

Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held via MS Teams on Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 2.45pm

- Present:** Christine Bampton (Committee and Corporation Chair)
 Mark Aberdein (Independent Governor)
 Heather Austin (Student Governor)
 Michelle Brabner (Principal)
 Anita Holt (Associate Governor)
 Catherine Durr (Staff Governor)
- In Attendance:** Paris Bonwick (AP Apprenticeships and MIS)
 Maura Cummins (Deputy Principal)
 Lisa Farnhill (Clerk to the Governors)
 Vickie Hayes (Head of Learning Support and Inclusion (to item 8))
 Victoria Wickington (Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Quality)
- Apologies:** Katy Robinson (Independent Governor)
 Susannah Porter (Independent Governor)
 Stephen Musa (Asst. Principal Student Experience and Welfare)
- Absent:**

Minute No.	Minutes	Action
S.23.24	OPEN AND WELCOME The Committee Chair opened the meeting, welcoming everyone to the meeting of the Committee, with it noted the meeting had been preceded by training on the new dashboards.	
S.23.25	ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence from Katy Robinson and Susannah Porter were accepted by the Committee. Members noted the AP Student Experience and Welfare was unable to be in attendance. The Committee Chair confirmed it had been agreed the Head of Learning Support and Inclusion would present item 8 in the absence of the AP Student Experience and Welfare, therefore the order of the agenda would be amended to allow this to be delivered after item 2. <u>Item 1 – Resolved:</u> <i>Members accepted the apologies as provided above.</i>	
S.23.26	ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST No interests were declared. <u>Item 2 – Noted:</u>	

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	Item 8 was delivered here.	
S.23.27	<p>ITEM 3: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF 27th SEPTEMBER 2022</p> <p>Members gave their approval for the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair invited members to raise any additional matters not included under item 4 or elsewhere in the agenda, with a member asking for governor and SLT input into IFATE’s big conversation. Members agreed to contact Mark Aberdein if they were able to contribute, with it confirmed the AP MIS and Apprenticeships would provide feedback from an operational perspective.</p> <p><i>Item 3 - Approved: The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2022.</i></p>	
S.23.28	<p>ITEM 4: MATTERS ARISING / ACTIONS SUMMARY</p> <p>The Clerk summarised the report, confirming that a number of actions were linked or duplicated as they had been raised at a number of meetings. The majority of those due were in relation to the student voice reporting, which had been deferred, with a verbal update to be provided under item 10, and the full report now due in March.</p> <p>Members discussed the ESFA action, with the Principal detailing some progress had been made, with further information set to be discussed at the annual strategic conversation in January and fed back to the Committee in March.</p> <p>A member noted the information provided in relation to the role of the progress tutor and its position in the structure provided assurance of high expectations. Further clarity was provided on how the role aligned to course recovery areas and how tutors were allocated to areas or courses. Members indicated it clearly outlined levels of accountability and support for those needing it, asking for the AP Student Experience and Welfare to be thanked for the information.</p> <p><i>Item 4 - Resolved: The Committee resolved to accept the report.</i></p>	Principal
S.23.29	<p>ITEM 5: CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS</p> <p>No items within the minutes or on the agenda were considered to be confidential.</p> <p><i>Item 5 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to approve the minutes for publication, confirming they did not need any items on the agenda to be reviewed confidentially.</i></p>	
S.23.30	<p>ITEM 6: REPORTING AGAINST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ACTION PLANS</p> <p>Item 6.1: To Provide Excellent Teaching, Learning And Support</p>	

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The Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Quality confirmed that the plan had been updated.

Progress in relation to staff observations was highlighted noting absences had prevented all observations taking place, however, areas of concern had been prioritised. The process and impact was outlined to the committee, including the role of the improvement practitioners and the utilisation of a consultant to provide external validation of the judgements of the internal observation team.

Members confirmed they understood the rationale for avoiding the use of Ofsted descriptors during the observations and feedback, however, expressed concern that this may not enable staff to clearly understand where practice is below the standard expected or the urgency and pace at which improvements were necessary for the benefit of students.

The Committee was assured that the feedback was clear for staff, with the feedback offered clearly outlining where improvements were required, delivered in a supportive and positive way, yet still ensuring that staff knew the session observed was not at the standard necessary. Members noted that some staff responded positively, embracing the opportunity to improve their delivery, whilst some had been less accepting of the feedback.

The Committee asked the staff governor to confirm if staff within her area understood the feedback and implications, and she confirmed that staff themselves were self-allocating grades to their sessions based on the feedback received and despite the absence of a grade, were definitely aware where the lesson observed was considered to be an unacceptable standard.

