

**College of West Anglia**  
**Minutes of**  
**The Performance Review and Quality Committee**  
**21 September 2022**  
**8.30 am**  
**Meeting Room, Principal's Suite, King's Lynn Campus**

<b>Present</b>	Sam Fletcher	Governor (Chair)
	Chris Ashman	Governor
	Scott Leadley	Governor
	David Pomfret	Governor (Principal)
<b>Attending</b>	Kerry Heathcote	Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality
	Rob Petto	Assistant Principal Funding & Performance
	Sarah Anstiss	Head of Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning (part)
	Trevor Hewlett	Interim Head of English & Maths (part)
	Mandy Lakey	Employer Engagement System Implementation Manager (part)
	Ria Steventon	Head of Learning Improvement (part)
	Jackie Watt	Interim Head of Technology (part)
	Stephen Halls	Clerk to the Corporation

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The Chair welcomed Kerry Heathcote, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality to the committee, noting that Kerry had just joined the college at the time of the last meeting and was in a period of handover with the former Vice Principal; the Chair also welcomed Rob Petto, Assistant Principal Funding & Performance, who would be attending committee meetings for this academic year.

#### **1 Apologies**

The Clerk advised that Chris Ashman would be arriving late for the meeting, due to a traffic delay. Lee Smith was absent from the meeting.

#### **2 Declarations of Interests**

The Chair advised that she had recently been appointed as Interim Assistant Director for Education Strategy and Infrastructure with Norfolk County Council and would have a closer involvement with the FE sector and also apprenticeships.

#### **3 Minutes of the previous meeting – 15 June 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2022 were reviewed and agreed as being an accurate record.

#### **4 Matters Arising**

The progress against the outstanding matters from previous meetings was summarised in the report for Item 4. There were no questions or concerns raised.

## 5 Election of Vice Chair

**It was agreed that Scott Leadley would serve as Vice Chair of the Performance Review and Quality Committee for the 2022/23 academic year.**

*Trevor Hewlett joined the meeting at 8.34 am*

## 6 Mathematics & English

The Head of Department advised that there were no late changes to the outcome results presented in the report. There had been much work by staff so far this term to engage with and to develop good relationships with students in a bid to promote engagement. The attendance gap, as at 20/9/22, between English & Maths and students' main study programmes was 2.6%. Work was currently underway preparing those students who would be undertaking exams in November 2022.

The Principal commented on the disappointing Maths results, noting that this area had been under intervention for some time, and asked what actions were planned to improve performance in 2022/23; the Head of Department advised that the poor performance in the previous year was in part due to the teacher assessed grades of those students joining in September 2021, which did not accurately reflect the ability of those students. The assessments of students now joining the college were showing an improvement and attendance levels so far this term were positive.

*Chris Ashman joined the meeting at 8.42 am*

The Chair asked about the priorities for 2022/23; the Head of Department noted that there would be a greater focus from the English & Maths teams, with involvement also from the vocational areas in encouraging students to attend. The Head of Department also noted that there was possibly some confusion in the tracking of attendance data. The Assistant Principal Funding & Performance explained that this should not be the case and that teaching staff should have reports available for this. This matter would be investigated further outside of the meeting. **ACTION-HoD/APFP**

The Head of Department noted two other priorities; the need for staff to focus on the data available and then take appropriate action, and also the need to incentivise students to attend and engage with the subjects, for which a budget would need to be made available to cover this.

The Chair asked that in future reports, updates are provided on the actions taken by management and the progress gained, to help in the monitoring and oversight of this area.

Governors stressed the need for a focus on attendance, engagement and better outcome predictions. The Head of Department explained that development training had been planned to assist staff in the moderation of results. The Chair was keen to understand how closely the predictions were to the results received; the Head of Department explained that in some cases the predictions had been based on the final piece of work assessed.

