on the strategic quality development priorities.

As regards student experience, there had been little discussion about the experience of students moving from Peaks Campus. The DCE said that the move had gone smoothly. Planning had adapted to student feedback, with one group choosing to move to Hillsborough rather than City. The Project Board was continuing to meet to maintain oversight and continue planning for future use of Peaks. Student Mentors were ensuring that individual students received the additional support and transport agreed for the move.

The committee welcomed the additional reassurance.

23/3/12 Date and time of next meeting

- 12.1 6/12/2023 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus
28/2/2024 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus
12/6/2024 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus