



Minutes of the Curriculum, Quality and Student Experience Committee Meeting

held at 6.00pm on Wednesday 12 June 2024
at the College.

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

12/24 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from AC, GC, TK and ACo.

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

13/24 **Declarations of Interest**

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

14/24 **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes from the meeting of the Committee held on 28 February 2024 had been received in advance. (Paper 3). IT WAS DECIDED the minutes were a true record of the meeting and they were approved.

15/24 **Matters Arising**

The 'Summary Action Point List' (Paper 4) was received in advance of the meeting and progress towards the actions was noted.

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16/24 Risk Register

A 'Risk Register June 24 CQSEC Extract' (Paper 5) was received in advance of the meeting. The Committee reviewed the risks. No changes or amendments were suggested.

17/24 Review of Data Dashboard and Development Plan

a) Deep Dives

All of the Deep Dives had been completed. This year the criteria for Deep Dives had been increased so 'green' reflected 'Outstanding' expectations. All curriculum areas had received a report from the Deep Dives which was being discussed as part of the Journey to Outstanding. Areas identified as needing most improvement had been given additional resources and progress in these areas was being closely monitored.

b) Learning Walks

All scheduled learning walks had been completed. The majority of learning walks had been rated as 'green'.

Governors asked whether the criteria for learning walks was more rigorous this year. MGK said the rigour had been increased for learning walks in line with the Deep Dives.

c) Attendance

Attendance was currently 85.7% compared to the target of 87%. Curriculum areas that were consistently using the attendance toolkit processes had seen an improvement in attendance. Attendance was part of the College's continuous journey for improvement.

The College's position compared favourably to the AoC Attendance Survey Report Benchmark which was 84.3% in 2022-23.

Governors congratulated the College for all the work done in attendance.

d) Achievement

In 2022-23, the College had maintained the number one spot in London for achievement rates and it was in the top 3% nationally. Predicted achievement for 2023-24 was currently 89%. There were no significant variances in terms of level or type of provision.

e) Development Plan

A 'Development Plan Update June 2024' was received in advance of the meeting.

Goal 1.1: Governors asked how the College had gauged demand for the two low carbon transport courses that been developed but hadn't run because they hadn't recruited students. MGK said there had been staffing issues which had impacted on the courses running. Governors asked whether employers had specifically wanted the courses. MGK said it was one of the skills gaps in the local area identified as part of the LSIP. Governors said they were concerned that some courses were identified as being needed but the College had been unable to find anyone who wanted to do the course. The CEO said the courses might require additional work in terms of recruitment. Governors suggested linking with the Careers team. The courses might need to be marketed in a more targeted way. The CEO said the College could make more use of the Logistics Hub and could broaden out how the courses were marketed.

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Governors asked whether the Careers team engaged with employers directly and noted that they did.

Governors asked whether the courses were developed in consultation with employers. MGK said the courses had been developed with employers and were based on local need for the skills.

Governors suggested the College consider offering the course to employers free of charge as a pilot.

Goal 1.2: Governors noted that the College was 65% green for meeting needs, 64% green for assessment and 85% good or better for teaching and learning which didn't align with the Journey to Outstanding paper later on the agenda.

Goal 1.3: Governors asked what actions were being undertaken for the 4 Notice to Improve courses that hadn't improved. MGK said actions plans were in place and there was additional scrutiny, reporting and support. Governors said it would be useful to know the size of the courses involved to understand the impact.

Governors asked if the College would still offer Functional Skills entry level. MGK said the College would still offer Entry level Maths and English. There would also still be Functional Skills Level 1 in English.

Goal 1.4: Governors congratulated the College for the fantastic attendance.

Goal 2.1: Governors asked what % of 16-18 students should be doing work experience and what % were actually doing it. MGK said 100% of students on Level 3 courses and the vast majority of students studying Level 2 courses should be undertaking work experience. All students studying T Levels should be doing industry placements. The College tracked all work experience by curriculum area and was in the process of collating the data. The CEO said change in staffing had positive impact and the College expected to see a positive picture at end of the year compared to last year.