The Principal acknowledged that the failure of the college to provide teachers for all lessons had caused difficulties for some students last year. The Head of Department agreed that staff absence (through sickness and other reasons) had had a negative impact on the quality of the provision. The teaching team was now up to full capacity and academic support practitioners were working effectively.

The Chair thanked the Head of Department for covering this area during the maternity period of the substantive post holder, Laura Holland, who would be returning at the end of October 2022.

**The report was noted.**

*Trevor Hewlett left the meeting at 8.56 am*

*Ria Steventon joined the meeting at 8.57 am*

## **7 ESOL**

The Head of Learning Improvement outlined a new strategy for the department and the development of a new curriculum plan. There had been a refresh of the delivery of ESOL to help improve the experience for students. With the changes made over the summer period a growth in student numbers was anticipated.

Governors asked about the staffing resources within the department, where there had previously been difficulties. The Head of Learning Improvement said that one member of staff had recently left the department, with the remaining staff members keen to develop the provision. The Head of ESOL, currently on maternity leave, would be returning at the end of October 2022 and both she and the Head of Learning Improvement would work together initially to continue to progress the improved delivery of ESOL. It was anticipated that the curriculum would be fully completed and implemented by December 2022.

The Chair asked about the current teaching team. The Head of Learning Improvement advised that a community engagement post had been established which would assist the department, and that, generally, staff were settled and open to the new ideas for ESOL. The Chair warned against the dangers of trying to make the required changes too quickly and expecting fast results. Governors asked about those students currently studying ESOL; the Head of Learning Improvement advised that current students were still being taught under the previous curriculum and would move to the new curriculum from December 2022.

The Principal accepted that ESOL had been in intervention for some time, and that student recruitment and outcomes had been low. The Principal noted that Ofsted could possibly be concerned should a review of this provision take place. The Principal thanked the Head of Learning Improvement for her work in managing the department during this interim period.

**The report was noted.**

## **8 Complaints Summary 2021/22**

The Head of Learning Improvement advised that there were no changes or updates required for the information already presented in the report for the 2021/22 year.

Currently, there were 8 complaints for 2022/23:

5 complaints related to application/enrolment issues; all had been dealt with quickly, effectively and were now closed;

1 complaint related to staff/student interaction; this had been investigated and resolved;

2 complaints were currently being processed.

The Chair referred to previous discussions regarding the difficulty of categorising complaints relating to staff/student interaction and advised that a brief explanation of the complaint would be sufficient in future reports.

The Head of Learning Improvement highlighted the introduction of a compliments process and also the recording of 'near-misses' – responding effectively to a grievance before it becomes a complaint.

**The report was noted.**

*Ria Steventon left the meeting at 9.13 am*  
*Sarah Anstiss joined the meeting at 9.14 am*

## **9 Apprenticeships**

The Chair welcomed Sarah Anstiss, the new Head of Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning to her first meeting with the committee.

Governors noted their concerns with the timely completions of apprenticeships. The Head of Department advised that staff would focus on this as a matter of priority and would be meeting with faculty staff on a monthly basis to review progress; action would be planned and taken where progress had appeared to have stalled. The Head of Department noted her concerns with the performance from some subcontracted providers and other smaller areas.

Governors were interested to hear how the department was working with faculties across the college. The Head of Department advised that new procedures had been put in place for all connected with apprenticeships to understand and follow, with responsibilities being made clear; this had been emphasised particularly with the Technology faculty. The recent enrolment process had raised one or two issues and these were now being addressed; an audit of all data for all new starts was underway to ensure completeness and accuracy.

The Principal referred to the data compliance issues raised following the audit report undertaken during 2021/22, where work was progressing to correct the data.

The Chair welcomed the new apprenticeship risk register, attached to the report as an appendix. The Head of Department explained that this had been devised by Rob Petto, Assistant Principal, and Mandy Lakey, System Implementation Manager; the risk register provided a focus for attention on the key areas of concern. The Chair asked if the department had sufficient resources and support for the work to be undertaken; the Head of Department considered that staff had accepted and had been very supportive for the work to be completed, although there was much to do; there were particular challenges with end-point assessment gateways and also with the Technology faculty where extra support would be needed.

