

**College of West Anglia  
Minutes of the  
Performance Review and Quality Committee  
14 June 2023  
8.30am  
Remote Meeting – Microsoft Teams**

<b>Present</b>	Sam Fletcher Chris Ashman Scott Leadley Fliss Miller David Pomfret	Governor (Chair) Governor Governor Governor Governor (Principal)
<b>Attending</b>	Kerry Heathcote Rob Petto Sarah Anstiss Laura Holland Sue Moore Ria Steventon Jules Bridges	Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Assistant Principal Funding and Performance Head of Apprenticeships and WBL Head of Faculty – Maths, English, ESOL Head of Faculty – Technology Head of Learning Improvement Head of Governance

No.	Action
<p><b>1 Apologies</b> Apologies for absence were received from Lee Smith.</p>	
<p><b>2 Declarations of Interests</b> There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p><b>3 Minutes of the previous meeting – 8 March 2023</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023 were reviewed and <b>agreed</b> as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>4 Matters Arising</b> The progress against the outstanding matters from previous meetings was summarised in the report. The completed items are to be removed from the table.</p> <p>Regarding the positive destination data appended to the report it was agreed that the codes attached to the keys in the drop-down criteria will be circulated to the committee.</p>	HoG
S Anstiss joined the meeting at 8.35am	
<p><b>5 Priority Item 1 – Apprenticeships</b> The Head of Apprenticeships and WBL highlighted from the report that good progress has been made. The EBS training has taken place and the team ready to get started as soon as the CRM system is up and running. The EBS system is the main MI system for all data returns/funding. HE learners are also on EBS, and apprentices will also soon be transferred over from PICS into EBS, enabling enhanced data movement capabilities between EBS, smart assessor, CRM and other college systems to integrate and build data reports, and build data flows.</p> <p>There are some concerns with out of funding learners around;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maths and English</li> <li>• Progression</li> <li>• Plumbing (13 learners waiting to go through)</li> </ul>	

- Engineering (13 learners out of funding due to COVID legacy in terms of not being able to visit these learners during this time)
- High levels of Team Leading learners out of funding due to ILM certificate put into the provision, slowing things down. The majority of these are with just one organisation.

It was noted that the new assessment facility at Wisbech is almost finished so this will enable speedier completion for learners through end point assessments.

Regarding appendix 1, achievement rates, it was noted that the number of 2022/23 (R09) achievers were overall achievers, and it was reported that timely would be around the 50% mark. There are a few red indicators on the risk register, so it was questioned if these issues were affecting the quality of provision and delivery or if these were just improvement areas that needed addressing to move the provision to the next level. These indicators, in the main, relate to the legacy issues and there was confidence that processes around the quality of the learner journey, admin, and audit that are now embedded and implemented will move these red indicators on. The Head of Apprenticeships and WBL anticipates that this will look more positive in 6 months' time, and at the same point next year it is expected that timely achievement rates, robust audit trails, and a clear vision of good working practice will be evident.

F Miller joined the meeting at 8.40am

The Head of Apprenticeships and WBL will provide a forecast outturn after receiving updated data on the remaining achievements to come through. This will be circulated to the committee when available. In addition, in future reports best case, worst case and probable (best estimate) will be reported.

HoG  
HoFAWBL

S Anstiss left the meeting and L Holland joined the meeting at 8.45am

## 6 Priority Item 2 - Maths

The Head of Faculty for maths reported that today is the third and final maths GCSE paper. Attendance for the first two papers has been good with 88% attendance. There are good GCSE outcome predictions, but grade boundaries remain unpredictable and are anticipated to return to pre-COVID.

Functional skills students are receiving intensive revision sessions and entry into exams. There is an influx of entry level students this year. Normally there are around 90 entry level students, this year there are 276, and this is a post COVID impact with more learners coming in at the lower end. The college does all the administration and verification for these learners, so this is time intensive for the team although the removal of Level 2 for 16-18s this year has allowed the team to focus more concentrated support at Level 1.