Members were assured previous reluctance to progress quality issues to formal processes as capability matters was no longer an issue, with processes clear, and support and informal options remaining prioritised in the initial stages. Members commented on how it was their obligation as governors to ensure the right processes were in place and being followed, both for students, with their futures at risk, and for staff, who deserved the opportunity to develop and progress in their careers.

Members asked if all course recovery courses had been observed, and were informed new staff were prioritised, followed by course recovery, then all other areas, noting only where there were issues of long-term absence had they not yet been undertaken, with these scheduled for the new year.

Members were advised of some significant challenges by some staff in relation to the observation process, and were assured it had been positioned as a positive and supportive measure and reviewed with the unions ahead of implementation. Members asked about the communication and preparation time of the observation, with it confirmed staff could choose to defer if assessments or trips were taking place, with it also clear if a previously delivered lesson was being redelivered.

Members asked how many staff were in receipt of support and how impact would be evidenced, with it agreed there would be a table detailing the number of observations undertaken, number of sessions considered to require improvement, resulting in intervention, with further updates outlining whether there was an improvement witnessed when the next session was observed.

**AP T, L &
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	<p>Examples of excellent practice seen was outlined, with it noted that self-critical staff were delivering the best quality teaching and learning and accurately identifying their own areas for improvement and the Committee thanked the SLT for their work in relentlessly challenging and addressing poor practice.</p>	
	<p>Members expressed their disappointment at the delays in the rollout of the updated student survey, asking if the focus groups were still held. Members noted these were still in place and asked for members of the Committee to be invited to attend future sessions</p>	AP T, L & Q
	<p>Members asked for further detail around the completion of sexual harassment training, with it agreed percentages would be included in the next update in addition to the number of staff.</p>	AP T, L & Q
S.23.31	<p>Item 6.2: To Meet The Needs Of The Community And Contribute To The Local And National Economy By Offering A Carefully Considered Diverse Range Of Professional, Technical, And Academic Programmes The Deputy Principal summarised the report on behalf of the AP Student Experience and Welfare, noting all areas were on target or complete, although the completion date for sustainability training for governors had been pushed back to January.</p>	
	<p>Members were advised that the SLT had completed the training and all gained certification. Members asked for assurances that what had been learned was being put into practice, with the DP confirming the knowledge was being built into delivery, with more content being added as their knowledge base broadened.</p>	
S.23.32	<p>Item 6.3: 6.3. To facilitate students and apprentices achieving the highest possible outcomes to progress on to ambitious destinations The Deputy Principal summarised the report, confirming there was a typing error in 3.5, with this being not achieved.</p>	
	<p>The DP highlighted the issue in relation to the appointment of a Level 6 Careers Advisor. It was noted that the initial advert was for a L6 advisor, with a second advert indicating training would be provided to bring the appointee up to level 6 standard, although this had still not resulted in any suitable applicants. Members clarified that the training could not be provided in-house, with it not being a course offered at the College, however, would be funded for the right applicant.</p>	
	<p>Members were advised that there was considerable competition across the education sector and a small pool of people qualified to that level.</p>	
	<p><u>Item 6 – Resolved:</u> <i>The Committee resolved to accept and note the updates provided.</i></p>	
S.23.33	<p>ITEM 7: RISKS RELATING TO STANDARDS The Deputy Principal summarised the key risks relating to the Standards Committee terms of reference. The changes in risk rating scores were discussed, including the increased score relating to raising the quality of provision.</p>	

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Members were assured by the mitigations in place, noting this would be covered in detail under the SAR and QIP item.

Members expressed concern over the challenges in relation to staffing, noting they were sector-wide, and highlighted the cost implications of agency use.

Members noted that although this was a national issue, this was irrelevant to the students who expected and deserved consistency and high-quality provision, asking how the staff shortages and retention issues were impacting on the other staff. Members asked about the recruitment and induction process, which was considered robust, with exit interviews completed for all resigning staff, with a number of teachers choosing to leave the profession, some due to affordability of remaining in the sector.

Members were assured every effort was being made to tackle staff shortages to prevent disengagement and minimise the impact on the wider staff family. Members were assured that all complaints had been handled sensitively, with communication over staffing issues improved as a result.

Members conceded affordability in a competitive market remained an issue, again asking that quality and recruitment remained the priority to drive up income as the only plausible resolution.

Members discussed the short term absences and the mitigations in place to support staff, including the offer of the flu vaccine, with it considered possible immunity had reduced as a result of the reduced socialisation in recent years, factors which were outside of the college's control.

The Committee Chair thanked the Deputy Principal for the report, considered to be highly beneficial to the Committee in highlighting the risks relevant to the Committee.