Governors noted the difficulties faced by the department in getting individuals to complete their functional skills. The Head of Department explained that work was progressing with the English & Maths department to address this, and assured the committee that individuals would be supported in getting their functional skills, as well as getting through their end-point assessments. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality added that individual plans would be created for students who were struggling to complete all elements of their course, ensuring good communications with their respective employers. Governors noted the importance for managers of being aware of the numbers of those struggling to complete their courses, and the action being taken to address this.

The Chair thanked the Head of Department for her report.

**The report was noted.**

*Sarah Anstiss left the meeting at 9.29 am*  
*Mandy Lakey joined the meeting at 9.29 am*

## **10 Apprenticeships – Systems Development Update**

The Chair welcomed Mandy Lakey, Employer Engagement System Implementation Manager, to the meeting, who began by explaining that a number of common issues had been identified as a result of running the manual system; further difficulties had been encountered as a result of the ever-changing funding rules. The new accountability

framework required colleges to have suitable and robust systems in place to manage data. The Assistant Principal Funding & Performance added that the implementation manager's role had expanded to include the introduction of a new customer relationship management system (CRM), audit function, as well as temporarily covering her previous role as partnership supervisor.

The Principal referred to the Apprenticeship Risk Register, reviewed during the last report, and commented that a number of items were due for completion by the end of September 2022. The Implementation Manager reported that she had met with the Head of Apprenticeships the previous day to review the targets; all targets were progressing and it was expected that those due for completion in September 2022 would be completed on time; the Assistant Principal confirmed that good progress had been made.

The Chair asked for information regarding the completion of the project; the Implementation Manager reported that the CRM system would be in place by the end of the autumn 2022 term, enabling it to be fully tested using those new starters joining the college throughout the remainder of the academic year, and ready for its main launch, when most apprentices would next join the college in September 2023. A number of small tasks would be completed during this time, also. The Assistant Principal advised that ILR data would be moved from the PICS system to EBS, thus improving data reporting throughout the year. The Principal noted that these changes would improve compliance, quality of data, funding assurance and efficiencies within the workforce. The Assistant Principal noted that the virtual learning environment (VLE), Smart Assessor, used by the apprenticeship department would be reviewed for its effectiveness.

Governors asked if managers would be using the new systems being put in place; the Principal said that managers would have access to the system and would be expected to use it to access data and enable monitoring; the Implementation Manager considered that some staff members would need additional encouragement to use the new systems with the Principal adding that support, guidance and training would be given for staff.

The Chair was pleased with the progress being made with the project, and asked for updates at future meetings. **ACTION-APFP/ML**

**The report was noted.**

*Mandy Lakey left the meeting at 9.42 am*  
*Jackie Watt joined the meeting at 9.43 am*

## **11 Technology Faculty Update**

The Chair welcomed Jackie Watt, interim Head of Faculty-Technology, to her first meeting with the committee.

The Head of Faculty provided updates on the 9 vacancies: a female plumber who was also a qualified teacher, along with a machinist engineer would be joining the college in November 2022; 2 vacancies within engineering were currently being covered by hourly-paid staff. King's Lynn staff were currently covering vacancies at the Wisbech campus. Of concern, was a vacancy in brickwork at Wisbech; the Head of Faculty would be meeting with the college's new HR recruitment specialist, Gemma Everitt, to form a plan for this particular vacancy.

Onsite apprenticeship assessment was noted as a concern for the Head of Faculty, along with the recruitment of specialist staffing to cover the new developments, contracts and project bids coming up for the college.

The Chair noted the Red, Amber, Green ratings of the items of concern noted in the report and asked about the key priorities; the Head of Faculty considered that support of students was a priority, ensuring good behaviours, attendance, retention and engagement. A faculty day was planned for staff to focus on these areas.

