

Minutes of the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee Self-Assessment Validation Meeting

held at Midday on Wednesday 22 November 2023
at the College.

Present:	Mr R Turner (RT)	Chair
	Ms T Aust (TA)	CEO/Principal
	Mr J Bolt (JB)	
	Ms A Cornish (AC)	
	Mr G Casley (GC)	
	Mr B Armstrong (BA)	
Apologies:	Mr A Smith (AS)	
	Ms T Kaur (TK)	
	Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK)	Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality
In Attendance:	Ms K Frost (KF)	Head of Governance
	Ms A Cutler (ACu)	Assistant Principal, Teaching, Learning Assessment and Quality.

42/23 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from AS and TK.

43/23 **Declarations of Interest**

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

44/23 **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes from the meeting of the committee held on 4 October 2023 had been received in advance. (Paper 1). IT WAS DECIDED the minutes were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

45/23 **SAR Validation Overview and Introductions**

The Principal explained the self-assessment process that had taken place which had included a review by an external HMI, peer assessment and, for the first time this year, link governors had provided feedback on the reports. It was felt the link governor involvement had been positive although noted that some governors hadn't completed the relevant section in the SAR report.

Governors said in general, the quality of the SARs was very high and they were very thorough. However, they had been disappointed with the student feedback, in particular with the number of students who had taken part in the survey. The CEO/Principal said student questionnaires were only one way of gathering student feedback, there were other mechanisms in place.

Governors said the SARs hadn't included information about value added or data about how students progressed towards their target grades. The College could consider how to track and report on value added more effectively as it would enable the College to celebrate and build on success.

46/23 **Core Skills**

Reman Swidan (RS) was in attendance for this item

A 'Core Skills Curriculum Area SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 3). RS said that based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good', explaining the reasons for the judgement.

Governors asked which digital skills qualifications were provided. RS said Entry Level and Level 1 digital skills qualifications were provided, mainly for adult learners. The courses had been introduced in response to local needs. Governors asked what the achievement rates were for the digital qualifications. RS said there were concerns with the Entry Level results. Governors said there needed to be an action in the improvement plan to address concerns with the results for digital skills qualifications and they asked for data about the digital skills qualifications to be added to the SAR report.

Governors asked who taught the functional skills courses. RS said Entry Level courses were taught by vocational staff and Level 1 English and Maths courses were taught by experts.

Governors asked about Careers provision. RS said the needs of 16-19 students were being met but further opportunities could be provided for adult students.

Governors asked whether there was a difference in attendance between the different vocational areas. RS said every curriculum area was putting a lot of work into attendance but attendance did vary depending on the nature of the students. For example, students studying Art or Dance might have the perception they didn't need Maths and English more than students studying other courses. Governors asked how Core Skills would achieve better attendance. RS said a new attendance strategy had been introduced and already an improvement in attendance had been seen.

47/23 **ESOL Threshold**

Reman Swidan (RS) was in attendance for this item.

An 'ESOL Threshold Curriculum Area SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 4). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors said more detail could be added to the SAR to celebrate success and progress made in terms of students' behaviours and attitudes.

Governors asked how issues with behaviour were being tackled. RS said there had been a different intake of students over the last year, many of whom had never experienced an educational setting. As a result, there had been an increase in behaviour issues. Training had been provided for staff to equip them to deal with the issues.

Governors suggested more detail be added to the SAR about value added and how students progress towards their target grades.

48/23 **Alternative Provision**

Beverley McGuire (BM) was in attendance for this item.

BM explained that based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out for Alternative Provision, the proposed overall grade was 'Requires Improvement'. BM summarised the reasons for the assessment along with key areas in the Improvement Plan.

The committee decided not to discuss the area further as they had not received the SAR in advance of the meeting.

49/23 **Engineering and Motor Vehicle**

Beverley McGuire (BM) was in attendance for this item.

An 'Engineering and Motor Vehicle SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 5). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Requires Improvement'. BM summarised the reasons for the proposed grade.

Governors asked for improvements made with attendance to be recorded in the SAR.

