

The College of West Anglia
Minutes of
The Performance Review and Quality Committee
13 November 2019
8.32 am
Meeting Room, Principal's Suite, King's Lynn Campus

Present	Samantha Penn	Governor (Chair)
	Chris Ashman	Governor
	Scott Leadley	Governor (Vice Chair)
	David Pomfret	Governor (Principal)
	Lee Smith	Governor
Attending	Andrew Gedge	Assistant Principal Quality & Students
	Ruth Harrison	Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning
	Laura Holland	Head of English & Maths (part)
	Vicky Mann	Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning (part)
	Paul O'Shea	Head of Marketing & Student Services
	Donna Woodruff	Programme Manager, Animal Care
	Stephen Halls	Clerk to the Corporation

The Chair welcomed Lee Smith, Governor, to his first meeting of the Performance Review & Quality Committee.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Roderick Watkins.

2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting – 25 September 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2019 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising

The progress against the outstanding matters from previous meetings were summarised in the report for item 4. This was accepted by the committee and there were no questions raised.

Laura Holland joined the meeting at 8.33 am

5 Mathematics & English

No update to the report was required. The Chair moved immediately to questions.

Noting that there had been a sharp increase in the number of adults wanting to study maths, Governors asked if there was a risk of poor retention within adults. The Head of English & Maths reported that the increase in student numbers in Maths was partly due to the good performance of a particular tutor in the previous year. It was accepted that some adults would inevitably need to leave the course due to work and family commitments and already this year there had been some withdrawals. Honest and accurate feedback would be asked for to identify any issues and to support the student where necessary. Within maths, it had been appropriate to substitute one teacher this term to improve the performance within that class. One teacher in English was currently being managed through the capability procedure. These early measures would help to improve retention. Governors asked if retention was a particular concern. The Head of English & Maths responded that no, retention was not a concern as each individual who was potentially looking to withdraw would be supported in order to avoid a withdrawal where possible.

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students advised that attendance was a concern. The Head of English & Maths reported that tracking and reporting systems needed to be improved to assist in the monitoring of attendance. The initial interview, assessment, enrolment and induction for students was considered to be good, but once teaching commenced the control and monitoring of students reduced. This issue would be addressed in time.

The Chair noted the overall improved performance for Functional Skills from 2017/18 to 2018/19 particularly in Maths L2 from 18.2% to 72.2% and enquired if this was the direct result of improvements in the quality of teaching. The Head of English & Maths reported that the number of maths students had increased and therefore additional teaching resources had been put in place. The Head of English & Maths advised that it had been noticed that students tended to pause in their studies whilst waiting for exam results at the end of each module. In order to stimulate continued learning during these periods teachers were providing workshop style study groups looking at various topics, such as mortgages (for maths) and curriculum vitae preparation (for English).

The Chair thanked the Head of English & Maths for the clear report. The challenge for this area was in the retention of students and a focus on English. The Head of English & Maths added that functional skills reforms had commenced from September 2019. It was noted that maths still remained within "Support to Improve" and was receiving the appropriate support. The Chair recognised the effort that was being put in by managers and staff.

The report was noted.

*Laura Holland left the meeting at 8.44 am
Vicky Mann joined the meeting at 8.44 am*

6 Apprenticeships

The Chair noted that there had been some confusion in the requirements for this particular report and thanked the Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning for preparing this combined report for all activities pertaining to apprenticeships. It was agreed that future reports would cover all aspects of apprenticeships, college wide, reporting on those activities, issues and concerns taking place at that time.

The Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning highlighted the areas for development noting that the Technology faculty, which provided the largest proportion of activity for apprenticeships, was currently in Support to Improve. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning explained the difficulties currently being experienced regarding quality and the use of external quality assessors. Out of date assessment techniques within Technology were being addressed and the college was now looking to see the impact of the improved methods. Other issues concerned the change from teaching frameworks to the newly introduced standards where staff needed to move away from teaching in a modular manner and address their overall teaching methods. The Principal added that it was necessary to support and encourage staff within Technology to identify areas for improvement and considered that a coaching style of support would help in this situation.

Governors asked if apprenticeship staff attended the golden hours sessions and other meetings within the Technology faculty. The Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based advised that on occasions this did take place, although with a lengthy agenda for the faculty it was not always possible for the matters relating to apprenticeships to be given sufficient time for discussion. Work based assessors were now based within the apprenticeship department and this had led to some improvements being seen with regard to their management and communications.