In terms of staffing, this remains a challenge. In year there has only been three weeks that were fully staff and three days in total with no cover. The team currently has two vacancies. Interviews were held yesterday for five applicants but only two internal candidates turned up and it will be difficult to get a fully staffed maths team by September 2023. Working with HR, there is a need to think creatively about recruitment, attracting people from other areas, training and supporting people to develop and upskill into teaching, and potentially changing/adjusting delivery models. Despite these staffing challenges the department has self-assessed as a grade 2 (subject to internal validation and moderation).

It was agreed that future reports would include target against actual on Multiply numbers for example so that governors are able to understand performance and in the case of Multiply, if recruitment is on target against the government funding allocated.

LHolland

It was noted that the 12% of students that didn't attend the first two GCSE maths papers equated to about 50 learners and it was questioned if these were students from across the curriculum or were isolated to specific areas. It was confirmed that these students are

from a variety of areas and not concentrated to pockets of the curriculum. Reasons for absence are followed up and students not withdrawn until the end of the GCSE papers in case there are special considerations to make. It was noted that overall positive progress is being made from starting point and it was questioned how this is measured and how it can be demonstrated that learners are progressing from their starting point from when they join the college, and how this may compare with any external benchmark. There is a robust, 4-point assessment process in the year, and these are carefully delivered, monitored, and tracked.

It was noted that the Programme Manager for maths has recently been recruited to be a 'trailblazer' and it was questioned how they would be able to balance their trailblazing priorities, against their work for the college. There is capacity as this individual has recently completed a maths mastery project so this will replace that work and the college is keen to invest and encourage personal development and practice.

## **7 Priority Item 3 - ESOL**

ESOL provision is currently graded as a 3 (subject to validation and moderation), which is an improvement, as this provision has sat at inadequate (grade 4) for some time.

The new 0.5FTE programme manager is making a great impact and there are other new staff bringing new ideas. The new award structure, moving to three separate units (reading, writing, and listening), rather than one qualification throughout the year, is leading to higher retention rates and is positively impacting student commitment and this is hoped will translate into better achievement rates.

There are currently seven different outsourced ESOL provision with other providers, including QEHL, Guy Raymond Engineering, Ferry Project, and the Freebridge Housing Association. Some of these are Multiply based but some are leading to other ESOL provision. There is also a demand for unaccompanied asylum seeker children (known as UASC) in the Peterborough and Norwich areas. Delivery is at King's Lynn and Wisbech campuses for these learners and discussions with Norfolk County Council to develop a bespoke package for UASC in King's Lynn continues.

The 'ESOL Plus' course will be trialled in Technology at Wisbech and Hair and Beauty at King's Lynn in the next academic year. This will introduce learners from school into college, build their language skills, and give them access to an aspirational vocational course.

In terms of impact, it was questioned if the increased retention because of the changes in delivery is the reason why or are there other reasons, new staffing, new leadership that are also positively impacting. Achievement rates on ESOL have sat at about 30% below national rates so it was agreed that undoubtedly moving to the new award structure is resulting in improved retention rates, and this will improve achievement rates, but this is just one change that has been made. The changes in leadership and changes in staffing is also really impacting and helping to move ESOL forward. The team, and the committee, look forward to seeing the achievements come through at the end of the year.

L Holland left the meeting and S Moore joined the meeting at 9.15am

## **8 Priority Item 4 - Technology**

The Head of Faculty for Technology reported good progress across the provision since January 2023 and there is good movement on getting apprenticeships through although there are a concerning number of out of funded learners in engineering, but an additional assessor has been assigned and this is helping to reduce the number. Good progress with the number of out of funded learners in the Anglian Training Centre has been made and some learners from 2020 starts will soon be ready for gateway.

The new assessment facility at the Wisbech campus will be instrumental in securing End Point Assessments for plumbing and gas apprentices. There is also the opportunity to approach and work with BPEC (specialised provider of industry recognised qualifications, assessments, training courses and learning materials) for Gas EPAs as there is nowhere currently in the eastern region to do Gas EPAs.

It was noted that retention is better than last year despite the number of learners removed. Many of those removed were redirected and applications are being seen to be coming back in from those learners who were put into better supported, and smaller groups, so this has been positive for those individuals.

