



Minutes of the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee Meeting

held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 2 October 2024
at the College.

Present:	Ms R Turner (RT)	Chair
	Ms T Aust (TA)	CEO/Principal
	Mr J Bolt (JB)	
	Ms B Bata (BB)	
	Ms H Abdul Hakkeem (HAH)	
	Ms A Cornish (AC)	
	Ms C Zervoudakis (CZ)	
	Mr G Casley (GC)	
In Attendance:	Ms K Frost (KF)	Head of Governance
	Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK)	Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality
	Mr M Cooper (MC)	Executive Director
	Ms N Gharu (NG)	Head of Apprenticeships
	Ms S Louisy (SL)	Director of Student Experience

24/24 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

25/24 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest relating to the items on the agenda.

26/24 **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes from the meeting of the Committee held on 12 June 2024 had been received in advance. (Paper 3). IT WAS DECIDED the minutes were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

27/24 **Matters Arising**

The 'Summary Action Point List' (Paper 4a) was received in advance of the meeting and progress towards the actions was noted.

17/24: It was noted that the target for apprenticeships included both Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships.

28/24 **Safeguarding and Careers Update**

a) **Annual Safeguarding Report**

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The 'Annual Safeguarding Report' (Paper 5a) was received in advance of the meeting.

Governors asked whether the Health and Wellbeing vacancy had been filled and noted that it had.

Governors asked how they could be assured that safeguarding at the Feltham campus was as robust as at the Isleworth campus. SL responded that safeguarding information was stored on the same platform, a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) was based at Feltham. Safeguarding at the Feltham site was discussed with the safeguarding link governors.

Governors asked if there were any concerns. SL confirmed there were no concerns and that safeguarding measures at both sites were equally robust. MGK added that the safeguarding team from both sites met regularly.

Governors asked about the rise in LGBTQ+ disclosures and what the story behind that was. SL explained that the college had always had a safe environment, particularly for LGBTQ+ students and emphasised its inclusive culture which meant students felt safe to make disclosures. Governors then asked if the increase was related to events happening inside or outside the college. SL clarified that it was primarily due to new students joining the college who found they had the opportunity to discuss these issues.

The Staff Governor confirmed staff had extensive training on all aspects of safeguarding and were committed to continuous self-development, choosing to undertake additional training.

From the student point of view, the Student Governor noted that students felt safe and had no concerns.

Governors asked for clarification on the item in the Safeguarding Report about the numbers of students missing from education. SL mentioned that statistics were available and said the majority were missing for extended periods. Governors highlighted the need to differentiate between children who were absent for long periods and those described as Children Missing from Education by Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Action: SL/MGK Confirm the number of students who are CME according to the definition provided in KCSIE.

IT WAS DECIDED to recommend the Annual Safeguarding Report to the Corporation for approval.

b) **Safeguarding Policy**

A draft 'Safeguarding Policy' (Paper 5b) was received in advance of the meeting.

The Safeguarding Link Governor reported that the policy had been discussed in their recent Safeguarding Governor monitoring visit and they had been assured it had been updated in accordance with revised KCSIE guidance.

IT WAS DECIDED to recommend the Safeguarding Policy to the Corporation for approval.

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c) **Report from Safeguarding Link Governor**

A report from a governor safeguarding visit carried out on 19 September 2024 was received in advance of the meeting. (Paper 5c). There were no further comments or questions.

d) **Report from the Matrix Careers Inspection**

An assessment report from the Matrix Careers Inspection carried out in September 2024 was received in advance of the meeting. (Paper 5d)

SL said the report was very positive and had confirmed the robust Careers provision at the College. The level of inclusivity and diversity within the College was emphasised and demonstrated through discussions with students. Key points from the report included the need to raise the profile of the Careers provision by utilising social media more effectively to highlight the wonderful range of activities taking place.

Governors asked whether the focus was on raising the profile internally or externally. MGK said it was externally. The external website contained information but didn't convey the full experience. The use of videos to showcase the work the college was doing in this area might encourage more students to join.

The Student Governor said there were quite a few notices around the college about the careers provision but suggested considering advertising it in a different way that would be of more interest to students, perhaps via the portal or the Instagram page. She said the Careers team was working with students to complete their UCAS applications and personal statements. SL acknowledged that the Instagram page could be utilised more effectively, and that the improvements in this area could be student-led.

Governors expressed their interest and congratulated the College on achieving the award, recognising the significant amount of work involved.

SL left the meeting at 6.20pm

29/24 **Feedback from Apprenticeship External Advisor**

An 'Apprenticeships Update (Paper 4b) was received in advance of the meeting.

MC reported on the external feedback and support received so far. Phil Cook, from the Further Education Commissioner's Office had been working with the college. He had provided key insights from a report he had been writing on what constitutes a high quality apprenticeship and how to foster growth. MC said a lot was already being done but noted that the college had a challenge with the scale of operations due to the small number of apprenticeships. The team were working through the initial findings to identify potential areas for improvement. Support was also being received from Lisa Wilson from the Further Education Commissioner's office.

