

## Minutes of the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee Meeting

held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 14 June 2023  
at the College.

<b>Present:</b>	Mr B Armstrong (BA) Ms T Aust (TA) Mr J Bolt (JB) Ms A Cornish (AC) Ms B Sandhu (BS) Ms R Turner (RT) Mr L McBirney (LM)	Chair CEO/Principal
<b>Apologies:</b>	Ms T Kaur (TK) Mr A Smith (AS)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Ms K Frost (KF) Ms M Gajewska-Kopczyk (MGK) Ms N Gharu (NG) Ms F Chalk (FC)	Head of Governance Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality Director, Higher Education External Governance Reviewer

### 16/23 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly RT who was attending her first meeting and FC who was attending as an observer as part of the external review of governance. LM was attending the meeting virtually via Teams.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from AS and TK.

### 17/23 **Declarations of Interest**

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

### 18/23 **Apprenticeship Update**

An 'Apprenticeships Update' (Paper 1) was received in advance of the meeting.

NG summarised the retention data over the last few years, which had always been up and down due to the number of variables involved. Governors asked what the different variables were. NG said there were a number of factors impacting on retention but the main two were changes in commitment on the part of the apprentices and issues with employers. The College was looking at how to retain the optimum amount of learners.

Governors asked what the breakdown was of timely and not timely achievement for the starts in 2023. NG explained that the College was no longer measured on timely achievement but still worked on the basis of encouraging apprentices to complete within the expected duration.

*BS entered the meeting*

Governors asked if there was a sector causing most concern and, in particular, how the College was finding business apprenticeships. NG said it varied. Business had been a strong apprenticeship in the past but there was a question of whether there was added value with it.

Governors asked whether external inspections still looked at 16-18 and adult. NG said both age groups were looked at. Apprenticeships were now open to everyone and focused on getting best value.

Governors asked whether the funding varied. NG said the Institute of Apprenticeships issued guidance but the College was able to negotiate prices.

Governors asked whether the College was confident in meeting the 73% target this year. NG said 73% was the best case scenario, it would be challenging to achieve. Governors asked for national data to be included in future reports. It was noted that the current achievement rates were well above national figures.

Governors asked whether the College would take on any hairdressing apprenticeships or only focus on key sectors. NG said it had been decided to refocus on key areas that would support local needs and areas of growth. When the College received calls about apprenticeship standards that weren't offered, the caller was signposted to the right provider. It would be unlikely that the College would run a hairdressing apprenticeship.

NG said the College was still recruiting apprentices and thought numbers could reach 74. The target was 65. The income for next year was likely to be £195k compared to a target of £250k. The CEO said that Tufnells had recently gone into liquidation which would impact the apprenticeships.

Governors asked whether employers approached the College or the College approached employers. NG said it was a combination, specific sectors were targeted.

Governors asked how much it was costing the college. MC said apprenticeships were costing more than the income they were generating. It was a challenge to deliver a good apprenticeship in a cost effective manner. Governors asked if apprenticeships became more efficient with the right sized cohort. MC said they did, the College was trying to increase the number of apprentices with the same employer.

Governors asked what the critical mass was for apprenticeships. MC said the college needed at least 5 new starts a month.

Governors asked whether students in the Skills and Logistics Centre progressed onto an apprenticeship once they had finished their course. NG said that any apprenticeship opportunities were offered to students already at the College first. Employers were invited in to speak to students. Governors asked whether staff were proactive in approaching employers. NG said staff were. Governors asked what proportion of the completers at the Skills and Logistics Centre went on to apprenticeships. NG said that not many went on to apprenticeships as there were no suitable Level 3 apprenticeships for those students who had completed a Level 2 course. Governors asked whether the College looked at progression for particular sectors. NG said progression was captured in the destination data. The Principal explained that there was a range of employer engagement events throughout the year, the College worked with the Chamber of Commerce and there were regular regeneration conferences. There were a range of activities happening to access potential opportunities for students.

Governors asked whether apprentices stayed with their employer when they finished. NG said the majority stay with the employer. A high number of apprentices were already in work when they started but were being upskilled.

NG said the targets for next academic year were: 70% overall achievement, 85 apprentices in learning and a target income of £350k. Priority areas would be construction, green skills, digital and logistics. NG summarised the next steps.

Governors asked whether someone already working when they started dropped to an apprenticeship salary. NG said they kept their salary. There were very few employers that offered the apprenticeship salary.

Governors said a proactive approach to the management of apprentices was evident. Apprenticeships had always been an area of concern but it was looking promising. The target was ambitious. It was important to be mindful of the national rate.

It was agreed to add apprenticeship information to the Data Dashboard so that the Committee could monitor progress at every meeting.

**Action: MC**

*NG left meeting at 6.47pm*

## 19/23 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the meetings of the committee held on 22 February 2023 been received in advance. (Paper 2).

IT WAS DECIDED the minutes were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

## 20/23 Matters Arising

The 'Summary Action Point List' (Paper 3) was received in advance of the meeting. Committee members noted the following updates of previously agreed action points:

No.	Action	Status
5/23	Add a risk to the risk register relating to the transition to T Levels and the defunding of Level 3 courses. This could be as part of another risk rather than a stand-alone risk.	Completed.
7/23	Separate the leads for action and monitoring in the Higher Education action plan so that there is a different person named for both.	Completed. The action is Pauline Hudson and monitoring Katrin Lehman.
12/23	Carry out an analysis of the committee terms of reference and evidence how the committee is fulfilling its responsibilities.	Completed. On agenda for discussion.

## 21/23 Risk Register

A 'Cover Sheet CQS Risk Register' (Paper 4a) and the 'CQS Risk Register' (Paper 4b) were received in advance of the meeting.

The CEO reported that following feedback from the Committee at their last meeting, Risk 1 had been changed, adding in specific reference to the risk relating to the transition to T

levels and the defunding of Level 3 qualifications. This would need to be kept under constant review.

Governors suggested amending Risk 1 to 'outstanding or good' as the College remaining at 'Good' would not have a reputational or financial impact.

**Action:** MC

## 22/23 Data Dashboard

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

### a) Teaching Learning and Assessment

138 learning walks had been completed as at end of May 2023. 80% had been graded as green compared to the target of 85%. There were still learning walk results to come in. Meeting needs was 68% green against the target of 70%. A positive impact had been seen but work was still needed around consistency. MGK said she was confident the target would be reached. Assessment and feedback was slightly below the 70% target. Feedback needed to be consistent to be 'Outstanding'.

### b) Attendance

Attendance was at 84.6% against a target of 88%. Attendance was being impacted by the cost of living and mental health issues.

Governors asked whether the attendance issue at the Skills and Logistics Centre had any comparison with learning walk results. MGK said there was a connection. The College tried to engage with students wherever they were so that they could continue their qualification. Governors asked whether there were any trends at College level. MGK said data was analysed at College level but there were no trends.

Governors asked whether there were any issues with attendance for students with different kinds of backgrounds. MGK said there were some contributing factors for certain courses at the Skills and Logistics Centre, mostly with the Level 1 and 2 Motor Vehicle courses.

Governors said they were surprised that the report from the governor Skills and Logistics Centre curriculum link visit had made no mention of the fact that certain courses hadn't done so well. They would have expected to see information about it being it being addressed and what was being done about it.

Governors said they thought the College had done well with attendance, the figures were very strong compared to other colleges. The team should be commended for their effort, which was fantastic.

### c) Deep Dives

The Deep Dives had all been completed; progress should be seen in the Self Evaluation Reviews. The only red area was Motor Vehicle and Engineering. An action plan was in place.

### d) Achievement

The final achievement rates for 2021-22 had been published. The College was the number one college in London in terms of achievement in 2021-22 for 16-18 year olds, for adult students and overall for all levels.

Predicted achievement rates for 2022-23 were largely in line with the high achievement rates in 2021-22.

30 courses had been given a Notice to Improve, 22 of which were on track to improve achievement in line with the targets set. At the Skills and Logistics Centre, 5 courses had been given a Notice to Improve.

Governors said they were disappointed at the lack of improvement in Motor Vehicle which had poor achievement last year as well. MGK said the action plan was robust but hadn't been implemented in a timely and precise enough manner. The area would be subject to special measures next year with additional scrutiny. External support would be used to ensure the needed improvements were made.

## 23/23 Student Report

### a) Student Governor Report

A student governor report was received at the meeting covering:

- Skills Centre: it had been a lot better at the Skills Centre regarding enrichment since the last meeting of the Committee. The Student Union was having more meetings and being taken more seriously.
- Football cage: A net for the football cage would be useful as the footballs were always being kicked over and lost.
- Fresher's Fair: It would be good to have more activities at the Fresher's Fair so that students at the Skills and Logistics Centre had similar provision to Isleworth.
- Mural: Students at Isleworth would like to paint a mural on the walls by the staircase.
- Canteen: There had been a big improvement in the food and there was a lot more variety which was positive. A request was made for milkshakes and smoothies.

LM was asked to identify some students who would be willing to help shape the Freshers Fair at the Skills and Logistics Centre next year and to meet with Terrie Carter to discuss the ideas about the mural.

It was agreed the Executive Team would look into the suggestions.

