

**College of West Anglia
Minutes of the
Performance Review and Quality Committee
8 November 2023
8.30am
Remote Meeting, Microsoft TEAMS**

Present	Chris Ashman Sam Fletcher Fliss Miller David Pomfret	Governor (Chair) Governor Governor (Vice Chair) Governor (Principal)
Attending	Kerry Heathcote Sarah Anstiss Sue Moore Ria Steventon Clare Pelling Jules Bridges	Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality Head of Apprenticeships and WBL Head of Faculty – Technology Head of Learning Improvement Learning Experience Manager Head of Governance

No.		Action
	The Chair handed the role of Chair to Chris Ashman. He will replace Sam Fletcher as Chair as she steps down from the role due to increased work commitments.	
1	Apologies There were no apologies for absence from committee members. The Assistant Principal, Funding and Performance sent his apologies for absence.	
2	Declarations of Interests There were no declarations of interest.	
3	Draft Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2023 The draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 were reviewed and agreed as being an accurate record of the meeting.	
4	Matters Arising The progress arising from the previous meeting were summarised in the progress report and all actions reported had either been resolved or, where appropriate, an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.	
	The apprenticeship legacy numbers are to be separated out from the Apprenticeships / Technology report for the next meeting to be held in March 2024.	HoAppWBL HoTech
	The Head of Governance will circulate the Hair and Beauty Therapy two-page profile document that was missing from the pack of papers for the September 2023 meeting.	HoG
	The Head of Learning Improvement will update and refresh the Learning and Curriculum report with more context of strengths and weaknesses of lesson observation delivery and detail the areas for improvement.	HoLI
	It was noted that there is still some work to be done to finalise the 2022/23 Quality Improvement Plan, but an update was provided for in item 6 of the meeting.	
	All other completed items are to be removed from the table.	HoG
	R Steventon joined the meeting at 8.40am	

5 Overall College Self-Assessment Review 2022/23

The heat maps were shared with governors at the Ofsted training session held last week. These evidence and demonstrate, through the rigorous area performance reviews, that progress has been achieved.

It was noted that high needs learning has been assessed as outstanding. Acknowledging that this area was good last year, good progress has been made, and it can be evidenced that this area meets the indicators of outstanding.

There is plenty of evidence that the college can support a strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

The Principal/CEO thanked the Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality for such a comprehensive piece of work and for concluding the evaluation so early in the year. As an added comment it was noted that the reputation of high needs provision has increased, and the college has seen 40 more learners, and this increase is continuing. The college has also been shortlisted for two AoC Beacon Awards, one of which is for Support for Students.

On Page 21 of the SAR the GCSE maths and English results for 2023 are compared with the results from 2019, the most recent year with non-covid mitigation factors. The comparisons show positive percentage differences for maths and a good percentage increase in English for 19+ learners; results for 16-18 learners on English (Level 2) are a focus for improvement. Colleagues across curriculum and business support areas are engaging in short brief meetings converted into podcasts which are providing rich data in the year, appearing better than just written position statements, and these narratives will build on the work already committed in the self-assessment report.

Looking at the heat map on page 53 which provided a two-year comparison of provision performance review outcomes, governors questioned if there was enough evidence to demonstrate the governors' tenacity for seeking improvement.

Fliss Miller joined the meeting at 8.50am

Although ESOL remains an area for improvement (grade 3) the committee has seen and insisted upon significant improvement in outcomes for learners. This has been a priority area for the committee and governors have seen changes to the curriculum model and delivery, critical posts have been recruited to, and there is confidence now that there is momentum in the team and emerging good progress coming through. Challenge from governors has been supportive and particularly focused on intervention and scrutiny. The same shift can be seen with maths which was also a priority area for the committee. Maths in most colleges have experienced a dip in performance but CWA is seeing improvement. The direct delivery of apprenticeships continues as an area of focus for the committee so there is a strong case to evidence a mature, robust, challenging, yet supportive approach of governors.

A governor asked for some narrative around what some of the data tables mean to help them understand if the data is good, bad, below target, above target for example. The Deputy CEO/Vice Principal for Curriculum and Quality will reflect on the data and reporting style perhaps updating tables or including an addendum to the SAR.

DCEO/VPC&Q

Noting that the data as presented doesn't change the justification of the judgements made, the committee was content to **approve** the SAR and overall good judgement, recommending that it be approved by the corporation at the meeting to be held on 6 December 2023.

Chair

Vice Chair Appointment

The Chair nominated Fliss Miller as Vice Chair of the committee, approved by members.

6 Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24

It was confirmed that the document presented was an iterative document with progress from the 2022/23 QIP crossing over into the new 2023/24 QIP.

For clarity the Head of Learning Improvement commented that the progress recorded against target 3 under study programmes (page 5 of the QIP) related to a technical problem found with the swiping system. The IT glitch is preventing learners logging their study hours, but a solution has been found and will be implemented.

The committee is conscious of the number of actions in the QIP, and governors asked how they would know from the report if quality is being improved, at what point do actions get signed off, are the right things being done, and does the QIP help governors see this? It was recognised that adjustments could be made to the report to show trajectory or movement of progress, perhaps adding an additional column with overall risk RAG rating.

An example was shared by a governor in relation to action 10 under leadership and management which documented the new target for June 2023, to improve the quality of the LEARN platform. The progress reported was that this had commenced regarding planning improvements but given that it is now November 2023 it was questioned if this should be a higher risk level as the target has not been achieved? Through discussion it was apparent that ownership and accountability for the production, accuracy, and leadership of the QIP needed to be with one person, the Head of Learning Improvement. A collation of updates from action leads is not sufficient to inform governors to be able to make decisions, scrutinise or challenge the right things. Governors were insistent that updates are timely, and the Head of Learning Improvement leads and work with action leads to make this happen in a more effective way. It was agreed that an updated version will be shared with the committee ahead of the next meeting scheduled for March 2024 as governors wanted assurance that quality improvement was being made. In addition, a review of how the QIP sits alongside the SAR and other performance improvement processes will be undertaken to provide the confidence that the QIP is robust, valuable and useful.

HoLI

Clare Pelling joined the meeting at 9.25am

7 Single Equality Scheme and Equality Objectives 2023/24

The committee was informed that a creative arts learner has shown interest in the student governor role. The campaign continues so more candidates may come forward, leading to an election.

Regarding the single equality action plan item 1.1 'embedding EDI as part of the tutorial and enrichment strategy' the status claims that practice is not consistent cross college, and more work is to be done to improve this', so governors wanted to know to what degree the practice was inconsistent and what needed to be done to improve this. Inconsistent application was found through deep dives so more information has gone out to staff, training will be rolled out and more emphasis made through learning practice around the importance of it. Governors were assured that there is a robust action in place, but concern was raised as a governor mentioned at the last Ofsted inspections one of the actions was around reviewing the means by which students and apprentices are helped to understand British Values and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism so if there are inconsistencies around how this is being applied in tutorials how is this being addressed? Online materials are now being used by apprentices through LEARN and discussions with teams are being held to ensure systems and usage are being implemented. Noting that this action had not been updated since the end of the 2022/23 academic year governors made the point that reports are only useful to them if they show the current picture. The Learning Experience Manager commented that the action plan has now been aligned with the SAR as it had been recognised that the plan was not updated frequently enough and as suggested by the committee previously, they wanted to be able to see the distance travelled so three review points in the year will respond to this. The next review will be in December 2023.

LEM

Accepting that the review of the action plan process has been undertaken further concern was raised by the committee that the plan presented (pre review) was to some extent incomplete. For example, an action for completion in early 2023 is not RAG rated, no final outcome is noted against any of the actions and some due to be completed 18 months ago are still in review, so the current position is not clear. The plan raised more questions for governors than providing assurance. This was agreed and now that the plan has been aligned with the SAR a whole college approach to EDI will be in focus so there is confidence that reporting to governors will be timely and much improved.

