

# Meeting of the Quality and Curriculum Working Group

## Monday 21<sup>st</sup> of October at 4 pm Conference Room 2 Minutes

**Present:** Jon Thedham (Chair), Kevin Boles (Governor), Andrew Lord (Governor), Neil Boggin (Governor), Kelvin Nash (Principal), Mary Osmaston (Co-opted Governor)

**In attendance:** Richard Evans (Vice Principal for Education and Standards), Sinead Kay (Director of Curriculum), Kelli Horner (Head of Quality), Tom Conroy (Head of Faculty), Tamara Breeze (Director of Governance and Compliance)

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76    **Apologies for Absence:**

none

77    **Declaration of Interests**

None

78    **Minutes from the Meeting 19.09.24**

These minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

79    **The emerging impact of the change agenda on teaching and learning**

Tom Conroy, Head of Faculty for Care and Professional Services, presented his faculty's experience of the teaching and learning 'change agenda' to the group.

Three courses that were in Course Improvement Plans (CIPs) were in his Faculty; these being, Level 5 Operations Manager, Lead Adult Care, and Hospitality Supervisor. He outlined changes made to the programmes as a result of the improvement plans, such as, updating the onboarding plans for apprenticeships and course content alignment with the workplace. The impact of these improvements had been evidenced in each standard, with increased distinction grades in all of these. The Director of Curriculum, (DoC) noted that apprenticeships in the care and hospitality industries, were subject to high withdrawal rates due to the transient nature of the workforce.

The group questioned what had changed in the onboarding process. TC described the process in detail, providing assurance that the commitment of the apprentices had been sufficiently tested prior to enrolment in order to predict positive outcomes.

It was recognised that the apprentices were mostly in-service trainees, rather than new employees, so there was a need for industry specific conversations earlier in the process with the tutor, these were now included in a timely way. Improved results were evidence of these quality improvements.

The group discussed the numbers on these programmes to better understand context. There were approximately 50 on Lead Adult Care and 15-20 on the other two.

Governors checked how good practice was shared between Heads of Faculty. This group of middle managers have 'stop days' to share effective practice, they also meet weekly, an example was provided of TC piloting the milestone system in

apprenticeships, this had been successful for monitoring progress and had therefore been adopted by other HoF.

The group thanked TC and he left the meeting.

## 80 **Apprenticeship Update**

Sinead Kay noted how well they had been able to communicate their changes and improvements to the inspectors last week. Tripartite reviews had been simplified and redesigned with employers as the audience. She explained that they had taken out information that was previously included for KC purposes, such as tutorial information, this was now audited in a different way rather than 'confusing' the review information. 'Just one thing'- feedback system to learners was working with the monitoring visit team noting that apprentices could articulate their area of improvement needed. The apprenticeships were linking more to the EPA (End Point assessment) and what the apprentices needed to know to achieve high grades.

The group acknowledged that individualisation was difficult, SK outlined that the teaching team worked hard to provide the right type of training for each apprentice. Previous practice had been to produce a separate tuition plan for each apprentice, with staff asked to annotate the plans weekly. This had not been possible and had created a huge amount of work for those teaching apprentices. The group agreed that reducing workload was important and praised the team for the new process, that was outlined as, the teacher produces a central tuition plan, spends the first 6 weeks getting to know the apprentices and their workplace and then creates a holistic plan for how to meet their needs across the whole apprenticeship.

An additional change in provision had been a move to increase the College presence in the workplace, with the tripartite reviews now being held on the premises, if at all possible, with the employer, apprentice and the facilitator.

There was evidence of impact; Out of Funding apprentices had reduced in number and achievement rates had improved. A target had been set for high grade achievement in EPA of 50%, this was now in sight.

A governor asked how adaptation for apprentices worked, and SK explained that the teacher adapted their delivery to the situation of the workplace, and asked questions related to that. Individual apprentice targets were set with employers, shared with teachers so that the approach was aligned to maximise attainment. The apprentice's portfolio was also work based and specifically applied to their workplace. There were cases where knowledge that prepared the apprentice for the future was included that was not specific to the current job role. This occasionally created tension with the employer but contributed to providing promotion opportunities for the apprentice.

The statutory obligation is to carry out reviews every 12 weeks, the College carry out a review after 6 weeks. Then every 12 during the programme. The frequency of reviews was increased if something was not going well.

