

## Minutes of the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee Meeting

held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 5 October 2022  
at the College.

<b>Present:</b>	Mr B Armstrong (BA) Ms T Aust (TA) Mr A Smith (AS) Mr J Bolt (JB) Ms A Cornish (AC) Ms T Kaur (TK) Ms B Sandhu (BS)	Chair Principal
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr L McBirney (LM)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Ms K Frost (KF) Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK) Ms K Lehmann (KL) Mr M Michaelides (MM)	Head of Governance Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality Director, Higher Education Executive Director Resources and Student Experience

### 14/22 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from LM.

### 15/22 **Declarations of Interest**

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

### 16/22 **Committee Terms of Reference**

The draft terms of reference for the committee (Paper 7) were received in advance of the meeting.

After making an amendment to the membership of the committee, IT WAS DECIDED to recommend the terms of reference to the Corporation for approval.

### 17/22 **Higher Education Report**

The annual 'Higher Education Report – October 2022' (Paper 5) had been received in advance of the meeting.

There had been another decline in enrolment numbers for Higher Education provision which had been the trend for the last few years. Competition for students had been high for several years, particularly for traditional Higher Education courses. As a result of the decline in numbers, a review of the Higher Education offer would be undertaken,

considering the 3 streams of provision: franchised provision, Level 4 and Level 5 provision and internal progression.

The partnership with St Mary's University continued. The steering group continued to meet regularly to explore joint working. The College continued to be a member of the West London Higher Education/Further Education group.

Next steps included:

- Review of the College offer with a clear analysis of numbers and trends over the last 3 years.
- Revision of the traditional offer with 3 distinct streams: franchise, internal offer, expansion of flexible offer at Levels 4 and 5.
- Re-purposing and re-design of what the Higher Education offer needed to look like by 2025.

Governors asked if there was a threshold below which offering Higher Education provision wasn't viable. The Principal said there was a threshold but at the moment it still made financial sense to maintain Higher Education provision at the College. It was important to recognise that the traditional Higher Education offer was no longer what was needed but there were opportunities for growth in other areas.

*JB entered the meeting.*

Governors said there were increasing numbers of students who were interested in remaining in the College for Higher Education.

Governors asked if the flexible and modular courses were accredited. KL said they were accredited and the qualifications were in demand. West Thames was able to offer specialist courses that other colleges weren't offering.

Governors asked about the timelines for curriculum planning and noted it was likely to be completed by January.

Governors suggested the Council might be interested in certain qualifications in areas such as safeguarding and SEND. The Principal said working with local partners would be key moving forward.

Governors thanked KL for the update.

*KL left the meeting*

## 18/22 **Safeguarding Report**

### a) **Annual Safeguarding Report**

The 'Annual Safeguarding Report 2021-2022' (Paper 6) was received in advance of the meeting.

The report gave an update on safeguarding training, including a breakdown of safeguarding completed in academic year 2021-2022.

Safeguarding policies and procedures had been updated to reflect the most recent Government guidance and references to COVID 19 had been removed.

There had been an increase in the number of safeguarding disclosures, cases and referrals over the last three years. In particular, in 2021/2022 there had been a larger proportion of disclosures made which was linked to the return to education following the COVID lockdowns.

Mental health and emotional health were the key emerging themes of disclosure. To respond to the increased need, the College had put in place additional counselling support and introduced Kooth, an online mental health and wellbeing tool powered by the NHS.

In 2021, safeguarding was inspected by Ofsted who found:

*“The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and managers have successfully created a culture of mutual respect and tolerance across the college. Learners feel safe and are safe. All staff know and look after their learners exceptionally well. The well-qualified and experienced safeguarding team provides very effective care and support for learners. The designated safeguarding lead liaises appropriately with a wide range of welfare organisations” - OFSTED Inspection Report - October 2021*

In 2021-22, there were no safeguarding cases involving staff.

In a student voice survey run during the academic year, 93% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the College provides a safe, disciplined and positive environment for them to learn.

The College had completed the annual Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) safeguarding audit. There were no recommendations, only a single advisory which was to formalise supervision arrangements for DLSs & Safeguarding Officers’, which would be taken forward.

Future steps included the development of a mental health and wellbeing hub for students.

Governors were satisfied that safeguarding arrangements were effective and congratulated the team on the hard work.

#### b) **Safeguarding Link Governor Report**

JB said safeguarding at the College was impressive. As well as meeting regularly with MM, he had also met with the admin team who maintain the Single Central Record and checked it was in order.

