

Date: 30 January 2019
Venue: The Boardroom, City Campus, the Sheffield College

Clerk to the Corporation
 Granville Road
 Sheffield, S2 2RL
 Tel: 0114 260 2620
 Email
alison.shillito@sheffcol.ac.uk

Present: Beri Hare (Chair)
 Angela Foulkes
 Chris Linacre
 Saleem Rashid
 Seb Schmoller
 John Timms

In attendance Andrew Hartley, Commercial Director (items 1 – 9)
 Alison Shillito, Clerk to Governing Body
 Paul Simpson, Executive Director of HR and Organisation Development (item 10 only)
 Anita Straffon, Deputy Chief Executive: Curriculum, Quality and Assessment
 Kevin Straughan, Assistant Principal English Maths and Inclusion (for Item 7)

Action by whom
by whom
when

19/1/1 Welcome, introduction and apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Gwyn Arnold. The Clerk reported that she was still in the process of completing pre-appointment checks for Stephen Betts (new governor) and Hanif Mohammed (co-opted member).

19/1/2 Chair's remarks

2.1 The Chair commented that she was concerned that not enough of the Committee's discussion and issues were being presented to all members of Governing Body. She had already raised this with the Chair of Governors. At the December meeting of Governing Body, she had commented that the agenda had not adequately reflected the College's highest strategic priority which was to improve the quality of teaching, learning and the student experience.

2.2 In response, Governing Body had agreed that this needed to be addressed and had asked for in-year changes to the cycle of business and re-ordering of the agenda to ensure issues from TLQ&SE Committee were given due prominence and consideration.

2.3 It was noted that the agenda for this meeting included two presentations. At the end of the meeting members would be

asked to comment on the merits of this approach as compared to circulating reports for discussion.

19/1/3 Declarations of interest

The Committee noted Angela Foulkes' standing declaration of interest as Chief Executive and Principal (CE/P) in all matters discussed. There was no action required for any of the agenda items in respect of this declaration.

Saleem Rashid declared his standing interest as a maths lecturer that may be relevant to item 7 (presentation on English and maths) and a presentation by the Deputy Chief Executive: Curriculum, Quality and Assessment (DCE CQA) attached to item 6, when the Committee would be discussing the initial findings of the teaching observation scheme.

19/1/4 Confidentiality

The Committee noted that two items had been marked as confidential - sub-contracting and apprenticeships. The reason for this was that these aspects of provision were highly competitive and the reports contained information that Executive Team considered to be commercially sensitive.

19/1/5 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

19/1/6 Matters Arising and Action Record

- 6.1 It was noted that all matters arising from the last meeting had been included on the updated Action Record. The Committee considered matters on the Action Record that were not on the agenda as follows.
- 6.2 Minute 18/02/7.3 refers: HE Link governor – it was commented that there should be equal regard for FE should SRG Committee decide to appoint an HE link governor. The Chair of Governors said that the appointment of link governors for certain themes (in addition to the Safeguarding governor which was a required role) was a pilot. The additional themes had been selected to address issues that might not otherwise receive full board attention. FE Education and Training was the primary focus of the TLQ&SE Committee and the Governor Engagement Plan. SRG Committee would be monitoring the link governor scheme and it was unlikely that any further appointments would be made pending review of the pilot.
- 6.3 Minute 18/02/12.2 refers: Complaints Annual Report – it was noted that the summary of complaints and action taken to address upheld complaints would be presented with the next annual report in June 2019. This was the only action on the Action Record that had not yet started.
- 6.4 The Committee agreed that the closed actions could be moved off the action tracker, noting that there had been good progress made since the last meeting with all but one action completed or referred to a more appropriate forum for action.

