

**College of West Anglia**  
**Minutes of Performance, Review and Quality Committee**  
**Wednesday, 18 September 2024**  
**8:30am – 11.00am**  
**Meeting Room – Principal’s Suite, King’s Lynn Campus**

<b>Present</b>	Chris Ashman	Governor (Chair)	In person
	Fliss Miller	Governor (Vice Chair)	Remote
	Jan Feeney	Governor	In person
	Samantha Fletcher	Governor	Remote
	Paul Gibson	Governor (Staff)	In person
	David Pomfret	Governor (Principal/CEO)	In person
<b>Attending</b>	Kery Heathcote	Deputy CEO/Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality	In person
	Rob Petto	Assistant Principal Funding and Performance	In person
	Sarah Anstiss	Head of Apprenticeships and Work Based Learning	In person
	Sue Moore	Head of Faculty - Technology	In person
	Ria Vinten	Head of Learning Improvement	Remote
	Clare Pelling	Head of Learner Experience	In person
	Jules Bridges	Head of Governance	In person

No.	Action
1	<p><b>Apologies</b>            There were no apologies for absence from committee members. Rachel Boast, Head of Faculty Public Sector Service passed on her apologies for absence.</p>
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interests</b>            There were no items of interest declared.</p>
3	<p><b>Election of Vice Chair</b>            The committee nominated and appointed Fliss Miller as Vice Chair of the committee.</p>
4	<p><b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting on 12 June 2024</b>            The minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2024 were reviewed and <b>agreed</b> as being an accurate record.</p>
5	<p><b>Matters Arising</b>            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.</p> <p>F Miller joined the meeting at 8.35am</p> <p>It was noted that item 6 from the previous meeting would be of interest and a focus for the Finance and General Purposes committee as this related to the financial impact of an apprenticeship withdrawal.</p> <p>S Moore and S Anstiss joined the meeting at 8.40am</p>
6	<p><b>Priority Item 1 – Apprenticeships/Technology</b>            The team continues to drive up quality and improvement which in turn will improve achievement rates. Work in the year with students who probably shouldn’t have still been on programme has been undertaken to move them forward and there has been a roll back on quality processes to ensure that off the job training logs for example are updated weekly, enabling learners to get to their end point assessment (EPA). Robust QA has been put in place to ensure that this is kept on top of with current learners and it was confirmed that there are currently 19 legacy students from 2022/23 and 51 in 2023/24 and the vast majority are in</p>

the technology faculty. Very few are likely to reach EPA before the R014 ESFA return in October 2024.

The ESFA Apprenticeship Accountability Measures were shared with governors although there was difficulty understanding the calculation of the percentage of those past their planned end date. The learner count in 2023/24 was 926 and those past their planned end date was 6.7% (between 90 and 180 days) and 13.1% (over 180 days) but the total of 278 learners past their planned end date didn't represent 19.8% of 926 as 278 of 926 is 30%. It was noted that the ESFA calculates this measure of overdue learners differently from the college. CWA counts any overdue active learners on programme whereas the ESFA counts any student that was overdue at any point during their programme and completed in year so this will include learners that the college is no longer measuring as overdue because they have completed. Governors questioned how helpful the government dashboard was and have repeatedly asked to see the count of students in year, those who are predicted to achieve, how many did, how many were timely and how much of the legacy issues are negatively impacting achievement. The Chair will work with the DCEO/VPC&Q and the APF&P to agree the dataset for future reports. The HoG will convene a meeting. Additionally, governors asked for an explanation of the data with a few lines of commentary and the executive summary that pulls out the highlights and the lowlights and provides target and actual numbers i.e., what was the target, what was achieved, how close to target are we, what else is being done etc.

HoG

HoAPP&WBL

HoF Tech

It was noted that the report shows a 3-year positive trend with the number of learners passed their planned end date decreasing from 742 in 2021/22 (post covid) down to 537 in 2022/23 and then just below 300 in 2023/24. Governors asked for more narrative around the data so that it is clear where positive progress has been made, where there are targets for the year and if the targets in year are realistic to achieve or are indicating that they will not be achieved.

Achievement may have dropped but the quality of what is being delivered has significantly improved. The college recognises that there is still much to be done and will self-assess and downgrade the college SAR to 'requires improvement'.

The Chair commented that flow and process maps provided under matters arising didn't necessarily reflect practice. This committee has for some time kept apprenticeships on its priority list and has been assured that changes have been made that will positively impact yet the outcomes for learners are not improving so where and when will positive change be seen. It was confirmed that there are some challenges in engineering and some staffing issues in construction. Recruitment has been difficult with attracting plumbing assessors due to pay and some frustrations with some team members who in the past have not been receptive to change. New processes are being communicated and the reasons why this is so important. Managers are more visible, and intervention put in place quicker. This approach is working but it is taking time to embed. The complexity of the funding rules also causes complications as the college needs to adapt its processes to be compliant, enrolment for example is taking much longer because of all the documentation and rigour attached to it but there is confidence that process and practice has been changed and the positive impact will be recognised.

