

**Minutes of the
Quality, Standards and Achievement Committee
Tuesday 12 October 2021
Video conference - Microsoft Teams**

Present: Richard Dimpleby (Chair)
Sharon De Leonardis
Melissa Peacock
Ian Pryce
Sheila Selwood
Allan Schofield
Abi Stevens
Luisa Vecchio

In attendance: Georgina Ager (Vice Principal)
John Guiney (Head of Quality)
Em Lowe (Vice Principal)
Alex Mortby (Director of HE)
Rachel Nicol (Director of Governance & Clerk to the Corporation)
Petra Williams (Director of Quality Improvement, Learning, Teaching and Assessment ("QILTA"))
Rebecca Shaw (Governance Coordinator), Minutes

QSA/34/21 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence. Helen Smith, Head of Bedford Sixth Form was unable to attend the meeting.

QSA/35/21 Declarations of Interest

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

QSA/36/21 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

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

QSA/37/21 The Bedford Sixth Form presentation

Vice Principal Georgina Ager gave a presentation in the absence of the Head of Bedford Sixth Form.

The presentation covered the following topics:

- Pass rates and grades

- Numbers of pupils going on to Oxford, Cambridge or Russell Group universities
- Retention rates and actions in place to improve destinations.
- Open Day success and growth in student numbers to 903 students
- Academic bursaries
- Work taking place to bridge any gaps in learning and sitting exams
- Student feedback
- Improvements to the student experience
- Risks: including, lost learning, BTEC/vocational funding, mental health support, grade sustainability and support for new staff.
- Opportunities: including, mentoring programmes with university application support and building relationships with other schools to aid the learning transition from GCSE to A-level.

Comparing exams results nationally was discussed along with the differences between pass rates and appeals for state vs public schools.

It was reported that good reputational improvements had been made by the Sixth Form, focus going forward would be to move to an outstanding rating while improving the student experience and preparing students for their next steps The Bedford Sixth Form has the largest range of subjects of the local state schools and would like to add music and Latin options to the curriculum.

Market research of parents has shown that there is a demand for an academic A-level offer. When asked about provision, working groups showed a matching vision for both Bedford and Corby Sixth Forms.

QSA/38/21 Academic Risk Register

Vice Principal Em Lowe reported on the Academic Risk Register and highlighted the following points in the paper to the Committee.

03. An anonymous site has been created for students to report sexual harassment in light of the #metoo movement. A similar site for staff will be launched later in the term.

04. T-level recruitment did not meet the target, this was not an uncommon outcome in the sector. The sector shift from BTECs to T-levels was discussed and the funding surrounding this. Financial and workplace implications of moving to T-levels was explained to the Committee.

11. There have been very few appeals to the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG), it was noted that the Quality Team did a good job at managing the process.

12. COVID cases in the local community were on the rise, especially in schools. College cases remain relatively low.

14. A Teaching and Learning lens will be applied to developing the student experience.

It was reported that the recruitment for Wellingborough was on target and that student satisfaction was good.

The Committee requested information on what needs to be done to move from a good to outstanding rating.

The report was noted.

QSA/39/21 Quality dashboard and academic performance

The Director of Quality Improvement, Learning, Teaching and Assessment (QILTA) reported on the dashboard KPIs.

The targets allowed stretch from pre-COVID statistics with a view to move toward an outstanding rating.

It was noted that attendance figures were difficult to record and that some students that were being supported online weren't being captured. High needs students' attendance was in-line with overall student attendance.

The targets for 2021-2022 were agreed

The data for achievement targets was still being received but given the preliminary results the targets should be above achievement tables nationally. ***It was noted that the RAG rating for this was incorrectly recorded as green when it should be amber, this is to be corrected.***

It was explained that that the systems and measurements for adult attendance and retention had changed, this will be reported on throughout the year.

QSA/40/21 Peer working

The Director of QILTA reported on peer working across the Group.

Work was being undertaken with Shuttleworth College, Landex and the Association of Colleges. The peer working was explained, and discussed by the Committee. ***It was agreed that the Landex feedback would be shared with Shuttleworth College students.***

International peer working opportunities were raised and discussed, there may be areas where this can be expanded through the Turing Scheme.

The benefits of students taking part in competitions with other colleges were noted.

The report was noted.

QSA/41/21 Stakeholder feedback (NSS scores)

The Director of HE provided an overview of the survey. Overall satisfaction has increased to 68%, the number of participants in the survey had decreased by 2% year on year. This remains within target.

Assessment & feedback and Organisation & management were identified again as key areas for improvement from the NSS.

It was noted that the NSS cohort sample for the NSS was < 70 students and that there are over 700 HE learners across the Group. All of these students within the NSS relate directly to our partner.

It was reported that our partner is responsible for the marking and feedback provided to our Shuttleworth Programmes. The feedback from the partner hadn't been timely to students. Work was being carried out to improve the turnaround; however, the larger cohorts at Shuttleworth had increased this pressure on marking turn arounds. As part of the robust monitoring that was carried out, it was identified that there is potential over assessment which has added to this pressure. Therefore this would be a further action to prompt timely marking turnarounds with our partner to increase student satisfaction.

The Committee requested that a colour key, benchmarking against outstanding colleges (including the size of the cohort) be added in future tables.

The Committee raised concerns over some of the statistics and were reassured these figures were an improvement on the previous year, and a significant proportion of the issues were linked to the partnerships under review.

The report was noted

QSA/42/21 Professional Development (including Risk It and Learning Teaching and Assessment ("LTA" development))

The Head of Quality reported on the Professional Development. Blended working with staff had worked well and the staff conference had been a positive experience that had started new staff and student projects.

The Director of QILTA provided an update on Risk It projects. There had been positive comments surrounding the projects in the Self Assessment Reports ("SARs"). The most popular projects had been on those developing tech skills. More work can be done on quantifiable data on the impact of the projects, this will be built into surveys.

The set-up of mandatory staff training and teacher toolkits was explained to the Committee.

The report was noted.

QSA/43/21 OfS Update

The Director of HE gave a verbal update. There had been some changes in the frameworks and consultations, reviews were ongoing. The Committee will be kept updated with regards to the Teaching Excellence Framework (“TEF”).

The update was noted.

QSA/44/21 Work plan and action log

The Chair provided a brief review of the previous year’s meetings.

Social media and its impact and Strategic plan draft points were to be added to the work plan.

The report was noted.

QSA/45/21 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 8 June 2021 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

QSA/46/21 Next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Thursday 25 November 2021.