Governors said last year was a disappointing year and asked whether staffing issues had been resolved. BM said work was still underway on stabilising the staffing in the area. Interventions were in place to ensure student's outcomes weren't impacted and as a result the area had seen an increase in achievement rates.

Governors asked why there was a difference between the achievement rates for 16-18 and adult students. BM said it was in part due to staffing issues which remained a concern. The committee discussed how the College could break the cycle with staffing issues, noting that recruitment in this area was particularly challenging. They suggested the College consider whether further developing partnership arrangements might help bring about change.

Governors asked for more detail about employer engagement to be added to the QIP.

50/23 **Construction**

Beverley McGuire (BM) was in attendance for this item.

A 'Construction SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 6). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked why Adult Level 2 results were lower than expected. BM said a number of students had left the course early.

ACu entered the meeting.

51/23 **Partnerships including Logistics**

Beverley McGuire (BM) and Eric Stober (ES) were in attendance for this item

A 'Partnerships and Logistics SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 7). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked why only 50% of students had completed the student survey. ES said Trade Union students didn't take part in the College survey but instead completed a feedback form at the end of their course.

Governors asked which students were included in the destination data and noted that it included students who were studying full time at the College.

Governors said that in the student survey, 11% (over 60 students) had said the course didn't meet their needs which was a very high number. ES said the area was in the process of finding out why so many students felt the courses weren't meeting their needs. Initial thoughts were that some Job Centre students were reluctant learners and some students may not have understood the survey questions. Governors suggested consideration be given to amending the questionnaire to ensure it was suitable for the students on the course.

Governors asked why the ICT results were lower than expected. ES said it had been caused by a member of staff leaving.

52/23 **ESOL Adult**

Eric Stober (ES) was in attendance for this item

An 'ESOL Adult SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 8). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors said there had been a large increase in students and asked whether the rapid expansion had impacted on the quality of teaching and learning. ES said there had been an issue with the consistency of approach. Governors suggested amending the wording in the strengths section of the SAR to ensure it reflected that there were still issues with teaching and learning.

Governors suggested thought be given to how the area captured the outcomes in terms of students studying the courses with a focus on the difference it made to students' lives.

53/23 **Business**

Eric Stober (ES) was in attendance for this item

A 'Business SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 9). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked whether meaningful work-related opportunities were provided and what the take up was. ES said there was a lack of work experience opportunities. Governors suggested rewording this part of the SAR to provide more clarity about this. Governors asked who sat on the Employer Advisory Board, ES said different employer board sessions were held with different employers.

Governors noted that 146 students had completed the student survey out of 187 learners. For several questions in the survey, a high number of students had disagreed including about whether targets had been discussed with teachers, timely assessment and whether students were given feedback. They asked how this would be addressed. ES said the area was addressing the issues and explained the actions being taken.

Governors asked about the value-added data for the area and what proportion of students achieved their target grade. ES said a significant number achieved their target grade. Governors suggested this information be added into the SAR.

Governors asked why there were lower results for Adult Level 2 and 3 courses. ES said this related to the AAT programme. Problems had been experienced with retention and with the online elements of courses. Some changes had been made including withdrawing online learning and a change to the delivery pattern.

54/23 ICT

Eric Stober (ES) was in attendance for this item

An 'ICT SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 10). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked how many students had completed the student survey. ES said a significant number had completed it. Governors said 14% of students had disagreed with the statement that work had been assessed on time. ES said this was being addressed.

Governors said 15% of students thought online learning wasn't effective. ACu said she thought this related to the blended learning hour. The question in the student survey might need to be reworded.

Governors said they were disappointed that only 47 students had participated in work experience. ES said this was an area for improvement. The area was working on identifying suitable employers.

55/23 Aviation, Travel & Tourism, Sport and Public Services

Eric Stober (ES) was in attendance for this item

An 'Aviation, Travel, Sport and Public Services SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 11). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

It was noted that there was an issue with high grades and work experience in this area. Governors said all elements of work related activity should be recorded in the SAR.