The Principal reminded the committee that performance for apprenticeships had improved on the previous year and that overall this was considered to be good when compared with other colleges. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning said that management was aware of the issues that needed addressing, that a plan was in place and that actions were being taken.

The Chair asked if there were any resources or support that could be given to the apprenticeship department to assist. The Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning noted an improved and faster reporting system in order to monitor and report on progress which would help to identify any issues with an apprentice and help to avoid resist costs for an employer.

The Principal asked about activities with external organisations. The Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning advised that a new level 4 course was soon to commence with Anglian Water and that work was progressing on developing the nursing degree with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning added that a validation panel was meeting on 3 December 2019 to review the nursing qualification.

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students reported that there had not been any inspections of higher level apprentices and so currently there was no indication of what could be identified as best practice at this level.

The Principal advised that it was correct to focus attention on apprenticeships at this time as it represented a significant proportion of the college's income. Growth of £1¼m had been allowed for in the current budget. This activity was open to and was experiencing many external changes. The Chair noted that this would be raised during the next Chairs' Meeting (2 December 2019).

ACTION-CLERK

The use of internal quality assessors was discussed. The Head of Apprenticeships & Work Based Learning noted that it was important to develop assessors to ensure that requirements of the respective awarding bodies and funding bodies were met where current practices were not consistent throughout.

The report was noted.

Vicky Mann left the meeting at 9.10 am

Donna Woodruff joined the meeting at 9.10 am

7 Support to Improve

The Chair welcomed Donna Woodruff, Programme Manager for Animal Care to the meeting and thanked her for preparing her report.

Dr. Smith, as a new Governor, asked for a brief explanation of the support to improve process and this was duly explained by the Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning.

Governors asked for clarification on which areas were currently being managed under Support to Improve. The Vice Principal noted those areas, such as Technology and Maths and explained that this particular report was focusing just on the success that this initiative had had on two areas, Hair & Beauty and Animal Care.

The Principal asked how it felt for staff and managers to be in the Support to Improve process. The Programme Manager for Animal Care explained that once the initial meeting had taken place to explain the process the team felt encouraged that the process would be supportive. Actions and targets agreed at each meeting were considered to have had a positive effect. Regular feedback was given back to team members so that all were aware of the expectations and the actions to be taken. The process provided a focus and encouraged open and honest conversations with team members and management.

The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning confirmed that Animal Care was no longer being managed under Support to Improve.

The Chair asked how the department was performing in the current academic year. The Programme Manager advised that there had been some changes over the summer months due to the staffing restructure. Tutorials had been re-introduced this term and audits had been planned into the timetable. Improvements had been noticed in the delivery of Maths and English by ensuring students were placed at the correct level for their ability. Maths and English staff were now physically located in the staff office which had helped to improve team working across the Cambridge Campus. The Principal added that he was continuing to hold open staff meetings at the campus and that staff were happy to raise their concerns and to ask questions.

The Chair asked what the immediate priorities were for the department. The Programme Manager reported that weekly meetings would continue to take place, sometimes to include elements of training and to discuss issues that had been identified during learning walks. It was noted that learning walks were very welcomed and appreciated by teaching staff. Staff would continue to work closely with their students and offer support where needed. A skills advisor/tutor would be available for students to utilise when needed. Use of the "You Said, We Did" exercise for student feedback would continue as this allowed for a number of fast and easy changes to be put in place, once received. The Principal reported that the college was interviewing for a new Student Adviser and would hope to make an appointment this week.

Andrew Gedge left the meeting at 9.24 am

Dog grooming was noted as being an area in which further improvement was needed. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning explained that this was currently being managed. Teaching for this had previously taken place over 2 days per week but had now been extended to 3 days following feedback received stating that the 2 days of teaching were too condensed, pressured and sometimes rushed.

The report was noted.

Donna Woodruff left the meeting at 9.26 am

Andrew Gedge re-joined the meeting at 9.26 am

Paul O'Shea joined the meeting at 9.27 am

8 Annual Safeguarding Monitoring Report 2018/19

Governors noted that the percentage of students with concerns had increased from 7.7% in 2017/18 to 12.5% in 2018/19. The Designated Safeguarding Lead clarified that the statistics reflected actual concerns and discounted any initial concerns that did not develop into a safeguarding issue. The Designated Safeguarding Lead advised that the improved reporting system accounted in some part for the increase in the figures now being reported but considered that overall there was definitely an increase in the number of issues being raised.