The committee was keen to support management to make the changes. The Learning Experience Manager felt supported and was positive that the review and alignment with the SAR is robust. The changes have been made but time is needed for these to impact to be seen and evaluated. A good example of this is in 2.1, highlighted by the Chair, around disadvantaged learners as mentioned earlier the 'final outcome' measure is blank, but the status is green so where is the evidence that demonstrates the journey and distance travelled. The data is there and will be pulled through for future reporting.

The Chair asked for assurance that the objectives detailed in the 2023/24 plan can be measured in terms of progress and outcomes. It was acknowledged there may be some challenges and emerging themes, but these can be dealt with and resolved in year. It was further suggested that the objective/improvement in the plan labelled 'white ribbon' needs further development to articulate exactly what this is to achieve.

LEM

Finally, the Chair asked how successful the posters have been in aiding communication, raising interest, awareness etc. This is growing as they have been placed at key stations across the college, published online. They are showcasing how successful students are and some of the fantastic things that they are doing. There is also better engagement with club activities as students have seen these in the newsletter.

Clare Pelling left the meeting at 9.40am

8 Operational Oversight Report

The Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality provided an update on the number of purple (perilous) learners at risk of leaving, which was 106 as at 30 October 2023. There had been 515 students on purple but then moved on and the number of students who set themselves at purple was 145. Students who had been on purple but remain on their course is 95 and 45 have transferred onto another course. More analysis of the data to see how this compares to last year will be undertaken.

Sarah Anstiss joined the meeting at 9.45am

Regarding item 2.5 in the report around the adult and higher education offer, it was reported that the two events held on 1 November 2023 at the University Centre were successful. There were 117 CWA level 3 students who attended the late afternoon slot and 37 attended the evening event.

Sue Moore joined the meeting at 9.50am

Under point 2.6 in the report the HE strategy is under construction. The HE management meeting took place yesterday and a review of the 18 lines of enquiry resulted in two further lines being added around counselling and nursing apprenticeship pathways. These 20 lines of enquiry are to be reflected in the long term HE strategy with clear pathways from level 3 into HE clearly identified.

Noting that the strategic target for retention of students is 97% and the report (item 1.1c) as at October 2023 confirms 97.1% it was confirmed that this is now 97.4% and the definitive figure will be available the first week in December 2023. Governors wanted to know the comparable October figure from the year before but recognised that retention at this time of year is a movable figure. The number of withdrawals is roughly the same, but the college has bigger cohorts of learners this year so when it is finally reported it was

agreed that the Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality will provide comparable data and narrative.

DCEO/VPC&Q

There is good attendance on vocational but a stubborn trend on English and maths resulting in an almost 10% differential between English and maths and vocational attendance. The update post half-term is that there is a slight improvement although there has been a 58% and 34% increase respectively on maths and English recruitment this year so the impact on attendance figures is yet to be confirmed.

The Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality agreed to add in comparative target figures and narrative for the study programme outcomes (data table 1.3) and again on the deep dive destination data presented in table 1.7.

DCEO/VPC&Q

Recognising the falling numbers in HE governors questioned that the proposed strategy would look like given the difficult landscape for HE in an FE environment. The strategy is predicted to be in place by the end of this academic year although the Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality is working on a draft for easter, but this is dependent on written confirmation from the Open University of the collaborative provision.

9 Priority Item 1 – Apprenticeships/Technology

In addition to the report there are some challenges around systems with enrolment that are impacting on data and reporting available. It's a combination of issues between the CRM, EBS and transfer from PICS.

Governors were concerned about the system issues and asked for assurance that there is a focus for rapid resolution. The issues are known and are being triangulated and troubleshooted daily. Governors insisted that an update report is received from the Assistant Principal Funding and Performance on progress before the next meeting of the committee.

APF&P

Governors asked that where recommendations are proposed in reports these are relevant to the recommendations that governors need to make and are not used to document what the report writer is recommending is changed in terms of the delivery of the provision.

For clarity governors asked about the transfer out of the Level 4 Data Analyst programme for Anglian Water and wanted to understand more about the 53.8% apprenticeship achievement which is low but how does this compare with the sector. More data and context is needed. The report does detail the hotspot areas where achievement needs to improve and there is a robust plan in place. There are some administrative adjustments to make around gateway that is delaying achievement in engineering for example and some in year learners past their end date. In terms of the 36 engineering learners, 25 of these are ready for their end point assessment so the administrative adjustments just need to be completed for audit compliance.