56/23 Health and Care

Carolyn Moncrieffe (CM) was in attendance for this item

A 'Health and Care SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 12). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked why Quality of Education had been judged to be 'Good' when student feedback was poor. CM said there had been issues with staff attendance and turnover which had impacted on the student experience but support had been put in place to ensure students achieved. Governors asked how the area had resolved the issues around assessment and CM explained the steps that had been taken.

Governors said it had been quite an achievement to get the results given the staffing issues and congratulated CM for her work on this.

57/23 Science and Access

Carolyn Moncrieffe (CM) was in attendance for this item

A 'Science and Access SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 13). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors said they were disappointed with the number of students who had completed the student survey and asked what the challenges were with this. CM said she had reflected on

this and actions were being taken to ensure a higher number of students completed the survey.

Governors said the area should consider adding more detail about career choices to the SAR, particularly as a large number of students had disagreed that they were well informed about career choices in the student survey.

Governors asked about the issues with the midwifery course. CM said there had been issues with low recruitment and retention and a number of significant mental health issues. Governors said a quarter of students felt they weren't well informed about career choices. CM said this was part of the Improvement Plan. Governors asked if there were partnership agreements with Universities in place and CM confirmed there was.

Governors said thought Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for the area was of a very high standard and could be used as a role model.

58/23 **Arts and Media**

Katrin Lehmann (KL) was in attendance for this item

An 'Arts and Media SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 14). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked whether students with additional learning needs had achieved their targets. KL confirmed that they had. Governors suggested adding this detail into the report as it was a real success for the area.

Governors said there had been a 13% decline in functional skills but the area had still graded the Quality of Education as Outstanding and asked why this judgement had been made. KL explained it was due to the strong achievement rates. Governors asked what had caused the decline in functional skills. KL said the decline had been partly caused by attendance. The QIP included a target for improving performance in functional skills.

Governors said the performance with functional skills and achievement of high grades would make them question whether the Quality of Education was Outstanding.

Governors asked whether issues with mental health and impacted on achievement. KL said there had been a significant impact despite the support in place.

Governors said 19% students had said they disagreed that online learning was effective. KL said she thought it might be an issue with the way the question was worded.

Governors asked for further information about how students achieved compared to their target grade to be added to future reports.

59/23 **Hair and Beauty**

Katrin Lehmann (KL) was in attendance for this item

A 'Hair and Beauty SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 15). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Outstanding'.

Governors said they were disappointed that such a low number of students had completed the student survey. KL said she didn't think the SAR included the survey results for adult learners.

Governors said 25% students disagreed that sport and enrichment activities contributed to their health and wellbeing. KL said a number of students had said that they didn't want to take part in the sports activities and so may have marked this question as disagree. AC said she didn't think students understood which activities were classed as enrichment.

Governors said the destinations data appeared to be incomplete and needed to be checked and there were also issues with the way the attendance data was presented.

Governors said they didn't feel that the SAR included enough evidence for the area to be judged as Outstanding. They said the SAR should reflect that 98% students completed their courses.

60/23 **Performing and Production Arts**

Katrin Lehmann (KL) was in attendance for this item

A 'Performing and Production Arts SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 16). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Outstanding'.

Governors said the destinations data appeared to be incomplete.

Governors asked why only 27 pupils had completed the student survey. KL said it was an area that would be improved. KL said regular meetings were held with students so the area felt they understood student views. Governors suggested adding more information about student voice to the SAR.

Governors said they weren't sure there was the evidence for the area to be graded as Outstanding. It was noted that 100% students did work experience which was brilliant. They suggested more evidence be added to the Personal Development section of the form, in particular about inclusion, diversity and the embedding of British Values. The SAR should include details about activities rather than aspiration. The SAR included details about how students achieved compared to their target grades, which was fantastic.

61/23 **Supported Learning**

Katrin Lehmann (KL) was in attendance for this item

A 'Supported Learning SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 17). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

62/23 **Apprenticeships**

Neena Gharu (NG) was in attendance for this item.

An 'Apprenticeships SAR Review 2022/23' was received in advance. (Paper 18). Based on the self-assessment process that had been carried out, the proposed overall grade was 'Good'.