Governors asked for clarification on who would normally be registering the concern. The Designated Safeguarding Lead explained that concerns could be raised by anyone at the college, including external visitors. The concern would be reported to a Student Adviser or direct to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed accordingly.

The Chair noted the analysis of the statistics that had been presented in the report and enquired if the system was able to drill down further on the data to look for possible trends, for example, by cohort and by concern type. The Designated Safeguarding Lead explained that further analysis would be possible although this had not been carried out.

The Chair reminded the committee that additional resources had been introduced to assist with mental health concerns at the college and, noting the increase in other areas, such as domestic abuse and substance misuse, the Chair asked if there was anything more that could be done to support these other areas. The Designated Safeguarding Lead advised that domestic abuse was focused on two years previously and that all student advisers had received training and were classed as Domestic Abuse Champions. The college also received support from Pandora (a project in West Norfolk offering support to children suffering with domestic abuse) although there was currently a 6-month waiting period once a referral had been made. There had been no additional resources to tackle substance misuse although the college regularly carried out drug checking using trained dogs across the campuses 3 or 4 times during the year.

Anti-bullying Week was currently taking place (11-15 November 2019) which usually gained support and focus from the student body. Where appropriate and when suitable, resources were made available with some issues being managed through tutorials.

The Chair asked if there was a correlation between a student with concerns and their attendance. The Designated Safeguarding Lead explained that some safeguarding issues such as homelessness and going missing were more likely than others to have an impact on attendance but that most students continued to attend college even when they experienced difficulties. The advice and support for students (and for staff in how to better manage students) provided by the Mental Health Co-ordinator had had a positive impact in keeping students at college. It was agreed that statistics to provide evidence that the actions taken had helped to maintain attendance would be useful in a future OfSTED inspection under the new Education Inspection Framework, accepting that time constraints restricted this from being developed at the current time.

Mental health issues were discussed, noting that some students may suffer from more than one type of issue (eg stress and depression; stress and anxiety). Mental health concerns very often

underpinned other issues, such as substance misuse or eating disorders. Governors accepted that the statistics reflected only those concerns that had been reported and considered that other students may also be suffering but were still to be identified.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead clarified that for concern types reporting zero cases in the previous year this may be because the category did not exist previously and that an incident, if reported then, may have been recorded under a different concern type. For homelessness concerns, this did not necessarily mean that the student was currently living on the streets, but could reflect that there was the potential for this to happen, or that the student could be living in temporary accommodation.

The report was noted.

Paul O'Shea left the meeting at 9.47 am

9 Current Performance Data & KPIs

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students advised that report included data for the 2018/19 academic year which had now been finalised.

The implications of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) were discussed, noting how difficult it was for the college to discuss and share performance information with the parents/guardians of students. To date, only 42% of students under 18 years had given their consent. This would in time cause issues for progress reviews (2 & 3) along with the next planned parents' evening. The Principal highlighted that this was a challenge for those parents who were keen to be kept informed of their child's progress but without consent being given the information could not be shared. Governors asked if this matter had been discussed or highlighted by the Association of Colleges (AoC). The Principal replied that as yet, this matter had not been raised as an issue by the AoC.

Governors were concerned that the report for this meeting did not include any apprenticeship information. The Assistant Principal Quality & Students advised that the data was not currently available. The Chair reminded the Assistant Principal that the meeting dates for 2019/20 were amended to ensure that they aligned with the availability of data, ready for review by the committee. The Chair asked for the remaining meeting dates for 2019/20 to be reviewed again to ensure that data would be available or to amend the meeting dates accordingly.

ACTION-APQS/CLERK

Governors noted the concern raised in the report regarding HE attendance and asked if this was linked to current recruitment numbers into HE being lower than anticipated. The Principal explained that the recruitment was affected by the offer from the college and the competitiveness of the market. Performance and student satisfaction within HE was considered to be very good. Recruitment for next year would be addressed. This matter was discussed at the joint-venture meeting held with ARU the previous week. Recruitment into HE was down nationally. Locally, getting the offer right was imperative to ensure numbers increased, such as with the Level 5 Nursing Associate course and other higher level apprenticeships. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning would be overseeing the development of the HE provision. Governors asked if the college's FE students transitioned into HE students at the college. The Principal explained that in most cases the 16-18 year old students looked to move away from the area for their HE studies. Adult learners who joined the college on access courses (or similar) tended to remain with the college for other HE courses providing the appropriate course was available, noting that adult learners tended not to want to relocate for their studies. The Chair

noted that it would be appropriate for the committee to focus on HE at the next meeting.