Working with the Head of Apprenticeships and WBL it was agreed that the Head of Faculty for Technology will work together to provide more joined up reporting in the future but specifically to provide the forecast apprenticeship achievement outcomes (asked for above), acknowledging that a good proportion of the students yet to achieve (through EPA) are Technology apprentices. Every effort is being made to get learners through although it was noted that there may be 6 individuals that may be taken off programme, as they have not achieved maths and English.

HoF -  
Technology

Regarding the RAG rating used in the report it was questioned how the recruitment of high quality, qualified staff had been rated light green despite the known difficulties in the department to recruit high quality, qualified staff. The Head of Faculty explained that at the time of writing areas were fully staffed, and there were some concerns over some staffing absence, and some recruitment difficulties in specific areas, since removed, so this indicator would now move to amber but compared to the position in January 2023 it is in a much better place.

S Moore left the meeting at 9.30am

#### **9 Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy Deep Dive Impact Report**

Due to absence in the department the Programme Manager and Head of Faculty were unable to attend to present the report. The committee agreed to defer the item to the next meeting of the committee.

HoG

#### **10 Operational Oversight Report**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality highlighted under item 1.4a of the report about the pilot of the century platform for the future delivery of apprenticeship functional skills for the next academic year. An evaluation meeting will take place shortly and a decision reached about potentially delivering maths, English and ESOL differently.

*Confidential item under Article 17(2) of the Instrument and Articles of Government*

This item was deemed confidential

Headline attendance figures for May 2023, compared with February 2023 and end of year July 2022 were provided in the report to show the decreased attendance gap between vocational and maths and English. The overall gap as at February 2023 was 8% and decreased by 2.3% (May 2023) to 5.7% across the college as a whole.

Retention at the time of writing the report was at 87.9% and is now at 87.7%. While the target 90% has not been achieved there is every expectation that this figure will not drop as students are kept on programme. This is a 5.4% improvement on the 2021/22 retention outturn. Maximum achievement is sitting at 87.15% across the piste and was 68.9% outturn last year.

It was noted that at the recent safeguarding oversight meeting the use of formal disciplinaries was discussed and how this has been used to positive effect. There are some behavioural issues leading to disciplinary but in the main these have been used to

positive effect, both retaining students who might otherwise have left but also withdrawing students for a variety of reasons who have been signposted to the right external agencies.

A four-week 'Meeting Skills Needs' Deep dives exercise has been undertaken by the 'Ofsted Task Force', comprising Ria Steventon, Alison Barber, Sarah Anstiss, and Ann Compton. The report arising from the deep dives is to be collated and will determine if the college has a 'limited', 'reasonable' or 'strong' contribution to meeting skills needs. The report will be shared with the committee at its next meeting to be held in September 2023.

VPC&S

The 'At Risk' headline figures in the report show 1,695 learners currently at risk and it was questioned what the percentage of all learners this represented. The VPC&S commented that although a high number, the effective use of disciplinaries is positively impacting retention and not all 1,695 will be at a high level of risk. The percentage will be included in future reports as well as providing comparative data so that governors have visibility of performance.

VPC&S

It was noted that external destinations are yet to be reported. The destination data reported are the known destinations.

The Chair asked the VPC&S to provide a comparative report for the September outturn reports which show if the college has achieved what was expected to be achieved.

VPC&S

## 11 **Headline Quality Improvement Plan 2022/23**

The Head of Learning Improvement reported that the process of reporting on the headline QIP is naturally evolving through attendance at APRs, additional meeting, and being part of the Apprenticeship risk register meetings. These updates are becoming less reliant on face-to-face individual meetings and more about oversight at these meetings. The template and dialogue processes around APRs have also changed, as well as the local level quality improvement plans. This is providing closer and clearer correlation between, and triangulation of, data at local level up to strategic level.

Governors' attention was drawn to two areas in the report; the apprenticeship area through the CRM that is amber in the report, should be green as the CRM is nearly at launch point, and the area concerning destination data can be omitted from the headline QIP as this is completed.