A governor asked what other opportunities were being made to engage with employers. SK described that College has identified stakeholders and employers for all apprenticeship programmes. The stakeholders can be leaders in industry and not necessarily current employers, an example of this was a cutting-edge Manchester Hair salon for hair programmes to ensure content was aspirational.

The recent Ofsted monitoring visit had provided strong assurance that employers were positive about the College and understood what the apprentices were learning.

The group questioned an observation made during the FE associates visit that there was a lack of effective CPD for some teachers. Leaders explained that the comment was specific to engineering. Where there was an issue that the teachers could be too focused on the qualification and not the KSBs (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours) outlined on the Standard where the qualifications were included in the standard. It was acknowledged that consistency of experience was essential. The working group thank you to SK, she left the meeting.

## **81 Discuss key points from the FE associates Report**

The Ofsted monitoring visit feedback was included in this agenda item. There were slight differences between the two reports and the Quality team noted how important it was to learn from both.

The team felt that the areas to develop, identified by FE associates had been acted upon swiftly in the two weeks before the Ofsted monitoring visit. Intent conversation training had improved staff confidence to speak about their programmes with inspectors. It was explained that the FE associates visit had been course specific whereas the MV had been thematic.

Both visits had produced similar outcomes which validated the actions taken since the last full inspection.

The VPES identified a weakness in learner set targets that the inspectors had identified, stating that, there was effective use of learner set actions following assessment points which had in some cases led to improved grades, however where learners did not judge these actions as well, they made less improvement. The quality team would need to evaluate how learner targets were set and how to improve them.

The working group asked whether the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was a live document and were informed it was for the quality team. They received assurance that it was updated regularly, half termly. Governors sought assurance that areas of concern are being fully addressed. For example, what actions have been taken to address FE associates findings. The Head of Quality explained that the Curriculum Performance Reviews (CPRs) in term one would address the key themes and set measurable targets.

The group asserted that they had received independent assurance from FE associates on the quality of teaching and learning and had also received that from ICCA as they had audited the QA processes.

The governors recommended that the college use FE associates again, next year, and this was accepted but with the caveat that timing may vary due to the next full inspection.

The impact of inspection under a new framework was discussed by the group.

The Ofsted MV, had confirmed that the college were on the right track, the processes were seen as fit for purpose in identifying issues and starting to address them. There had been a levelling up in provision and a reduction of variation in the quality of

teaching, learning and assessment. The VPES was confident that the quality team had been validated to continue to exert pressure in the same direction.

The governors challenged the team to evaluate their level of preparation for the MV and learn lessons ahead of the next full inspection. The team acknowledged preparation had been much improved in the last year but also recognised that preparation was easier for a monitoring visit than a full inspection.

**82 Full time retention statistics at 6 weeks**

Not available at this time.

**83 Full time attendance data weeks 1-6**

There was a significant variation between attendance on vocational programme and English and maths, with overall FT at 90% and English at 75% and Maths at 72%.

The quality team presented the data as imperfect due to data noise.

The group asked what support the college needed to be able to have accurate data available earlier in the year and therefore address attendance issues more swiftly.

It was noted that attendance was slightly higher than compared to this time last year. It was too early to measure the impact of 'Ready Steady Go' initiative.

The governors asked why raising attendance was so problematic. It was noted that persistent very low attendance from individuals often pulled generally good attendance down. A governor asked could we tackle the issue differently and see it as absence rather than attendance. He asked if it would change the approach. It was agreed that this approach would be discussed by the board and reported back with observations and ideas.

The VPES explained that parents could now see the student's attendance, the group were told that engagement was not currently known but would be monitored and reported.

**84 Emerging themes from the student satisfaction survey (Term 1)**

Participation was currently: Full Time: 30%, Part Time: 25%, Apprenticeships: 25%, Higher Education: 1.7%. This was lower than expected due to an Ofsted pause last week.

There was no direct comparison with Term 1 last year due to a survey change in Term 2 23-24. To date, all programme types had improved scores across all questions compared to the Term 3 survey from 23/24. It was explained that it may have been due to an increased understanding of the Teaching and Learning Charter pledges. Learners reported improved feedback that helped them progress, this was directly linked to the 'One Thing' initiative. More learners reported that they knew how to study outside class, providing evidence of the Study Skills qualification introduced to all Full-Time learners on week 3 of 'Ready, Steady Go!'

Update on full data at the next meeting.

**85 Any other business**

None

Thank you to all the KC team from Governors

Thank you from the team to the group for their support and challenge.

**86 Date of next meeting: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2024**