ACTION-VPCL/CLERK

The Chair was concerned that overall attendance had dropped by 2% when compared to the previous year. Issues were discussed regarding the inaccurate recording of attendance in maths and English due to students being moved to different classes based on their abilities but registers not being updated in time to accurately record attendance. Action was being taken to address this issue.

Punctuality was briefly discussed with the Assistant Principal Quality & Students advising that 1% of sessions currently had punctuality concerns. Similarly, management was currently reviewing lessons where disruption takes place.

The report was noted.

10 Quality Improvement Plan 2019/20

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students advised that this document was still in draft form and would be finalised once the self-assessment process was completed and submitted to OfSTED, expected 22 November 2019, at which stage the final criteria for inclusion in the quality improvement plan would be determined.

The report was noted.

11 Single Equality Scheme & Equality Objectives 2019/20

Governors noted the document. The report indicated specific areas Governors should review in respect of equality and which would be monitored by OfSTED under the new education inspection framework. It was agreed that these items would be addressed within the regular teaching, learning and assessment report provided by the Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning. The report would be re-titled as "Learning & Curriculum Report." **ACTION-VPCL**

The committee agreed to recommend the document to the Board for approval at its next meeting (11 December 2019)

12 Teaching, Learning & Assessment

The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning reported that following the recent SAR review, ESOL had now moved into Support to Improve.

Governors commented from the report that during learning walks a number of lessons had continued to demonstrate poor questioning. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning reported that this had continued to be a particular issue, despite the fact that this had been addressed many times during training days and team meetings. It was noted that the younger/newer qualified teachers tended to demonstrate better questioning than their more established peers. This matter would continue to be addressed during further learning walks, one-to-ones and team meetings. Further training and emphasis was required in the teaching of less exciting topics within a syllabus so that students were engaged throughout the whole lesson. Regular meetings were planned with programme managers to focus on particular issues.

The Chair asked if the recent staffing restructure may have stalled the progress made previously within teaching and learning, especially with regard to programme managers. The Principal considered that the changes may have rekindled and boosted the interest in teaching and

learning due to staff changing their areas and taking on new responsibilities. The Chair asked about the support available to programme managers. The Vice Principal said that although the Learning Practice staff supported on matters regarding teaching they did not specifically support the programme managers with their duties. Coaching was considered to be the ethos required for this with management training days planned. There would be challenges but there was a need to invest in the managers at that level. The Principal reminded the committee that 2 members of staff had recently worked through the Middle Managers' Development Programme provided by the Education and Training Foundation. Two further cohorts would be undertaking the course during the academic year. The Vice Principal added that a number of staff were taking part in regional activities organised by the Association of Colleges.

The report was noted.

13 Strategic Targets 2019/20 Progress Review

The Clerk advised that for a number of targets monitored by this committee it was too early in the academic year to report on the progress being made. Four targets were showing that they were behind, relating to attendance and apprenticeship performance, both of which had been discussed during earlier items in the meeting.

The report was noted.

14 Complaints (Current)

The report by the Assistant Principal Quality & Students was noted and there were no comments or questions raised. The Chair noted that the issue of HE complaints being referred to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) had now been included on the college's risk register.

The report was noted.

15 Any Other Business

There were no items of other business.

16 Chair's items for briefing to the Corporation

- Apprenticeships – focus was currently looking into all areas of the apprenticeship department and how it worked alongside the teaching faculties within the college.
- Learning & Curriculum – looking at what was taking place in the classroom, attendance, teaching techniques, questioning, and student performance. The important work of the programme manager was recognised.
- Safeguarding – the committee reviewed and discussed in detail the findings reported in the annual safeguarding monitoring report, noting the increase in the number of concerns raised from 217 in 2017/18 to 359 in 2018/19 and also the types of concerns being dealt with, such as mental health, domestic violence, bullying, substance misuse and homelessness.

17 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 12 February 2020 at 8.30 am, King's Lynn Campus.

The meeting closed at 10.29 am