There had been an increase in the number of safeguarding disclosures but the numbers had been impacted by COVID and the transition to ‘My Concern’ may also have impacted the numbers making a comparison to previous years difficult to interpret.

The Government guidance included an increasing focus on ‘student on student’ safeguarding issues.

*MM left the meeting at 6.40pm*

#### 19/22 **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes from the meeting of the committee held on 15 June 2022 had been received in advance. (Paper 1). IT WAS DECIDED the minutes were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

#### 20/22 **Matters Arising**

The ‘Summary Action Point List’ (Paper 2) was received in advance of the meeting. Committee members noted the following updates of previously agreed action points:

Min Ref	Details of Action Point	Lead	Status Update
8 (13/10/22)	Framework for FE/HE development and collaboration – to make the framework available to the committee when published.	TA	Ongoing, no further update.
30 (23/2/22)	The Annual Safeguarding Report to include confirmation that the required annual self-assessment audit has been undertaken.	MM	The annual safeguarding report is on the agenda and the confirmation that the HSCP annual self-assessment audit was completed with no recommendations, is included as part of the report.
36 (23/2/22)	In future curriculum SARs, the SAR to include an analysis of the impact of employers on provision.	MGK	Ongoing.
4/22	Add a briefing about apprenticeships to a future Corporation agenda.	KF	To be considered by the Governance, Search and Strategy Committee.
5/22	Provide a summary for governors that includes all forms of oversight and any key themes coming through.	MGK	Key themes are pulled out in both the data dashboard and in the development plan objectives.

## 21/22 Data Dashboard Review

The Committee reviewed in detail those Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that fell under the Committee's remit including: attendance, learning walks, achievement and deep dives.

### a) Learning Walks

The cycle of classroom visits had been revised for 2022-2023. In the autumn term it would now include short drop-ins by managers in the first six weeks and a series of peer classroom visits, Teaching Triangles. All teachers would take part in the triangles, which were planned to start in October and finish in December. Key learning points and developments for these activities would be shared in the whole college CILT CPD session in January 2023.

Learning walks and deep dives would start in the spring term and continue into the summer term and would enable the College to measure the impact of the Teaching Triangles and objectives.

Since the start of the year, managers in all curriculum areas have been conducting short lesson drop-ins. Over the past three weeks, managers reported improved consistency in the application of standards for success and improving punctuality.

Governors said the Teaching Triangles seemed to be successful and asked whether any key themes could be shared with the Committee. MGK said each Teaching Triangle would be themed and an update could be given.

Governors suggested some of the themes could be a focus of governor visits in the spring term.

**b) Deep Dives**

The calendar of curriculum deep dives had been revised for 2022-23. The first deep dive would start in January 2023 and run through to the summer term. The process and scope of deep dives had also been updated, in line with the review following the Ofsted inspection last year. Deep dives would include a series of activities including meetings with managers, teachers and students to:

- Review progress towards targets in the curriculum QIPs.
- Review the planning documents to evaluate how well the intended curriculum is sequenced and prepares students for their next step in education or employment and the extent to which curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities have been embedded to complement the curriculum.
- Audit the course summaries with a focus on development of knowledge, skills and behaviours students develop on the course.
- Review learning walks to evaluate the impact of Teaching Triangles in the autumn term.
- Scrutinise work to evaluate the standards of work students produce and the quality of feedback.

**c) Attendance**

Attendance in 2021-22 continued to be impacted by COVID, especially in the second half of the autumn term. Attendance for Programmes of Study was below target at 84.6%, attendance for 19+ was on target at 87%, with overall attendance at 85%.

All full-time courses started in the week commencing 5 September and most part-time and evening courses started in the week commencing 12 September. As is always the case in the first six weeks, there had been some movement in terms of enrolments and this had an impact on attendance data. Once movements had been finalised and the data processed, attendance was expected to be around 88.5%.

Attendance continued to be a strategic focus for the College and was being very closely monitored with a clear attendance strategy in place.

**d) Achievement**

Results were still coming in so the final position for 2021-22 would be confirmed by mid October 2022. The 2021-22 results were expected to be largely in line with predictions. Provisional achievement rates were:

- College Overall - 89%
- 16-18 Overall - 88%
- 19+ Overall - 89%

GCSE English and Maths results for 2021-22 were confirmed:

- GCSE English high grades (4-9) at 39.2% improved by 8.7% compared to 2018-19 (pre-Covid year with external exams).
- GCSE Maths high grades (4-9) at 41.9% improved by 14.1% compared to 2018-19.

Governors asked how it compared to the national picture. MGK said it compared very favourably. Both English and Maths GCSE high grades remained very high compared

to the national average published by the Association of Colleges. National Average for GCSE English high grades was 28.4% and for Maths high grades was 20.1%.