**Action:** ET

### b) Report from Student and Community Link Governor

A 'Student and Community Link Governor Report' (Paper 6) was received in advance of the meeting. BS said students continued to come forward with ideas about improvements which were actioned by the College. Students had appreciated the improvement in the Canteen at both sites. Students felt safe, involved and liked the activities on offer.

## 24/23 Development Plan

The 'Development Plan June 23 Update' (Paper 5) was received in advance of the meeting. The only area marked as amber was attendance which had already been discussed.

Governors asked whether it was too early to know how the new Level 4 courses were recruiting. MGK said it was too early.

It was agreed that it would be useful for RT, as a new member of the committee, and MGK to meet to discuss the impact resulting from actions within the Development Plan.

**Action:** RT/MGK

### 25/23 **Safeguarding Report**

A 'Safeguarding Update June 2023' (Paper 8) was received in advance of the meeting.

JB said mental and emotional health were the biggest contributing factors to safeguarding referrals.

He suggested the Corporation arrange a fuller report on how the increase in ESOL students was being managed. This could be included in the Executive Report.

**Action:** TA

The College had recently increased the number of trained DSLs to 5 in order to build further in house expertise.

Governors asked whether there was a recommended ratio for the number of DSLs. The CEO said the College only needed one but had always taken the view to have more to ensure sufficient coverage.

Governors said they felt assured by the safeguarding report.

Governors asked whether a check of the Single Central Register was undertaken as part of the Safeguarding Governor visits. JB said it had been carried out but could be repeated.

### 26/23 **Arrangement for Obtaining the Views of Students and Staff**

A draft of the 'Arrangements for Obtaining the Views of Students and Staff Document' (Paper 9) was received in advance of the meeting.

The Head of Governance explained that the Instrument and Articles of Government of the College required the Corporation to publish arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the determination and periodic review of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities.

The current version had been updated and circulated for review by the Committee. No significant changes to bring attention to.

It was agreed to add in some details about staff wellbeing and then to recommend approval of the document to the Corporation.

### 27/23 **SAR Process**

The proposed new Self-Assessment Review Process (Paper 10a) and the proposed new Curriculum Self-Assessment Review Template (Paper 10b) was received in advance of the meeting.

MGK had met with JB and BA to look at updating the SAR process to include greater input from link governors as part of the process. Next year the internal review panel would include the link governor to review the curriculum SAR which would be followed by the CQSE SAR validation meeting to look at overall effectiveness.

Governors said they thought it would make the process more consistent and systematic. They asked whether it would be worth adding in what directors were most proud of last year. MGK said it would come through in the strengths. Governors suggested separating out actions and outcomes.

Governors asked where employer engagement and work experience fitted into the report. MGK said it was included under Intent, Implementation and Impact. Work experience was under Personal Development.

The effectiveness of link governors would also be reviewed.

A governor training session on the new process would be arranged.

**Action:** MGK/KF

## 28/23 **Committee Terms of Reference**

A report summarising how the Committee had fulfilled its terms of reference (Paper 11) was received in advance of the meeting.

When reviewing the committee terms of reference at the last meeting, governors asked the Head of Governance to provide a report identifying how the Committee had fulfilled its terms of reference. For the most part there was evidence that the committee had fulfilled the areas of responsibility. There were three areas for which there was very little evidence. The following actions were agreed:

- To monitor the College’s curriculum offer and how it meets the needs of learners, employers and stakeholders at a local, regional and where appropriate, national level.  
*Curriculum Directors would be asked to provide a contextual statement explaining how the offer meets local needs as part of the Curriculum SAR report. The wording would be amended to read that the committee would ‘seek assurance’ rather than monitor.*
- To monitor equality and diversity and student wellbeing policies, procedures and outcomes.  
*The wording would be amended to read that the committee would ‘have oversight of equality and diversity and student wellbeing’.*
- To oversee the provision of Careers guidance.  
*A Careers Link Governor role would be introduced who would report to the Committee.*

The proposed changes would be recommended to the Corporation at their next meeting.

## 29/23 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the committee was Wednesday 4 October 2023.

## Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Lead	Target Date
18/23	Add Apprenticeships to the Data Dashboard.	MC	Nov 23
21/23	Amend Risk 1 to ‘outstanding or good’ as the College remaining at ‘Good’ would not have a reputational or financial impact.	MC	Nov 23

23/23	Look into the points raised under the Student Governor report and consider them.	MM	Nov 23
24/23	Meet to discuss the impact resulting from actions within the Development Plan.	RT/MGK	Nov 23
25/23	Include a report in the next Executive Report on how the increase in ESOL students is being managed.	TA	Jul 23
27/23	Arrange governor training in the new SAR process.	MGK/KF	Oct 23