Governors asked about the new students who had already withdrawn from their courses this term; the Head of Faculty explained that data was not currently available on this, however, at present it was considered that this number was few. The Assistant Principal Funding & Performance added that across the college the number of withdrawals so far had been low.

Governors asked about the culture, atmosphere and learning environment within the faculty; the Head of Faculty considered it to be purposeful, focused, meaningful; further, the Wisbech campus was developing with the commencement of a new programme manager at the campus this term.

Governors were interested in hearing about the faculty's engagement with the apprenticeships department; the Head of Faculty explained that there was a great deal of work to undertake to improve the current processes and to catch up on previous backlogs; regular meetings were taking place with the new Head of Apprenticeships and good communications between the 2 areas were essential for the issues to be resolved.

Governors congratulated the Head of Faculty on the recent successes of students in the WorldSkills competition.

The Chair thanked the Head of Faculty for covering during this interim period.

**The report was noted.**

*Jackie Watt left the meeting at 9.53 am*

The Chair reflected on the reports reviewed so far during the meeting. The Chair noted her concern for Laura Holland, returning from maternity leave and her workload in taking back responsibilities for Maths & English and ESOL; The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality reported that recent office moves would improve the working operations, with the Head of Maths & English now being located in the main administration hub along with other heads of faculties; the co-ordinators for maths and English would be moving to the now vacant office on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the tower block, providing easier access to them by the teaching staff. In addition, there had been recent communications and updates from the Vice Principal with Laura Holland as she planned her return to work.

The Principal noted his appreciation for the work of Jackie Watt in covering the Technology faculty during this interim period and reported that Sue Moore, currently Head of Care & Public Services, would be taking over as Head of Technology, with her former position then being recruited to.

The Chair was concerned that many of the priority areas for the committee, and the college, were taking too long to resolve, despite the efforts and interventions employed. The Chair would meet with the Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality before the next committee meeting to discuss progress and future plans. **ACTION-CHAIR/VPCQ**

## **12 Learning & Curriculum Report**

The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality noted that there was a planned move towards a learning walk based approach to observations, to include thematic walks, along with plans to amplify the student voice.

Curriculum changes would include the joining up of provision, theming the provision of maths and English delivery, with separate teaching lessons and styles for 16-18 students to those for adults.

The first deep-dive of the academic year was planned for the following week (w/c 26 September 2022).

The Initial Teacher Education Team had moved and was now under the management of Ria Steventon, Head of Learning Improvement.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for her report, along with the others included in the agenda for today's meeting. The Chair would discuss with the Vice Principal in due course the future content of information and supporting data requirements. **ACTION-CHAIR**

Governors noted that it was important to be able to observe how effective teaching, learning and assessment was at the college, identifying areas of good performance and those areas of concern and in need of improvement. The Principal advised that the data from the final area performance reviews for 2021/22 was currently being reviewed and moderated, and, once completed, would provide a good overview of college performance.

**The report was noted.**

### **13 Learning Strategy Annual Review**

The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality reported that the Head of Learning Improvement would be introducing new frameworks as part of the quality improvement process to review the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment. A digital strategy was currently being developed and would be presented to the committee in due course. There were no major changes to the current strategy.

Governors asked how the strategy was used within the college; the Vice Principal explained that it was used to inform on the quality improvement frameworks, and to review each area of provision. Governors asked if staff were aware of the document; the Vice Principal advised that it was published across the college, and so pro-active staff would be aware; in addition, the document was referred to when forming personal development plans for all teaching staff.

The Chair noted that the strategy would need approval by the Board, and suggested that Appendix 2 regarding the JISC FE Skills Strategy Report, although of interest to the committee, was not submitted to the Board. **ACTION-CLERK**

**The Committee agreed to recommend the Learning Strategy to the Board for approval.**

### **14 Curriculum Planning Strategy Report**

The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality explained that in the development of the strategy there would be a need for the college to focus on the accuracy of the predictive numbers for 2023/24 year ahead. The strategy included a focus on the development of HE. The Principal added that immediate attention was required for both adult courses and the HE offer; the college was looking to work closely with ARU this term in the development and expansion of the HE offer.