Overall, Functional Skills results were a positive picture at 80%, improved by 6% compared to 2020-21

- Overall, Functional Skills English was 68%, a slight drop of 3% compared to 2020-21.
- Functional Skills English Entry was 93%, improved by 1% compared to 2020-21.
- Functional Skills English Level 1 at 54% dropped by 6% and will be put in Special Measures for 2022-23
- Overall, Functional Skills Maths was 86%, improved by 10% compared to 2020-21.
- Functional Skills Maths Entry at 92% remained high compared to last year.
- Functional Skills Maths Level 1 at 59% improved by 12% compared to 2020-21.

Governors asked if the College was impacted at all by the issues at Pearson. The Principal said some students had experienced difficulties particularly those studying Science. It had been resolved and a formal review was being undertaken.

Governors thanked MGK for the report. The results were a good set of scores and looked promising.

## 22/22 Development Plan

### a) Development Plan 2021-2022

The 'Development Plan 2021-2022 – Oct Update' (Paper 3) was received in advance of the meeting. The Committee reviewed the final position, noting the objectives that remained amber.

### b) Development Plan 2022-2023

The 'Draft Development Plan 2022-2023' (Paper 4) was received in advance of the meeting.

Governors asked about objective 1.4 and whether there were any changes needed to the SAR process as a result. MGK said no changes would be needed, any actions would be identified and included in the Quality Improvement Plans.

Governors asked about objective 1.3, they said the CILT CPD programme was a good initiative but some part time staff were unable to attend the training sessions. MGK said managers were encouraged to share learning with staff. Team meetings could be used to focus on the quality of teaching and learning and the College made use of the Development Days. Increasingly, training sessions were being recorded.

Governors asked what the timescale would be for T Levels. The Principal said T Level courses would start in September 2023 in healthcare and digital. Governors asked whether T Levels needed to be included in the objectives under goal one. The Principal said it was included in the Strategic Plan and covered by goal three of the Development Plan.

## 23/22 Student Voice

BS reported that student voice meetings were in the process of being set up. A report would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

In terms of community, a Faith Leader project was underway. The project was part of local Interfaith work and as part of it, some media studies students from the College were involved in filming in local places of worship. The project would also include discussion about faith, community and cohesion.

#### 24/22 **Committee Cycle of Business**

The proposed cycle of business for the committee (Paper 8) was received in advance of the meeting and was noted.

#### 25/22 **Complaints**

The 'Summary of Complaints 2021-2022' (Paper 10) and the 'Complaints Cover Sheet' (Paper 9) were received in advance of the meeting.

There were a total of 50 complaints made during the academic year 2021-22. The largest proportion of the complaints were made in term three and related to incorrect fee assessment. The majority of complaints were from the Information Centre but this was linked to the fee assessment issue.

All complaints were fully investigated and students had an opportunity to appeal. In terms of complaints received in 2021-2022, 21 complaints were upheld. Action was taken where needed.

Governors asked about the 9 complaints received from 14-16 year olds saying they were surprised so many complaints were received from this age group as there was such a low number of students.

For future complaints reports, governors asked for more information about what had been learnt from the complaints and what was changing as a result.

Governors felt the number of complaints was fairly low compared to the number of students.

#### 26/22 **Risk Register**

The 'Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee Risk Register' (Paper 12) and the 'Risk Register Cover Sheet' (Paper 11) had been received in advance of the meeting. There had been no significant changes to the risk register since the last meeting of the Committee.

Governors asked if the resource implications that had been caused by the increase in energy prices would impact on the curriculum. The Principal said there wasn't expected to be any negative impact on the curriculum.

Governors said there was a lot of scores of 5 for 'likelihood' and asked whether this was accurate. It was agreed to ask the Audit Committee and the Governance, Search and Strategy Committee to look at this as it might be the scores were too cautious.

#### 27/22 **Items for the Next Agenda**

- Update on Higher Education curriculum planning.
- Feedback from Teaching Triangles.
- Update on governor link visits.

#### 28/22 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meetings of the committee were:

- Wednesday 23 November 2022 at 10.00 am for the SAR Validation
- Wednesday 22 February 2023 at 6.00 pm for a committee meeting.

### Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Lead	Target Date
8 (13/10/22)	Framework for FE/HE development and collaboration – to make the framework available to the committee when published.	TA	Ongoing
36 (23/2/22)	In future curriculum SARs, the SAR to include an analysis of the impact of employers on provision.	MGK	Nov 22