It was recognised that because of the changes in process the QIPs are being used more as a tool than a form to fill in and update so it was questioned if there was confidence if a governor visited an area that curriculum teams would know what the QIP is, the progress made, and what actions still needed completing. The Head of Learning affirmed that contact with Heads of Faculty and Programme Managers would provide the correlation and triangulation of what is reported to committee and board. Disseminating the QIP down to the team is work in progress although there are pockets of areas where this is developing.

It was noted that the apprenticeship risk register area on the headline QIP is RAG rated green while (as reported above) there are some actions on the risk register that are RAG rated red. The Head of Learning Improvement explained that as the risk register is being actioned, worked on consistently, and that progress is driving in the right trajectory, this is demonstrating good progress (green) against the headline QIP. If progress was not evident the risk rating would change accordingly.

F Miller left the meeting at 10.00am

## 12 **HE Performance Report**

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality reported that current HE retention is at 90.4%. The final meeting (somewhat late) for the approval of an institutional validation model will be

held later today. There is confidence that this will be awarded, and the Bio Veterinary Science degree can be released for intake for September 2023 starts. The OU discovery phase visit is scheduled for 29 June 2023 involving SMT, teaching teams in science, computing, and health. The Head of Learning Improvement will be leading on the validation of the MA Teaching route with the University of Huddersfield.

The number of withdrawals and retention by course were included in the report and this is informing where growth could be achieved in 2026 and beyond. This was particularly interesting to governors, and it was questioned why 5 people for example on the BA (Hons) Psychosocial Studies withdrew from learning. Every reason behind every withdrawal is known and the theme emerging is due to mental health issues, in the main. Likewise, there were four withdrawals on the Level 7 Teaching Apprenticeship which related to the attachment of the apprenticeship level 5 to level 7, Cert Ed PGCE that needed to cease so that this could be detached. The Cert Ed level 5 and the PCGE level 7 are standalone quals. This caused a confusion when the standard changed and the need to do a mandatory qualification as part of the apprenticeship dissolved and the off the job training didn't necessarily match the requirement of the qual. It was noted that while these four withdrew, one achieved distinction on the level 5 apprenticeship and the three remaining all passed with high grades.

### **13 Strategic Targets 2022/23 – Progress Review**

Strategic target owners have updated the termly progress made. A couple of targets have been achieved, and good, and reasonable progress has been made against others.

Under strategic target 1.8 it was noted that the progress reported that 80.32% (target 85%) of eligible students had either planned, started, or completed their work experience so it was questioned what would happen with the other 20% of students. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality commented that every effort continues to secure placements for every eligible learner. Noting that funding is linked to learners completing work experience the Assistant Principal Funding and Performance confirmed that compliance with funding rules in this respect can be evidenced.

### **14 Review of Committee's Performance, Terms of Reference, & Annual Business Agenda**

The committee considered the prepared review and concluded that it provides a fair and accurate summary of the committee's performance during the year. Under value added the HoG was asked to add the progress made for study programme learners from start point to end point.

HoG

The amendments to the Terms of Reference were considered and it was concluded that these remain fit for purpose. A recommendation will be taken to the Corporation at the meeting to be held on 5 July 2023.

HoG

Similarly, the annual business cycle was considered, and it was agreed that the business items covered in the year would enable the committee to fulfil its responsibilities.

### **15 Any other business**

The staff governor commented that his term of office comes to an end in the new academic year. A recruitment campaign for a successor will commence in September 2023.

### **16 Chair's items for briefing to Corporation**

- Good progress made on apprenticeships with a few concerns around out of funded learners that are being worked through and reducing in number.
- Good attendance at GCSE maths exams and functional skills student continue to receive support and intense revision sessions.
- Staff recruitment in maths remains a challenge but new HR initiatives deployed, making every effort to attract candidates into teaching roles.

- Changes in ESOL delivery are positively impacting retention, and hopeful this will translate into increased achievement.
- Good progress in Technology and working closely with apprenticeship team to get learners through their end point assessments.
- Attendance and retention are holding strong with every learner anticipated to stay on programme and no withdrawals.
- The committee terms of reference will be taken to the Corporation for approval.

**17 Date and time of next meeting**

Wednesday, 20 September 2023 at 8.30am

Meeting ended at 10.30am