The Chair asked if some case studies of employer engagement could be shared with the committee to evidence the positive work with employers and meeting skills needs.

HoAPP&WBL

HoF Tech

S Moore and S Anstiss left the meeting at 9.20am

## 7 Operational Oversight Report

The committee was informed that the college will self-assess High Needs Learning again as outstanding in the college SAR. With 675 starts in the year achievement is predicted to be 5.2% up on the year before.

Achievement for 16-19s last year was 72.6%, currently this year it is 75% with the best-case outcome at 77.4%.

Adult achievement was 82.9% last year (2022/23) and is currently at 70.1% with the best-case outcome at 85.6%.

Retention for 16-19s fell to 84.2% which was disappointing and investigation into the 945 different reasons why students left is underway. At February half term (2023/24) retention was over 93% and the theme emerging is that it is known that the wraparound support was robust, and the college was able to keep learners for longer but further analysis to establish why so many then left after the February half-term still needs to be investigated and understood. The BRAGP process is now firmly embedded, and this has significantly enhanced the ability to troubleshoot and transfer students onto other courses so there is hope that retention will improve this year.

Adult retention for the previous year (2022/23) was 91.3% and this dropped to 89.7% in 2023/24. There were roughly the same number of starts (1225) in 2022/23 as in 2023/24 (1210) so further analysis of the drop in retention is being undertaken.

High needs retention, for both age groups, is above the college retention rates at 88.7% for 2023/24 (87.3% in 2022/23) and 19+ was 90.6% in 2022/23 and this has fallen to 84.1% in 2023/24, but overall high needs learner retention has held at 87.6%.

Governors noted that CWA achievement for A Level A\*-C passes is 56.1% compared to 72.6% for Norfolk and 75.9% for England and this differs significantly from where achievement was predicted so governors were keen to know why and how this has happened. One of the main reasons was staff disruption and a need to focus on teaching and learning across the A Level provision. There were some courses with low numbers and therefore some impact on the learner experience. The grade profile however shows top grades achieved so this is not the issue, it's the value of the teaching and learning and what this is adding to the learner experience. There are more A\* and Bs, but A\* to C has dropped and a higher proportion dropping to a grade D, and this is prominent in science-based subjects, and this is being challenged with the delivery team which may need fundamental changes. There are some high performing areas such as creative arts, English language for example so it's a mixed bag of reasons with staff absence/recruitment remaining an issue.

The report shows excellent progress toward higher education, from a cohort of 68 learners 50 learners applied for HE with 42 learners gaining a firm offer to their first choice (80%) with 6 learners who are awaiting clearing. Overall, 96% of the students who applied to HE met the entry criteria for their confirmed choices.

Value added is also an area for investigation. There are some areas with good practice and some persistent problem areas. Governors wondered if there was a correlation between the destination data with the subject area, i.e., did A Level science students get the subject area destination to university, or did they apply for other subject areas. Analysis of value added will be completed over the coming weeks for reporting to the committee at the meeting to be held in November 2024.

APF&P

Achievement for Maths GCSE overall was 7% above national rate, English GCSE 1% below national rate. Attendance ended the year 6.7% lower across the college than vocational sessions which is disappointing, and governors wondered if there was confidence that this would improve this year and what would be done differently. Certainty cannot be guaranteed but all teams remain focused on attendance and retention and providing the wraparound support to keep as many students on programme to achieve.

## 8 HE Performance Report

Further to the report received an additional 3 learners on psychosocial have achieved with 2.2s, thus bringing the total number of degrees in the 2023/24 academic year to 46 with one first, twenty-one 2.1s, twelve 2.2s and one 3<sup>rd</sup> so 72% good or better degrees in the year. For foundation degrees there were six merits, and nine passes

Retention in year was 95.2% and from start of degree programme to July 2024 was 85.3%. The committee recognised that the final data for reporting was not available for this meeting but would be provided at the next meeting. There were many references in the reports that data was not available so members asked for assurance and confidence that this could be provided. This was confirmed as the CIS team have the capacity and the ability to develop

the reports and enhancements to systems such as migrating data from PICS to EBS for example will enable improved reporting for apprenticeships as well as other income lines.

Governors asked if enrolments for this year were in line with the new, HE strategy and what KPIs in terms of good or better degrees, and retention were set for this academic year. The aspirational target for good or better degrees is set at least 70% and 90% for retention. It was reported however that numbers are likely to reduce again this academic year due to vet nursing being pulled from the offer however the strategy does shape the ambition in years to come with a more positive intake of student numbers predicted.

It was noted that the Childcare and Early Years team have achieved validation of the BSc (Hons) Level 6 top-up for 2025/26 starts.

## **9 AEB Provision Analysis**

The college has seen some improvement in 2023/24 with AEB provision and opportunities have emerged to move from partner delivery to direct delivery which has been positive. There is an ambition to grow the adult offer outside of term time and a number of 'summer school' sessions took place that were successful and will now lead to shorter courses and workshops planned for February 2025 non-teaching week, and the April 2025 two-week non-teaching period.

Income this year is £380k less on AEB but if we deliver on the curriculum plan the college will achieve its allocation noting that the ESFA will only fund 110% of allocation so this will require close monitoring to ensure that we do not over provide. These programmes are also a good enabler to upsell and offer routes into HE.

The report shows an increase in student numbers in the year, but attendance has been of concern. There are themes emerging but deeper analysis and understanding of the issues will be gleaned with teams through the APR process. The absence reasons need to be explored as governors asked for assurance that this is investigated, understood, and addressed.

Governors were informed that the government has declined Norfolk and Suffolk devolution. This would have been beneficial for the college in terms of AEB allocation, so the future of this income line is unknown. The college continues to support Norfolk County Council to rally government to at least save this element of devolution.

The Chair asked how the college will track destinations as he had seen that this field had been removed from AEB datasets. It was confirmed that this can continue to be captured through the ILR (Individual Learner Record) processes so data will be available, tracked, and reported.

## **10 Headline QIP 2023/24 – Year End Review**

The report shows that out of 32 targets there are 28 to carry over into the 2024/25 improvement plan. The Chair commented that this suggests that the QIP isn't driving change with nearly 90% rolled over from the 2023/24 academic year into this year.

The risk register has been added to the Headline QIP and monthly updates with target owners are taking place. Members acknowledged the new energy around risk and commented that there is hope, and an expectation, that the monthly QIP review meetings will have greater impact. The committee would feel more reassured if targets aren't just rolled over but perhaps refined and condensed into smaller, achievable targets but do not want to lose sight of the original target date to ensure slippage is minimised and targets are chased. The HoLI recognised that some of the target's set have been progressed, but the positive output is not yet realised which is why some of the red (unsatisfactory/no progress) rated targets remain red but with more frequent updates the committee should start to see the status of these QIP targets change.

In summary governors would like to know what has been achieved in 2023/24 and how this has positively impacted the learner. The executive summary of the reports to the committee are to evidence the impact on learning experiences in future reports.

HoLI

**11 Applewood Nursery – Annual Report – 2023/24**

The report shows a positive outturn due to the innovative approach adopted by the team. Income from nursery fees has increased reducing the forecast £107k deficit to just £6k at the year end. The nursery this academic year is already at capacity with 54 children on site. Grasshoppers and bumble bees are full and there is a waiting list for babies and preschool. The option for term time only care is being phased out with full time provision for babies in place.

Analysis shows that 80% of registrations come from parent recommendation and reputation is growing for the nursery as a quality provider. A high proportion of children at the nursery have come from links with the hospital or the college. Governors were interested to know how many were QEH, or college linked and what the impact has/is on the learning experience for CWA students. The HoF for Public Sector Services, Rachel Boast, will be asked to respond.

HoFPSS

Item 13 preceded item 12 and C Pelling joined the meeting at 10.30am

**12 Single Equality Scheme/Action Plan**

It was reported that the new format plan is working well and incorporating BRAGP makes it more live, visible, and useful. It was noted that most actions are blue status (completed), but governors were keen to know how the plan will be reviewed. It was confirmed that a new version of the plan will be created for this academic year. Things like the white ribbon for example will flow into the new plan and specific groups of learners will be important to include, i.e., those with disabilities, those with impairments, disadvantaged learners for example. This will be reportable to the committee, and EDI has been integrated into APR meetings.

C Pelling left the meeting at 10.40am

**13 2023/24 Strategic Targets Final Progress Review**

The report confirmed good progress with a couple of targets not achieved by the year end. Those not achieved or closed off will drop into the strategic plan progress tracker for the 2024/25 academic year. It was agreed that it would be useful to cross reference the strategic targets with the Headline QIP and the HoLI will work with the HoG to incorporate this.

HoLI / HoG

**14 Any other business**

There were no other items of business.

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

- Apprenticeship quality processes and practice are yet to positively impact. The college will self-assess this area as 'requires improvement' in the college SAR. Achievement was lower than predicted at 52.7%.
- High Needs Learning will be self-assessed again in the college SAR as 'outstanding'. With 675 starts in the year achievement is predicted to be 5.2% up on the year before.
- The Operational Oversight Report was scrutinised by the committee providing an overview of retention, attendance and achievement.
- There were 72% good or better (HE) degrees in the year.
- AEB student numbers have increased in the year, but attendance has been of concern. CWA will achieve its allocation noting that the ESFA will only fund 110% of allocation so this will require close monitoring to ensure that we do not over provide.
- The committee has challenged the progress of the Headline QIP asking for detail of what has been achieved in 2023/24 and how this has positively impacted the learner.
- The Applewood Nursery shows a positive outturn due to the innovative approach adopted by the team. Income from nursery fees has increased and this academic year the nursery is already at capacity with 54 children on site.

Chair

**16 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 6 November 2024, Remote via TEAMS

Meeting ended at 10.45am