Item 7 – Resolved: *The Committee resolved to note the update.*

ITEM 8: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

S.23.34 8.1: Semester 1 EDI Update

The Head of Student Support and Inclusion summarised the outcomes data, key activities from the last term and actions for the coming term.

Members commended the work of the team, with effective strategies having a positive impact, recognised by, and leading to closer working relationships with local schools.

The positive outcomes were outlined, with areas for development to be incorporated into the objectives currently under review.

Members discussed the reluctance to declare support needs, asking if the team were aware what the barriers to disclosure were. The Committee were informed it was unclear, but expected to be linked to the application process and a fear it may impact their offer of a place. Members were assured by the positive impact of the questionnaire, with 660 declarations made.

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	<p>Members challenged the declining data in some areas, including retention for BAME students, with the Committee informed it was difficult to analyse due to the proportionality issue due to the low numbers.</p>	
S.23.35	<p>8.2: E&D Policy</p>	
	<p>The Head of Student Support and Inclusion summarised the changes to the policy, highlighting how it had been cross-referenced to relevant legislation and best practice.</p>	
	<p>With no questions or comments, the policy was recommended for Corporation approval.</p>	
	<p><i>Item 8 – Resolved:</i> <i>The Committee resolved to accept the termly update and agreed to recommend the policy to the Corporation for approval.</i></p>	
S.23.36	<p>ITEM 9: ENROLMENT UPDATE</p>	
	<p>The Committee Chair confirmed this had been on the agenda as an update on enrolment to facilitate discussions around the quality of provision, however, the report had included a full marketing update. Members highlighted the use of the dashboard information, confirming this made the information clear and concise.</p>	
	<p>It was confirmed that a full review of reporting was being undertaken, with the introduction of attendance, retention and withdrawals to replace the DP's report, and more clear alignment of the content of marketing reports to the terms of reference of the relevant committee.</p>	
	<p>Members noted that considerable school liaison activity was undertaken, but not reported on therefore the impact was missing from the governors' evidence base, noting the detail of which schools were not applying also missing. The Principal confirmed that this had been noted and would be incorporated into the report review, with the school detail available within the new dashboards.</p>	<p>Principal/ new VP C&Q</p>
	<p>Members clarified that AEB enrolment would continue, with the Committee advised it would, with new courses available in late January and an open evening having taken place that week. The adult enrolment information was contextualised confirming the numbers did not directly correlate to the financial targets due to the varying income streams.</p>	
	<p><i>Item 9 – Resolved:</i> <i>The Committee resolved to note the update.</i></p>	
S.23.37	<p>ITEM 10: STUDENT VOICE</p>	
	<p>The AP Teaching, Learning and Quality confirmed that as discussed under item 6, the learner voice survey rollout had been delayed due to the format needing IT support and approval.</p>	
	<p>Members noted positivity around being able to complete a full induction and course survey at KGV, with the delay having enabled a more meaningful survey delivered through a more user friendly system.</p>	

Item 10 – Deferred: *The Committee resolved to accept the update, noting the full feedback report would be delivered in March.*

S.23.38 ITEM 11: DEPUTY PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

The Deputy Principal advised the Committee that the report would be her last and the last DP report, due to retirement and the updated reporting schedule.

The content of the report was summarised, with members noting the value of the upcoming industry days as well as progress in curriculum planning for 2024/2025, informed by local needs and competitor information.

Members discussed the potential for new courses, including higher nationals, with the Committee commending the Deputy Principal for her efforts in ensuring the provision offered was right for the local community, confirming the planning was the most focused they had ever seen, and would support staffing discussions.

The data within the report, including retention and enrolment was discussed with the Committee assured that the first funding return had been submitted.

Improvements to the apprenticeship provision, including the use of grant funding for electric vehicle resources were outlined, along with processes for more robust tracking of progress.

Members were advised of apprenticeship outcomes, with notice of two distinctions being awarded, with the assessors having been congratulated by the SLT.

Item 11 – Resolved: *The Committee resolved to accept the update*

S.23.39 ITEM 12: SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021/22 AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR 2022/23

The Committee Chair introduced the report, describing it as well written, reminding the Committee of the importance of the item, to be presented by the Committee to the Corporation for approval.

The Deputy Principal was invited to summarise the key points, confirming that there was no standardised format with extensive discussions around whether or not grades should be included, with it concluded that these were for internal use only, to drive improvements in the right areas, whilst commending those who had exceeded expectations.

The process for validation was outlined, with those in attendance confirming it had been a robust and informative process. Members noted the value of having an MIS manager that understands the SAR process to ensure the right information is available to inform the assessment and improvement processes.