Governors asked whether the apprenticeship model was right, how it could be upscaled and what the barriers were. NG said she thought the apprenticeship model was right as it was very flexible. The focus for this academic year was to grow the numbers. The biggest challenge with the introduction of the standards was the length and duration of some of the apprenticeships which were too long. The College was trying to ensure the length of apprenticeships was right as it impacted on retention and achievement. The current barriers were retention, achievement, making sure apprentices were on the right qualification and the impact of the cost of living. The team had a strategy to recruit new apprentices.

Governors said they would have liked the following to be included in the SAR: data for apprenticeships, the improvement plan, student voice and employer voice.

63/23 Validation of Grades

At the conclusion of the review, the curriculum area grades were validated:

Curriculum	22-23 Validated Grade	22-23 Proposed Grade	21-22	20-21	19-20	18-19	17-18
English, Maths, Digital	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
ESOL Adult	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
ESOL Threshold	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
Engineering & Motor Vehicle	3	3	3	2	2	2	1
Construction	2	3	3	2	2	3	2
Business	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Partnerships	2	2	2				
ICT	2	2	2	2	1	1	3
Aviation, Travel & Tourism, and Sport & Public Services	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Health & Care	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
Science & Access	2	2	2	2	1	3	3
Supported Learning	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Hair & Beauty	1	1	1	2	2	2	3
Arts & Media	2	2	2	1	2	3	3
Performing & Production Arts	1	1	1	1	1	2	NA
Apprenticeships	2	2	2	3			

In particular the following comments were made:

- **ICT:** Governors asked for Behaviour and Attitudes to be graded as 2 and for Personal Development to be graded as 3.
- **Health and Social Care:** In order for the judgement of Quality and Education to remain a 2, governors asked for further information about student voice to be provided.
- **Performing and Production Arts:** In order to justify a 1 for Leadership and Management, governors asked for more evidence about student voice to be provided. The destinations data needed to be reviewed and further information was needed under Personal Development.
- **Hair and Beauty:** Further evidence was required to justify a 1. The data needed to be consistent throughout the SAR.
- **Arts and Media:** More evidence was required to justify the 1 in Quality of Education. There was an issue with higher grades.
- **Alternative Provision:** Wouldn't be considered as the SAR hadn't been received in advance of the meeting.
- **Apprenticeships:** Needed further information about data for apprenticeships, the improvement priorities, student voice and employer voice.

Overall, the following actions were suggested:

- Ensure there is a clear link between the Areas for Improvement and the Quality Improvement Plan.
- Include more coherent reporting of valued added and the progress towards achievement of target grades.
- Review how progress towards high grades is reported on.
- Ensure more care is taken with the presentation of SARs including grammar and spellings.
- Ensure a higher percentage of students complete the student survey.
- Provide more evidence and feedback from students in the report that is gathered from the other mechanisms in place for capturing student voice.
- Ensure the data in the reports is correct and consistent.
- Review the length of the reports to aim to reduce the size.
- Change the narrative in the reports to include more evidence to back up judgements and a greater focus on learning rather than teaching. Include more information about the impact on learners.
- Give a greater focus to British Values and provide more evidence of this.
- Review the wording of questions in the student survey.

Action: MGK/TA

64/23 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the committee was Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 6.00 pm.

Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Lead	Target Date
63/23	<p>To move forward with the suggested actions from the SAR Validation process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is a clear link between the Areas for Improvement and the Quality Improvement Plan. • Include more coherent reporting of valued added and the progress towards achievement of target grades. • Review how progress towards high grades is reported on. • Ensure more care is taken with the presentation of SARs including grammar and spellings. • Ensure a higher percentage of students complete the student survey. • Provide more evidence and feedback from students in the report that is gathered from the other mechanisms in place for capturing student voice. • Ensure the data in the reports is correct and consistent. • Review the length of the reports to aim to reduce the size. • Change the narrative in the reports to include more evidence to back up judgements and a greater focus on learning rather than teaching. Include more information about the impact on learners. • Review the wording of questions in the student survey. • Give a greater focus to British Values and provide more evidence of this. 	TA/MGK	Feb 24