The committee asked again for the legacy learners to be removed from the report so that the achievement of current learners is visible. The journey of apprenticeship years would also be useful to see so there is visibility of the number of drop offs year on year.

HoAppWBL
HoTech

The Principal/CEO interjected to mention that the college has been given commended status from the AoC Beacon Awards for the work with engagement with employers and CWA is just one of only three colleges commended for the support for learners. Finalist will be announced later this month with overall winners announced in the spring 2024.

Agreement has been reached with Anglian Water to transfer the learners until staffing and planned delivery is back on track. The relationship with Anglian Water continues to be strong.

The Chair mentioned that the outcome heat maps reported earlier show that the direct delivery of apprenticeships is judged at requires improvement so in the next report a

statement is expected in this regard to detail what is happening, the direction of travel, and how improvement is coming down the line. It was also requested that the risk register (appendix 2) missing from the report is shared.

HoAppWBL

S Anstiss and S Moore left the meeting at 10.25am

10 **Complaints Current 2023/24**

The report shows a total of 14 complaints raised year to date compared to a total of 84 raised in the previous year. It was noted that, as requested in previous agenda items it would be useful to compare data with the same point the previous year in reports as governors are not able to quantify if this is more, less, or comparable. In terms of issues there are two trends that have emerged from the complaints reported. These being around third parties and subcontractor complaints procedures and aligning these with college practice to manage resolution succinctly and swiftly.

HoLI

It was noted that the largest number of complaints are around staff/student interaction and governors questioned if there were any commonalities of these issues. There is an inference of personality clash and verbal interaction and misunderstanding of message but this is not evident in learner feedback so there are no commonalities just pockets of instances and not a college wide issue. As a follow up question, a governor asked if there is a triangulation between staff appraisal of those who have been named in complaints and any analysis of whether these staff are repeatedly involved. There is the ability to track against individuals and likewise staff and student interaction issues are made known to HR and capability/disciplinary procedures will be invoked and the college Staff Code of Conduct has recently been refreshed.

11 **Strategic Targets 2023/24 Progress Review**

The progress made against the strategic targets were detailed in the report. In summary good progress has been made albeit this is the first term report, and some areas (grey) showed no progress to date. The updates on targets 1.5 and 2.7 also notably had not pulled through and on target 1.5 regarding the apprenticeship accountability measures it was agreed that these will be included in future apprenticeship reports to the committee.

HoAppWBL

Regarding target 2.4 it was reported that confirmation has been received from the integrated care board that 8 dentistry practices have expressed interest for level 3 dental nursing technicians with progression to level 5 so a February 2024 pilot is planned to run with an additional intake in September 2024. It was further reported that the college has bid for level 3 introduction to engineering skills boot camps.

12 **Any other business**

The Head of Learning Improvement provided a verbal update on the matter arising concerning the status of lesson observations with a proposal to overlay lesson observation practice with the teaching development strategy. A report on progress will come back to the committee at the next meeting to be held in March 2024.

RSteventon

Fliss Miller left the meeting at 10.55am

13 **Chair's items for briefing to Corporation**

- The SAR is to be recommended to the Corporation for approval with an overall judgement of good.
- Work continues to strengthen the purpose of the QIP noting that the committee has challenged the 2022/23 performance measures and seeks a review of how the 2023/24 QIP sits alongside the SAR and other performance improvement processes
- The Single Equality Action Plan has been aligned with the SAR to ensure increased frequency of updates. The committee has challenged the transparency of distance travelled and has been assured that the review and alignment with the SAR will bring increased visibility of college wide progress against the plan.
- Apprenticeship/Technology remains the priority focus area for the committee and understanding/impact of removing apprenticeship legacy data to improve visibility of current performance

- The committee has made a number of suggestions to improve reporting processes to evidence/demonstrate how initiatives/progress are making a difference

14 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 6 March 2024 at 8.30am

Meeting ended at 11.00am