The need for transparency and accuracy were highlighted, with it confirmed the report, once approved would be uploaded by January 31st without the inclusion of the grades.

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Members attention was drawn to the evidence-based information, with the self-assessment activity and process supportive of this. Members noted the difficulty in assessing without benchmarking information, although accepted that the areas to improve were clear, highlighting the significant class sizes in some areas that were internally assessed as inadequate.

Members asked that areas that had excelled were celebrated and supported to share their good practice, with it noted that the SAR validation process had acknowledged and celebrated the relevant areas, being an enjoyable experience for those involved.

Whilst acknowledging the pockets of outstanding achievement, members expressed their disappointment at the overall results, confirming they had seen the plans and work of the SLT in the previous year, which weren't reflected in the results. Members were advised that the staff had been equally disappointed, with most committed to ensuring this is not repeated, with those with less positive attitudes, being supported with the relevant procedures. Complacency was discussed, with a zero tolerance perspective clearly outlined by the governors and SLT.

Members asked for assurances that there would be no surprises in the next set of results, asking that the impact of the actions could and would be measured before the students were impacted. Members were assured that the dashboards would support early identification of issues. This would be triangulated data, using attendance, withdrawals and progress grade data as well as focus group feedback and information gained from interaction with students during observations to ensure targeted support is provided where needed. Members were assured that this, along with new tracking and monitoring processes and more effective course structuring, with embedded exam preparation, supported by CPD to support the staff would ensure the result reflected the efforts of the team

The SLT assured the Committee they were digging beneath the data, particularly in relation to attendance and withdrawals. They were ensuring there were clear reasons documented for withdrawals, and any positive destinations captured. Members challenged whether a late withdrawal, even with a positive destination could have been avoided with a better learning experience or more appropriate advice and guidance ahead of enrolment.

Members discussed the benefits of online learning, with the need for effective support, tracking and monitoring essential for its success, with poor processes having impacted the colleges achievement rates and having a detrimental financial impact.

Members concluded by thanking the team for their rigorous review noting the attention to detail had been impressive, concluding they were hopeful and assured that this would deliver positive outcomes for the students.

Item 12 - Resolved: *The Committee resolved to recommend the Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan to the Corporation for approval.*

S.23.40

ITEM 13: HE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2021/22 AND QDP FOR 2022/23

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	<p>The AP Teaching, Learning and Quality summarised the report, reminding the Committee of the decision to pause enrolment whilst the offer was reviewed.</p> <p>Members noted the support of an external consultant had been used to support the strategy review, which would be presented to the Corporation at the Strategy Day in February. Members agreed that the overhaul needed to be significant to prevent a further decline in enrolment.</p> <p>Members noted the impact of class sizes on cost and student experience, with student survey information feeding heavily into the development plan.</p> <p>Members confirmed they were concerned about the low number on the PGCE program, which not only had a financial impact, but reduced the pool of local talent to draw from when recruiting.</p> <p><i>Item 13 - Resolved:</i> <i>The Committee resolved to recommend the HE Self-Assessment Report and Quality Development Plan to the Corporation for approval.</i></p>	
S.23.41	<p>ITEM 14: MEETING IMPACT</p>	
	<p>The Clerk confirmed only one response had been received following the last meeting, reminding members and attendees that their feedback was valuable in shaping meeting improvements.</p> <p>Members reflected on their discussions and agreed their impact had been evident in the improved quality of reports, which had facilitated considerable challenge throughout the meeting. The SLT confirmed this had been well received and delivered in a supportive way.</p> <p>Members suggested the supportive relationship between the Governors and Senior team had facilitated the improvements and would be further evidenced in the outcomes.</p> <p><i>Item 14 - Resolved:</i> <i>The Committee agreed to complete the post meeting survey.</i></p>	
S.23.42	<p>ITEM 15: ITEMS TO BE REPORTED TO THE CORPORATION</p>	
	<p>The Clerk summarised the resolutions and recommendations to be presented to the Corporation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (for approval) • SAR and QIP (for approval) • HE AMR and QDP (for approval) <p><i>Item 15 - Resolved:</i> <i>The Committee agreed to present the above to the Corporation.</i></p>	
S.23.43	<p>ITEM 16: ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p>	
	<p>The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions, advising members that there would be interviews in the coming week for the Committee Chair position.</p> <p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as March 7th 2023.</p>	

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The Committee Chair confirmed that it would be the last meeting for herself and the Deputy Principal, with both thanked for their time and contributions.

The meeting ended at 5pm with a training session on ALPs delivered to Committee members and Corporation members after the meeting.