MC said the college was struggling with growth and that this was impacting on the level of achievement.

Governors asked about the size of the teams involved in the colleges Phil Cook had written about. MC said the team sizes varied and highlighted that the administrative costs associated with the delivery of apprenticeships were disproportionately expensive compared to other areas of the college. The CEO said Phil had confirmed that the college was not under resourced in this area but had suggested that resources could be better utilised. It was expected that realising the growth strategy would require additional

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resources. Governors noted that an investment might be necessary to achieve a return and enquired about the level of contribution the college looked for. MC said the college looked for a 10-20% contribution from apprenticeships.

Governors asked whether different economic employment structures in different areas of the Country impacted on the level of apprenticeships. MC acknowledged that the economy varied across regions, which affected the potential for different apprenticeships but didn't feel this was a significant factor for the college. There were plenty of opportunities locally. The CEO said the college was part of a local group of external organisations who were looking at the issue of apprenticeships.

Governors asked about the number of internal apprentices. NG reported that there were none at the moment and the committee discussed the need to consider employing apprentices again. She mentioned the college had previously employed apprentices and some had gone onto become permanent members of staff. Governors asked if the college was utilising the apprenticeship levy. NG said it wasn't all being used but some was transferred to partner organisations.

Governors discussed strategic choices regarding growth—whether to continue with gradual growth or pursue a more significant step change by considering partnership with a private training provider. NG said there was a difference in the provision provided by both. The college prioritised quality and the overall experience of apprentices, aiming to provide the best possible experience. She felt confident the college could meet the targets.

Governors acknowledged that achievement rates had improved and emphasised the importance of scaling up. The CEO said the college had received a letter from the ESFA about progress made in terms of quality. She noted that discussions with employers indicated a desire to partner with the College due to the quality of training provided, which should be leveraged as part of their marketing strategy. Progress had been made regarding progression and destination. There were risks associated with working with a private training provider who would be regarded as a subcontracted provision and would require quality monitoring.

Governors asked if there had been pushback from employers regarding safeguarding requirements. NG explained the college went through safeguarding with students at the beginning of their apprenticeship and carried out regularly monitoring – every 6-8 weeks ensuring close adherence to standards. In the work place, employers had their own safeguarding processes.

Governors asked for a further report to be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

MC and NG left the meeting at 6.45pm.

30/24 **Outstanding Student Experience/Journey to Outstanding**

a) **Update on the Journey to Outstanding**

The CEO provided an update on the Journey to Outstanding. The Definition of an Outstanding Student Experience had been used to set goals for this academic year. A weekly meeting was being held to monitor progress.

b) **Strategic Plan Brainstorm**

The Committee split into two groups and discussed initial thoughts about areas of focus for the next strategic plan.

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As governors, it was important to look at the big picture. It was noted that it wasn't for governors to talk about individual courses but to focus on values, geographical areas, and specific groups involved and 'the big picture'.

Feedback from the groups included potential themes in a new strategic plan of:

- Inclusion (particularly focusing on high needs, ESOL, and different groups of students)
- Employment and Employer Advisory Boards, progression pathways and destinations.
- A focus on collaboration and strong partnerships.
- Growth and in particular at the Skills and Logistics Centre and the Apprenticeship Programme
- High Achievement rates, although it was recognised that this didn't always go hand in hand with inclusion.

Feedback from the groups also discussed some issues and how a future strategy might impact on

- The future of Higher Education and whether the focus should change to Access programmes rather than HE
- The difficulty of staff recruitment in various curriculum areas

It was noted that there were some unknowns involved including the outcomes of curriculum reform and inspection and that any strategy would need to consider local, regional and national needs.

31/24 Development Plan and Data Dashboard

a) Development Plan 2023-24

The 'Development Plan 2023-24 – October Final Position' (Paper 7a) was received in advance of the meeting and the final position was noted. Governors congratulated the College on the progress made.

Governors asked about T level recruitment. MGK said the Digital T Level had recruited well but not Childcare. The Staff Governor said the quality of the T Level Childcare lessons was very high.

The Committee discussed the risks around curriculum reform. It was agreed to rename Risk 4 Curriculum Reform and to widen the scope of Risk 5 to include all provision, not just apprenticeships and T Levels.

Action: TA/MC

b) Data Dashboard: Focus on Attendance

Attendance was currently 87.9% compared to the target of 88%. Last year ended on 87% compared to target of 87%. The Association of Colleges average was 83.5% for 16-18 year olds. Particular areas of strength included Supported Learning, Science, ICT and Travel. ESOL threshold had seen a significant improvement this year.

Governors asked about the pattern of attendance. MGK said she expected attendance to be higher in the first term.

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Governors said they were disappointed to see the attendance data for the Skills and Logistics Centre, particularly Motor Vehicle. The CEO said staffing remained an issue in that area. Governors asked how this compared to other colleges. The CEO confirmed it was a similar picture everywhere. The college was working with local employers and one of the governors, Alan Rides, had provided some helpful links for motor vehicle. Governors said there was a lot of reskilling going on in industry due to the introduction of electric cars. MGK said this was part of the issues as some potential members of staff didn't have the skills to deliver the full course. The college was running a recruitment campaign for employers.

Governors said it was an ongoing issue and suggested thought be given to asking a company to set up a training provision at the Feltham site.

From a strategic plan point of view, a discussion would be needed under the staffing pillar to look at how to overcome the issues.

Governors asked about the induction process for students and the number of students who left. MGK explained the process and said that if students left, the College would assist them in looking for a more suitable option. It was important to get the students on the right courses.

c) **Draft Development Plan 2024-25**

The 'Development Plan 2024-25. Draft Objectives CQSE' (Paper 7c) was received in advance of the meeting.

The committee discussed target 1.3: The target for high grades in English and Maths was 43% which had been based on the current Strategic Plan. It was felt this was too high as the national averages were only 15% for Maths and 19% for English. It was agreed to recommend this be reduced to 40% which would be a more realistic target but to keep the original 43% target in the Development Plan so it was clear that the college was not meeting the targets in the Strategic Plan.

Governors asked if the attendance target was too high. MGK said it was a realistic target to aspire to.

Governors asked whether it would be possible to measure achievement of target 1.5 which aimed for an increase of 5% in enrichment. MGK said the college captured data of attendance at enrichment activities and events.

Governors suggested rewording the target relating to Careers to reflect that the College was aiming to make progress in this area.

With these amendments, IT WAS DECIDED to recommend the Development Plan 2024-25 to the Corporation for approval.

32/24 **Risk Register**

A 'Risk Register October 24 CQSEC Extract' (Paper 8a/b) was received in advance of the meeting. Governors reviewed the status of the risk and no further amendments were suggested.

33/24 **Annual Complaints Report**

The 'Annual Complaints Report' (Papers 9a/b) was received in advance of the meeting and was noted.

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34/24 **Annual Student Disciplinary Report**

The 'Annual Student Disciplinary Report' (Papers 10a/b/c) was received in advance of the meeting.

Governors asked whether students who had been suspended returned to the college. The CEO said students were suspended temporarily during an investigation and then either returned to college or were excluded depending on the outcome of the investigation. Governors noted that the number of disciplinarys was higher in ESOL Threshold. The numbers were also higher in the first term and then reduced which could be a indicator that the college had developed the students' understanding of what it meant to study at college.

Governors said it was disappointing that Business and ICT had such a high number but it was noted that it was the largest area in the college.

35/24 **Policies**

a) **SEND Policy** (Disability Matters)

'Disability Matters' (Paper 11a) was received in advance of the meeting.

IT WAS DECIDED to approve Disability Matters.

b) **Complaints Procedure**

The 'Complaints Policy' (Paper 11b) was received in advance of the meeting.

IT WAS DECIDED to approve the Complaints Policy.

c) **Academic and Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures**

The 'Academic and Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures' (Paper 11c) was received in advance of the meeting.

IT WAS DECIDED to approve the Academic and Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures.

d) **Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech**

The 'Freedom of Speech Policy' (Paper 11d) was received in advance of the meeting. IT WAS DECIDED to approve the policy.

e) **Access and Participation Statement**

The 'Access and Participation Statement' (Paper 11e) was received in advance of the meeting. IT WAS DECIDED to approve the Access and Participation Statement.

36/24 **Key Points from the Meeting**

The Committee reviewed the impact of the meeting and agreed the following key points to bring to the attention of the Corporation:

- Risks around Curriculum Reform were discussed. It was agreed to rename Risk 4 Curriculum Reform and to widen the scope of Risk 5 to include all provision, not just apprenticeships and T Levels.

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- Strategic brainstorm key themes: Inclusion, Partnership, Employers, Growth, High Achievement. Potential challenges to be considered: curriculum reform, inspection, staffing shortages, the future of HE in FE, apprenticeship growth.
- From a strategic plan point of view, a discussion would be needed under the staffing pillar to look at how to overcome the issues being experienced, particularly with Motor Vehicle.
- Development Plan 2024-25: The committee agreed to change the target for high grades in English and Maths to 40% but to keep reference to the original target of 43% in the Plan to show how it differed to the Strategic Plan. It was suggested that the target relating to Careers be reworded to show that the college was aiming to make progress in this area.

37/24 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the committee was Wednesday 27 November 2024 at 9.30am.

Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Lead	Target Date
28/24	Confirm the number of students who are CME according to the definition provided in KCSIE	MGK/SL	Feb 25
31/24	Rename Risk 4 Curriculum Reform and widen the scope of Risk 5 to include all provision, not just apprenticeships and T Levels.	TA/MC	Dec 24

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Date: