

**Minutes of the
Quality, Standards and Achievement Committee
Tuesday 25 November 2021
TB602 Tower Block**

Present: Richard Dimbleby (Chair)
Melissa Peacock
Ian Pryce
Sheila Selwood
Allan Schofield
Luisa Vecchio

In attendance: Karen Campbell (Vice Principal)
John Guiney (Head of Quality)
Alex Mortby (Director of HE)
Rachel Nicol (Director of Governance & Clerk to the Corporation) (Minutes)
Petra Williams (Director of Quality Improvement, Learning, Teaching and Assessment ("QILTA"))

QSA/47/21 Apologies for absence

Vice Principals Em Lowe and Georgina Ager were unable to attend the meeting.

Abigail Stevens and Sharon De Leonardis gave apologies for absence.

QSA/48/21 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from those present relevant to the matters on the agenda.

QSA/49/21 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

QSA/50/21 TBCG Self Assessment Report ("SAR") and Quality Improvement Plan ("QIP")

The Chair thanked the team for their hard work in pulling together the comprehensive report.

The Director of QILTA outlined the process followed and the requirements for review. Key aspects were summarised including the slight improvement in timely achievement but with further work to be done on collating overall achievement

Discussion at Executive centred around reflection on personal development and how this had been managed during remote learning.

The Committee was keen to focus on a number of themes, and in particular reflect on work during the pandemic including around behaviour and the relationship with leadership and management.

It was clarified that the QIP presented provides the broad overview of what is planned. Assurance was given that the operational QIP will include clear time lines to enable monitoring by the Committee at future meetings.

Discussion centred around the level of satisfaction with “good” as opposed to “outstanding”, key drivers and motivations. The Committee was keen to understand how the College will identify the areas of focus and development to move from good to outstanding, particularly in the context of a larger college group.

The Quality team is working with directors to identify what is required to drive excellence in each area, including goals in terms of student destinations and a clear understanding of what “excellence” and “outstanding” look like for the College.

The Committee reflected on the relationship between a quality assurance process such as that of the SAR and the internal processes established to ensure outstanding / excellent / innovative. The Committee’s role in monitoring these issues will continue to be reviewed, with particular consideration to be given to how to reflect on the development of future practices.

It was confirmed that the SAR, in addition to being shared internally, is uploaded to the Ofsted portal.

The Committee noted the assurance provided by the robustness of the review, in particular the identification of areas for development.

The Committee were invited to advise the Director of QILTA of any typographical errors and presentation issues (all).

Consideration will be given to whether a map, better reflecting the geographical reach of the Group, can be identified (PW).

The Committee explored some curriculum areas and the reason for performance grades in more depth.

Work on attendance for English and maths and models for best practice were highlighted and structural changes explained. The correlation between on site attendance and areas identified for development is being explored.

The Committee reviewed the SAR section by section and in particular discussed:

Summary

- The comprehensive nature of the summary and the identification of areas to be an outstanding provider.
- Leadership and Management and the relationship between endorsements such as the College of the Year and the self assessed grade.

-The national agenda around staff workload and wellbeing and the relationship between accountability of students and staff and expectations around behaviour and attitudes.

-The transition to greater embedding and development of an holistic package of skills and knowledge within each curriculum area. Assurance was given on steps taken for closer support of curriculum areas to ensure learning is put into context.

Consideration will be given to how this might be better reflected in the summary(PW)

Quality of Education

The Committee was happy that this was a clear summary.

Behaviour and attitudes

The Committee considered that the report was positive, reflecting the strong engagement during Covid. The Committee considered that the narrative supported an outstanding grade in this area. ***Consideration will be given to reviewing the data, the narrative and the grade (PW).***

Measures for the assessment of behaviour and the relationship between disciplinaries, the correlation with safeguarding concerns and the interpretation of information was discussed. ***The need to reflect on the role of leadership and management, and how leadership know the behaviour policy is working was considered (PW).***

Personal Development

The Committee noted the number of positive statements. They discussed in particular the reluctance of adult students to return to site post Covid. Assurance was given that there has already been significant developments in this area to ensure the attraction and retention of particular student groups.

Although it was acknowledged that there was a significant amount of work and innovation in particular areas to promote development, the rationale for a grade 2 was the need for greater consistency in this area.

Leadership and Management

The Committee considered the potential tension between the narrative and the grade. The need for greater clarity between corporate leadership and programme leadership was raised. ***The general consensus of the Committee was that the narrative needs to address the achievement trends shown in the data. It should also make reference to the accolades achieved and explain why the College has graded itself as good.*** The links between programme leadership and corporate leadership and how this can be structured to support improvement was discussed.

Assurance was given around work being done on thematic projects and “Risk It” and how this is supporting development.

The correlation between the College SAR grade and entry grades was raised and evolving measures outlined.

The Committee questioned the day to day drive for excellence and how this is driven through the management structure.

The Vice Principal outlined the project with the Heads to ensure they have ownership and accountability for driving quality.

Areas for development were discussed. It was noted that the narrative in respect of governance related to the previous year. ***(PW will work with the Director of Governance and the Chair of the Governance Committee to update the report)***

The Committee supported the overall grading.

Apprenticeships

A conversation had taken place around the appropriate grade. It was confirmed this had been based on evidence from Ofsted and the internal audit with subsequent development being positive and supporting the grade.

Data

The data does not form part of the report submitted to Ofsted. The Committee was keen to understand the trend data going back to 2017-2018. It was noted that some achievement is still to be reported with more students carrying across due to the need to complete practical assessments.

The Director of Quality Improvement, Learning, Teaching and Assessment will add some narrative to explain the tables presented (PW)

The Executive are looking at better means of tracking performance in year, including the use of Onegrade system to monitor the predicted position against the national tables. Assurance was given that short courses and completion are being carefully managed.

The Committee further explored the issues of availability of data, the use of data by management and the presentation of data to provide better insight into performance. The alignment of different processes such as enrolment, registration and achievement, and the importance of timely information to influence management decisions, was highlighted.

The Committee commended the volume of work undertaken and reflected on their own experiences of the SAR moderation meetings. The management team were encouraged to consider whether there is any merit in streamlining the process to reduce some of the work but ensure the process is robust and has impact.

The process is already under review, including in particular the appropriateness of the process to professional areas as discussed at the Resources Committee, with a

plan to focus on the impact of professional areas on curriculum areas and other stakeholders.

A future paper to the Committee will set out proposed changes to the process, including an evaluation of the existing process.

The Committee was content, subject to the amendments highlighted, to recommend the SAR to the Board.

QSA/51/21 HE Quality Improvement Plan update

The Director of HE presented the report and outlined the priorities being worked on.

Discussion included:

- The development of specialist partnership arrangements as well as progress with existing relationships, the move towards more validated provision and the need for this to be taken into account in strategic planning.
- Positive progress on NSS but with further development work to improve NSS scores further noted.
- Expectations of increases in national benchmarks.
- Progress in student voice with further work planned with partner organisations.
- Progress on development of learner resources for the enhancement of learning and future plans.
- Review of new and emerging themes and need to monitor data and gaps. Further information is expected from the OfS.
- Assurance on due diligence carried out on partner organisations and how this will be reported to the Committee.

The report was noted

QSA/52/21 HE Office for Students – Reportable events

The Director of HE confirmed the OfS is in the process of reconfirming the framework from 1 January 2022

The new provisions are already included on the matrix used by the College for monitoring but with clearer explanations expected.

It was agreed that AM and RN will review the previous report to the Governance Committee for reporting and advise on whether any changes are required to the planned reporting framework.

QSA/53/21 Ofsted T level thematic review

The Director of QILTA set out details of the review, including planned visits during the next couple of years and potential for 3 day deep dives. The reviews will inform the DfE and policy makers on progress and the impact on students.

Visits are subject to a one week notice period. There will be no mention of the College by name in any reports.

Publication of reports is planned in Autumn 2022 and Autumn 2023 and are expected to cover progress of leaders and managers, curriculum intent, structure, quality of teaching and integration of english and maths, development of teachers as subject specialists, SEND, expectations and appropriateness of preparation for learners.

The Committee discussed political issues around BTECs and T levels, the management of work experience and likely approach by employers in the defence industry in particular.

The update was noted.

QSA/54/21 Early thoughts, future of learning, teaching and assessment as part of the strategic plan

An overview was provided on activity to date to support the agenda of teaching and learning as a central focus of strategic plan. This has included teacher briefings, external expert training for directors, Heads and Advanced Practitioners and new drop in sessions for Heads and Advanced Practitioners.

The work by external consultants, PrimeEast has focused on culture, brand and the promotion of educational excellence

A review is being carried out on the use of the Virtual Learning Environment as a tool to drive excellence and how this is articulated in the strategic plan.

The update was noted.

QSA/58/21 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 12 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

QSA/59/21 Next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Thursday 10 March at 3.30pm