Governors asked if the strategy took into consideration the need for employer engagement, to satisfy the new requirements of Ofsted; the Vice Principal reported that discussions were taking place within area performance reviews, at college leadership team meetings and also senior management team meetings regarding local skills and employers' needs. Governors asked if there was a concern that staff did not address the curriculum in relation to

employers' needs; the Vice Principal said that she believed staff were aware of the importance of how the curriculum offer addressed employers' needs.

The Principal noted the need for the college to further highlight the focus on employers' needs. The mantra "Careers, not courses" emphasised the importance. The college was currently looking to acquire EMSI data (EMSI provides its customers with detailed labour market information and insight in a single reporting tool).

The Chair asked the Vice Principal to move the narrative in the strategy regarding employer focus to the introductory section.

**ACTION-VPCQ**

**The Committee approved the Curriculum Planning Strategy.**

**15 Performance Data & KPIs 2021/22 and**  
**16 Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22 – Year End Review**

Due to time constraints, these 2 items were taken together.

The Chair asked particularly about A levels and HE provision. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality reported that A level results had been satisfactory; learner feedback had been requested although the number of responses received had been poor; A levels were now being managed by a new Head of Faculty, Scott Leadley, following the retirement of Richard Bradley in August 2022, in addition to a new programme manager; the A level provision would be reviewed in due course by management. The HE course in psycho-social studies had achieved great success with its results for 2021/22.

The Chair asked about the teaching of sciences at A level. The Principal noted that there had been teaching difficulties during the year, particularly with chemistry. The Vice Principal considered also that the teaching facilities were poor and would be reviewing this with the Head of Faculty.

The Principal noted the good performance of A levels in previous years, and the wish for the college to improve in this area.

With regard to the Quality Improvement Plan, the Vice Principal reported that the various changes in Ofsted requirements had been reflected in the plan; there were currently 72 unknown outcomes from 2021/22; the Assistant Principal Student Services was currently undertaking a piece of work on destinations data.

Governors again commented on the need to have immediate information regarding withdrawals, and action taken to support students who were considering leaving their course. The Vice Principal confirmed that individual follow-ups would take place for students; the Principal added that Student Services were playing a major part in targeting and supporting students at the start of term and that all staff were advised of the importance of student retention at the staff meeting held 31 August 2022.

**The report was noted.**

**17 Applewood Nursery – Annual Report – 2021/22**

There were no concerns or questions raised on the report. It was considered that the Applewood nursery was now operating effectively since its last Ofsted inspection and its move to a 'Good' grading.

The committee agreed that no further reports would be required from the nursery.

**ACTION-CLERK**

**The report was noted.**



## **18 Hearing the Student Voice**

From the report, the Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality highlighted the 3 key developments: the new, bespoke apprenticeship survey; the sustainability student voice survey and learning walks, which would be thematic, with the student voice being included.

The Chair apologised that there was insufficient time remaining to review the report in detail but noted that it would be presented to the full board for review at its meeting on 12 October 2022.

**The report was noted.**

## **19 Any Other Business**

Governors asked about the support department self-assessment reviews, planned for September 2022 but which had been postponed. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality advised that reports were due in from the departments on 3 October 2022, after which time review meetings would then be set.

## **20 Chair's items for briefing to the Corporation**

- The committee focused on its usual priority areas of maths & English, ESOL, Apprenticeships and Technology;
- The committee observed the change in the management over key areas during the summer months, presenting both opportunities and risk for the college;
- The meeting agenda was too large to give sufficient attention to all items. Future meetings would be extended by 30 minutes and the agenda would be more considered.

## **21 Date and time of next meeting**

Wednesday, 30 November 2022 at 8.30 am.

**The meeting closed at 10.36 am**