Governors said the number of new work experience providers look positive and asked whether there had been a net increase. The CEO said there had been a net gain overall.

Governors suggested adding an objective about work experience in the next Development Plan.

Action: TA

Governors asked whether students part time jobs would fulfil the work experience requirements. The CEO said it was possible to use some of the work experience but it had to be relevant to the course.

Governors said the Development Plan progress looked healthy. The College was ahead of each target. The layout of the Plan was good and simple to understand.

18/24 Student Voice

It was decided that RT would take on the role of Student and Community Link Governor for academic year 2024-25.

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a) **Accountability Statement and Curriculum Strategy 2024/25**

The 'Draft Accountability Agreement June 2024' was received in advance of the meeting. The content of the Accountability Agreement had been agreed in the Corporation Strategy Day in May. The Committee's role was to review the proposed targets.

Governors asked whether there would be a clear fit with next year's Development Plan. The CEO confirmed there would.

The Committee reviewed the targets, with particular focus on the targets for Apprenticeships and Higher Education.

Apprenticeship Provision

The proposed target was 108 new apprentices over the course of the year which would mean 9 new starts a month.

Governors asked how many new apprentices the College had achieved this year. The CEO said it had been approximately 4 a month. Governors asked whether any additional resources were needed to achieve the targets. The CEO said she had looked carefully at the resource the College had and was working with an external adviser. There needed to be a change in approach to recruitment and the College needed to be smarter about utilising the resource it had.

Governors said the College would need to be more proactive to achieve the target and would need to work in partnership with the Employer Advisory Boards.

Governors asked whether the problem was not being able to find the students or not being able to find the places with employers. The CEO said it was both. The College would need to look carefully at the employers they were working with and the commitment expected from them.

Governors discussed the proposed target, which they felt was too high. They asked the Executive Team to review the target and make a recommendation back to the Committee. The target should be in the range of 80 – 108 new apprentices.

Action: TA

Governors asked for feedback from the external adviser to be shared with the Committee.

Action: TA

Higher Education

The Committee discussed ongoing challenges with Higher Education recruitment. The CEO explained the College was working with partner Higher Education and Further Education institutions on what Higher Education in Colleges looked like.

Governors said some Further Education providers were doing better in terms of recruitment and suggested thought be given to whether sufficient resources were dedicated to it. Governors asked if there were any areas of stable growth. The CEO said there was potential for growth in modular provision in the Creative Industries.

Governors asked about the impact of the Higher Education and Further Education group. The CEO explained that progression agreements were in place and a recent Shared Governance Event had a focus about Higher Education. It was work in progress.

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Governors asked how significant the progression agreements were for the students. The CEO said the progression agreements were a benefit for students as many students wanted to move onto local universities.

Governors said funding would become an issue in the next few years and Universities might decide they don't want to continue to offer foundation courses. The CEO said this had been discussed by the local HE and FE Group.

Digital Skills

The Committee discussed the digital skills targets. Governors asked how the College measured whether a course was meeting the target. MGK said the College looked at the digital aspects of courses, whether they were appropriate for the course and whether they were used effectively.

Governors asked how close to target the courses were currently. MGK said 16-18 and Adult provision were close to target and Apprenticeships were on track to achieve. Next year the focus would be on AI and how to use it ethically.

Governors referred to the new Level 3 Business Course with Logistics that had been set up. Business was currently a Requires Improvement area. They asked how confident the College was in the quality of the provision. The CEO said she was confident in the quality as the course was an existing programme that had been changed rather than an entirely new course.

Targets

IT WAS DECIDED to agree the targets with a proviso that the Executive Team would review the target for Apprenticeships.

The final version of the Accountability Agreement with the approved targets would be circulated to the Corporation prior to the formal submission at the end of June 2024.

b) Journey to Outstanding

The Committee received a paper outlining the College's definition of an Outstanding Student Experience and the current position in terms of the Journey to Outstanding. The CEO explained the driving force was the ambition for all students to have an outstanding student experience at the College, be ready for their next steps and leave with the appropriate skills.

Governors said they thought the document was very useful.