19/1/7 Quality KPI Update

- 7.1 The Deputy Chief Executive, Curriculum, Quality and Assessment (DCE CQA) presented the KPIs which the Committee considered as follows.
- 7.2 **Condition of Funding:** it was noted that since the report had been circulated, the proportion of students who had not yet met the Condition had reduced from 8% (stated in the report) to 6%. At this time in January 2018 the figure for non-compliance with the Condition of Funding had been 17%. The Committee welcomed the improvement in compliance and that this indicated that a greater proportion of students were enrolled on and attending the right English and maths qualifications at an earlier stage in the year.
- 7.3 **Work Experience:**
- i) There appeared to be a substantial gap between the target and actual number of students on study programmes who had participated in work experience. Members asked why this was, given the much better performance for Industry Placement. They also queried the likelihood of the College being able to meet the target it had set for 2018/19.
 - ii) The Deputy Chief Executive (Curriculum, Quality and Assessment) (DCE CQA) said that the newly appointed placement co-ordinator had prioritised finding new Industry Placements initially in order to enable the College to meet the conditions attached to Capacity and Delivery Funding. Anecdotal evidence suggested that there was more work experience happening in academies than had been recorded and reported. Now that the target for Capacity and Delivery Funding had been reached, the Coordinator had turned her attention to new processes for capturing and recorded work and enrichment activities formally as work experience.
 - iii) The Placement Coordinator was confident that the College would achieve the target for work experience. More importantly, the College was now systematically promoting and tracking work experience whereas previously students were doing work and enrichment activities that were not necessarily captured and included in their College record.
- 7.4 **Quarterly reporting:** a governor asked why the report was for Period 5. The Chief Executive and Principal said that normally reports would be quarterly P3, P6, P9 and P12 but the timing of this meeting coincided with the end of P6 and therefore the KPIs had been presented for most up to date information available, i.e. the end of December. The Clerk would look at aligning the schedule with the availability of quarterly reports, which did not necessarily fit easily with half termly meetings. Clerk 13 March 2019
- 7.5 **Learner voice:** a governor asked what proportion of the learner population had responded to the induction survey. The DCE CQA said she understood that the response rate had been high, she would confirm the exact percentage to members after the meeting. DCE CQA Feb 2019

- 7.6 **Overall picture:** a governor commented that KPIs seemed to show an improving picture, with more indicators rated as Green. He asked if this was also the perception of staff.
- i) The DCE CQA said that improvements in the data reflected the positive impact that new improvement strategies and additional curriculum leadership capacity were having on the College.
 - ii) The CE/P said it also reflected a much improved grip on the data. The Executive Team were maintaining a relentless focus on ensuring the accuracy of data and challenging each other when it seemed to be below expectations. For example, at every Executive Team meeting, the CE/P was challenging the number of in-year qualifications being claimed and recorded. This focus was flowing through to managers via business review meetings, which made it a priority for staff too. Having access to data on in-year completion of vocational qualifications and functional skills enabled managers and their teams to speak more confidently about what was going well and adjusting where changes were not resulting in the improvement needed.
 - iii) Student attendance was improving but was still below target. The DCE CQA reiterated the processes that had been put in place to follow-up where students were late or absent. Members asked about the frequency of these processes. The DCE CQA said they applied to every absence. The Committee noted that this was a positive change from previous practice (prior to January 2018) had been to follow-up after several consecutive absences.

7.6 The Committee received the report and

- i) thanked the team for incorporating the additional information requested by the Committee at its last meeting
- ii) asked that future reports include the frequency of follow-up or remedial activities – e.g. for attendance as above.

DCE	March
CQA	2019

19/1/8 Curriculum area focus – English and maths

- 8.1 Kevin Straughan, Assistant Principal English, Maths and Inclusion (AP EMI) made a presentation to the Committee about the improvement work he had been leading since he had joined the College in September 2018. At that time, he had found unhappy students, often dispirited by their previous experience of English and maths, and low staff morale.
- 8.2 Based on the AP EMI's learning walks and in response to staff and student morale he had proposed the following strategies –
- **Back to basics** – a focus on students mastering the most important skills in English and maths.
 - **First time, every time** – making sure that students understood every learning point and made progress in every class. Supporting staff to be systematic about recording target setting and monitoring progress to create a virtuous cycle of progression within each lesson and over time.

- **Ready to teach** – CPD to equip staff:
 - to provide enjoyable, enriching and effective lessons;
 - to use technology;
 - with practical techniques to overcome students' barriers to learning.
- **Ready to learn** – inculcating a positive attitude in students that success is the progress they make in the essential skills of English and maths, irrespective of the grade they achieve.

8.3 Governors considered the presentation as follows:

- i) **Attendance** – this was still too low and members wanted to know what the team were doing to address this. The AP EMI said that students who had not registered within 20 minutes of the start of a class received a text reminding them to attend. Students who did miss a class also received an absence text message requesting the reason for the absence. When students did return to class, staff would ask them about their absence. This was to emphasise the importance of attendance but also to find out if there was an underlying problem. Students with persistent attendance issues were given a personal engagement plan (PEP).
- ii) **CPD** – members welcomed the focus on CPD and asked how much time staff were being allocated for this and how the time was being used. The AP EMI said that CPD was fundamental to the improvement strategy. The College had allocated half a day per week for CPD with his team. He was using this time to inculcate the concepts (summarised above) and practical strategies to build staff confidence. In addition, he spent time with the Heads of Academy for English and maths so they would cascade the messages to subject staff in their own faculty. The result of this was that staff in faculties had local managers to support their development and there was wide understanding and acceptance of the strategy across the College.
- iii) **Timetabling** – the Committee had previously been told that the position and duration of isolated English and maths timetable 'blocks' had contributed to poor attendance. Members asked if this problem had now been addressed. The AP EMI said that they had broken up the previous practice of timetabling three hour blocks for English and maths into two 1.5 hour classes, which was an improvement.
- iv) **Staff morale** – members asked about the AP EMI's current perception of staff morale. He said that there were currently no long term sickness absence issues in his team. He believed that talking to staff and students about engagement and progress and celebrating success was improving morale. Not all students would achieve a Level 2 qualification but it was right to measure and celebrate the progress students had made in their basic skills. The College was also working with Manchester College on the 'Assess for Success' project to develop and test the impact

of these and similar strategies on learner progress.

- v) **Engaging parents** – a governor asked if there was more the College could do to communicate positive messages to parents about the importance of English and maths skills. The DCE CQA said that they were finding barriers with parents who either did not value the qualifications or were concerned that their children were being demotivated by repeatedly failing English and maths qualification. This was a challenge but the College was addressing it with consistent messages that

- promoted the work and life benefits of basic skills;
- students do make progress if they engage; and
- celebrating the progress that students have made.

8.4 **The future** – the AP EMI said that feedback from the initial observations of teaching quality at the end of last term had showed some improvement but that there was still work to do on improving the quality of teaching. This would be covered further in the DCE CQA presentation. In terms of being Ready to Learn, English and maths staff would be visiting feeder schools from Easter onwards to start engaging with potential students and their teachers. For existing students, staff would be providing additional support sessions. There would also be more practice exams in test conditions to help students prepare for national exams.

8.5 The Committee received the presentation and welcomed the clear and enthusiastic presentation. Members requested that the slides be circulated to all members and they looked forward to receiving updates via the Quality KPI reports.

Clerk

Feb
2019

19/1/9 Additional item – Teaching observation update

9.1 The DCE CQA made a presentation about the findings of the first round of teaching observations following the introduction of the License to Observe scheme in autumn 2018.

9.2 **Progress summary** – the DCE CQA presented data from the two faculties where observations had been completed. Observers had assessed that 66% of learners observers had made some progress or better in the class. Like Ofsted inspections, this judgment was based on observing classroom behaviour and the marked work available. By the end of February, the updated student tracker would enable this finding to be cross-checked against student progress tracking data.

9.3 **Performance management** - the DCE CQA presented data on the performance of teachers in the two faculties observed so far. She emphasised that these were judgements, not grades, based on session observations and teacher on a page data. Where an observed lesson was below expectations but the teacher's overall performance (taking the data into account) was judged as acceptable, then the observer would give the teacher developmental feedback on the session. Staff judged as requiring improvement were offered a four week support plan. Should performance on the support plan not meet the required standard then this would be followed by a four week rapid action

plan. This ensured that staff had ample opportunity to respond to additional support and development provided.

- 9.4 **Disaggregation of the data at academy level** - members wanted to be able to see data about performance at academy level. The DCE CQA said that data was available and this analysis would be in the next report. Senior managers and the Committee would be able to see whether the picture was consistent across a Faculty or if certain academies were doing well or under-performing.
- 9.5 **Student Progress Tracking** – a governor asked about the consistency of use of Markbook. The DCE CQA said that by the end of February all Markbook records would be up to date and any gaps identified. If there were any gaps then these would be discussed in business review meetings. After February, senior managers would be looking at the feasibility of recording Level 2 student progress on Markbook.
- 9.6 **External assurance** – to validate the findings of the new internal observation scheme, FE Associates were undertaking external observations. There had been 42 observations so far in two faculties. Based on the external observations, it was estimated that around 19% of the staff required a support plan. This correlated closely with the findings of the internal observations scheme, which had placed 20% of staff observed on a support plan. This gave senior staff confidence that the standard of the internal scheme was at the right level.
- 9.7 **Frequency of observation** – members asked about the frequency of observations. The CE/P said that the College would refresh the licence to observe annually at the beginning of the college year. The observation scheme would be re-run September to December so that improvements could be put in place by January at the latest. Throughout the year, managers and the DCE CQA would be reviewing Teacher on a Page data on a weekly basis.
- 9.8 **Faculty health check review** – as a result of observations, faculties agreed an analysis of their strengths and development areas. The Teaching and Learning Innovator was working with outstanding teachers in each faculty to provide a CPD programme, peer work and supported sessions to address that faculty's development areas.
- 9.8 **Learner Voice** - it was reported that the College had appointed a higher apprentice to work with the Vice Principal Higher Education and Academic Studies on student voice activities. Progress so far included:
- 177 student representatives recruited and trained;
 - Monthly campus meetings of representatives;
 - Representatives' feedback was being captured on a rolling action log, the Vice Principal pursued completion of actions with Assistant Principals and departments.
 - Monthly faculty meetings - student representatives were invited to attend faculty meetings to give feedback on faculty specific issues.

- Termly cross-college meetings of student representatives with the DCE CQA.
 - Student Representative Conference on 13 February.
 - A new internal communications programme outlining action taken in response to feedback - 'you said we did'.
- 9.8 The Committee noted the presentation and looked forward to receiving a progress update at the next meeting including:
- i) the findings of the observation scheme in the faculties that had not yet been observed.
 - ii) Cross-college data on number of staff engaging with support plans, progress and actions arising from this.
 - iii) Academy level data for those parts of the College that were performing particularly well or under-performing.

DCE
CQA 13
March

19/1/10 Apprenticeship update

- 10.1 The Commercial Director presented a confidential report, responding to the request at the previous meeting for more information on the decline in apprenticeship retention and achievement and how this was being addressed.
- 10.2 In reviewing the data, governors expressed concern that the College was getting very close to the minimum standards threshold and wanted to know if current actions were being effective in improving achievement and if more rapid improvement could be secured.
- 10.3 The Commercial Director said that there was some improvement in current achievement but it would probably take more than a year to return to previous levels of achievement, due to the duration of apprenticeship programmes.
- 10.4 Achievement in functional skills was of most concern. To remedy this the College was:
- recruiting a functional skills specialist to coordinate improvement actions for apprenticeships;
 - targeting interventions and effort into the faculties that had seen most decline;
 - engaging with employers to make them aware of the progress that apprentices were making and working with them to address where progress could be better.
- 10.5 Governors expressed disappointment that retention had dropped by 1% and asked if this related to recent recruits leaving. The CE/P agreed to look at expanding the KPI dashboard to show data on retention, achievement and timely achievement for apprentices recruited since January 2018. This would enable members to monitor the impact of current support and changes over the last 12 months.
- 10.6 The Committee noted the report. The Chair thanked the authors for responding to their request and attaching a clear action plan. Members' welcomed the commitment and collaborative working that the Commercial Director and DCE CQA had shown to bringing greater quality assurance and oversight of apprenticeships. The Committee was satisfied that the

CE/P March
2019

availability of accurate and timely data was enabling senior managers to intervene and challenge to bring about improvement as well as facilitating more detailed discussion and scrutiny by the Committee.

19/1/11 Sub-contracting update

- 11.1 The Commercial Director introduced the report and the Clerk tabled a copy of the current subcontracting activity that had previously been reported to the Finance, Employment and General Purposes Committee.
- 11.2 Members asked if the College's reduction in large scale subcontracting of apprentice numbers had had a negative impact on achievement. The Commercial Director said that this had been a factor but the change had been inevitable, due to changes in the sector model for subcontracting. The College had prepared for this change and had been successful in securing national contracts under the new model, which was employer led. Employers contracting with a lead provider for apprenticeship training now determined where they wanted that training to be provided.
- 11.3 The College, as lead provider, was responsible for maintaining and enhancing the training quality, wherever it was provided. The Business Development team ensured this by:
 - carrying out 'due diligence' and quality checks on potential subcontractors, prior to contract.
 - using detailed contracts that included training standards.
 - implementing a programme of teaching observations to assure and enhance the quality of subcontracted training.
- 11.4 The Committee noted the report and welcomed the clarification provided.

19/1/12 Employee Engagement Survey

- 12.1 As already reported to Governing Body on 19 December, the Executive Director of HR and Organisation Development (EDHROD) updated the Committee on arrangements for running the next employee engagement survey. He reported that the Survey would open on 25 February 2019. Before that, there would be staff communications to encourage participation. This would include feedback on action taken in response to the pulse surveys.
- 12.2 The Committee noted the report and looked forward to receiving the results and an action plan at its meeting on 19 June 2019.

19/1/13 Review of meeting

- 13.1 Members viewed the presentations positively. They had enabled members to see how ambitious and engaged the presenters were with the issues. The format had enabled the DCE CQA to give the Committee current data from the observation pilot 'hot off the press' and it seemed to have evoked more questioning of the information presented.
- 13.2 There had been detailed scrutiny and challenge in the meeting.

It would be difficult to replicate this at full Governing Body meetings. The challenge would be to encapsulate the detailed work the Committee was doing by

- Selecting high priority TLQ&SE items for discussion at full board
- Giving due priority to the verbal reports made by the Committee Chair to Governing Body
- Ensuring that the Chief Executive and Principal's report and GB KPIs include sufficient coverage of teaching and learning performance.

Clerk and Chair March 2019

CE/P March 2019

The Chair of Search, Remuneration and Governance Committee commented that the SRG Committee would also consider the balance of board business at its meeting on 11 February.

SRG Cttee Feb 2019

19/1/14 Date of next meeting

13 March 2019 at 08.30 – 10.30 Boardroom, City Campus.