The Committee reviewed the timeline for the Journey to Outstanding that was part of the paper. MGK confirmed that the current grades on the timeline were the output from Deep Dives carried out this academic year. They were not the end of year position and would not be the grades the College proposed for the SAR.

Governors said the College had the best achievement rates in London and was top 3% nationally. They said they felt there was a mismatch between this and the paper. The CEO explained Outstanding was about more than just achievement rates. The College was striving for an Outstanding learning experience rather than being graded as Ofsted Outstanding.

Governors asked whether the College had an ambition to be Ofsted Outstanding. The CEO said the College did have an ambition but it wasn't the driving force.

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Governors asked why some areas would still not be offering an Outstanding student experience by 2025-26. Why was the College accepting that? The Committee went through the relevant areas:

- English and Maths: MGK explained it was unlikely to be Outstanding due to a number of external factors such as changes in conditions of funding, an influx of new staff and a national difficulty in recruiting staff.
- Teacher Education: MGK said this was due to external factors as the Diploma in Education and Training was delivered in partnership with a University. Initial Teacher Training was changing next year.
- Construction: MGK explained there were issues with staffing.

Governors asked whether the College was saying it would be impossible to have an outstanding learning experience if there were external factors affecting it. MGK said it wasn't impossible but the factors would have an impact. Governors asked whether the College could mitigate so students continued to have an outstanding experience. The CEO said there would be some actions the College could take but for some external factors it would be difficult. For example, the challenge with recruiting staff for some vocational courses.

The Staff Governor explained the College had robust structures and mechanisms in place which meant when a teacher left the student experience would be protected.

Governors asked about progress in Business. When the Committee met in November to review the SAR grades, Business was 'Good' with one area to improve which was attendance. Now it was Requires Improvement. Did something go wrong in terms of the self-assessment process. The CEO said there had been challenges in staffing and the College was looking at whether to split business into two. Additional resource had been needed. Significant improvements had been made but not at the rate that was required. The SAR judgement wasn't wrong based on performance but the College had recognised there was more to do which wouldn't be possible with the resources in place.

Governors thanked the team for the report and all that was being done.

20/24 Governor Monitoring Reports

a) **Safeguarding Monitoring Report**

A 'Safeguarding Governor Link Visit Form 17 May 2024' (Paper 9a) was received in advance of the meeting. The Committee noted the report and thanked AC and GC.

b) **Careers Link Governor Report**

A 'Careers Report Summer 2024' (Paper 9b) was received in advance of the meeting.

Governors asked about the situation with staffing. JB confirmed there had been a lot of change. There were still gaps in the structure but new people had bedded in successfully.

Governors asked for the SARs to have an emphasis on high grades. They wanted to be sure students were choosing to go to local universities rather than Russell Group universities because they wanted to rather than because they weren't achieving high grades.

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JB said the number of university applicants had gone down significantly. There had been a change in the way students were perceiving Higher Education.

The Committee thanked JB for the report.

c) Summary Report from Curriculum Link Visits

A 'Link Visits Summary Report' (Paper 9c) was received in advance of the meeting. The Committee reviewed the list of recommendations made in the visits, paying particular attention to the strategic recommendations.

In terms of the comment in ESOL Threshold that teaching 14-16 and 16-19 separately made achieving economies of scale difficult, it was noted that the ESOL provision was required to be discreet.

The Chair said that overall, the reports were very positive.

Link governors would be asked to follow up on their comments in their next visit and the comments would be addressed in the next SAR.

21/24 SAR Process

MGK reported that the SAR cycle had commenced and gave an overview of the process.

22/24 Committee Terms of Reference

The 'CQSE Committee Terms of Reference' (Paper 12) was received in advance of the meeting. IT WAS DECIDED to recommend the Terms of Reference to the Corporation for approval.

23/24 Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the committee was Wednesday 2 October 2024.

Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Lead	Target Date
17/24	Add a target about work experience to the next Development Plan.	Exec Team	Oct 2024
17/24	Governors asked for feedback from the Apprenticeships External Adviser to be shared with the Committee.	Exec Team	Oct 2024
17/24	Review the target for apprenticeships in the Accountability Statement and make a recommendation back to the Committee.	TA	June 2024

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Date: