



**TEACHING, LEARNING, QUALITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE  
COMMITTEE  
CONFIRMED MINUTES**

**Date:** 29 September 2021  
**Venue:** New Boardroom City Campus

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**Present:** Beri Hare (Chair)  
Gwyn Arnold, governor (Safeguarding Link Governor)  
Novaya Bedward-Makanjuola, SU President Student Governor  
Peter Brooks, governor (Apprenticeships Link Governor)  
Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive and Principal and governor  
Sol Miah (attended via Teams video link)  
John Mothersole, Chair of Governors  
Steven Spence, Staff Governor  
John Timms, governor (Employability and Careers Link Governor)

**In attendance:** Shaun Cook, Vice Principal for Technical and Vocational Skills (16-19) (17.30 – 18.10)  
Andrew Hartley, Executive Director Commercial and Operations (from 17.00 to close)  
Trevor Hewlett, Vice Principal for Technical and Vocational Skills (Adult) (17.30 – 18.10)  
Helen Molton, Vice Principal Technical Higher Education and Academic Studies (17.55 – 18.20)  
Nick Rudkin, Vice Principal Apprenticeships (from 18.00 to close)  
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to the Governing Body.  
James Smythe, Vice Principal Student Experience (from 16.30 -16.50)  
Anita Straffon, Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal  
Elise Temple, Vice Principal Quality Teaching, Learning and Assessment

**by whom**      **by when**

**21/4/1      Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the first face to face meeting of this committee since January 2020. She also welcomed Novaya Bedward Makanjuola to her first meeting of the committee as a new student governor and President of The Sheffield College Students' Union.
- 1.2 The Chief Executive and Principal (CEP) commented that in response to governor feedback, executive colleagues have changed the style of board papers so that the first two pages capture the risks and key issues and the following pages include more detail and/or appended data tables. It is intended that this style will be easier for members to absorb and consider key issues. For quantitative data, the RAG rating is based on

achievement against targets. For other sections, it is the author's opinion of the impact of that policy or provision. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) welcome feedback on the effectiveness of the new format and the extent to which members find the RAG rating helpful.

- 1.3 The committee received apologies from Stephen Betts (Vice Chair).

#### **21/4/2 Declaration of interest**

- 2.1 The committee noted the following standing interests and agreed that no action was required in relation to the agenda.
  - Angela Foulkes as Chief Executive/Principal and Accounting Officer
  - Novaya Bedward-Makanjuola as President of the Students' Union is paid by the college.
  - Steven Spence, staff governor, is a manager subject to and responsible for implementing TLA and staff policies.

#### **21/4/3 Minutes of the last meeting**

- 3.1 The committee approved the minutes of the meeting on 16 June 2021 as accurate record.

#### **21/4/4 Matters Arising and Action Record**

- 4.1 The committee noted that all actions raised at the last meeting had been completed and approved removal from the record.

#### **21/4/5 Student Experience**

- 5.1 James Smythe, Vice Principal Student Experience (VP SE) introduced the annual report on the implementation of safeguarding, student behaviour and engagement policies in 2020-21. The report highlighted the impact of the policies, including the high number of students that the Safeguarding Team had supported during the year who had stayed at college and made progress or achieved their qualification. He also reported on the wide range of activities and training provided to staff and students to enable them to implement the policies including the additional staff training on sexual abuse and harassment to support women and girls to feel safe in college.
- 5.2 Members considered the report and the main issues discussed were the following.

**Self-assessment of safeguarding** as outstanding was noted in the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2020-21 and members discussed the supporting evidence for this. The Chair commented that from her perspective and sector experience of different colleges, 97% of TSC students saying that they feel safe in college and online is excellent feedback. The college also has a relatively high percentage of students saying that

they would recommend the college to a friend, which managers are ambitious to increase further in 2021-22. It is also impressive that there were no permanent exclusions in 2020-21.

**Addressing disclosures**, a member asked how the college assures itself that every safeguarding disclosure is followed up and closed or referred, as appropriate. The VP SE said that all disclosures are allocated to a safeguarding practitioner, action taken is tracked and performance monitored via management reports to the Safeguarding Board. The Safeguarding Link Governor commented that she has attended the board and continues to be impressed by the diligence of its work and monitoring of individual students. This is substantiated by retention data.

**KPI targets for 2021-22**, members generally supported the approach taken to target setting except they challenged the target for student satisfaction with Initial Advice and Guidance (IAG) and careers. It was noted that performance in 2020-21 was already high but this provision is pushing for outstanding so the target should be suitably ambitious.

**Safeguarding team capacity**, the VP SE reported that the college had appointed a new Head of Safeguarding and a new full time safeguarding practitioner to give more support to apprentices and Looked After Children. The committee welcomed the continued investment in safeguarding as good value for money enabling the college to provide excellent support to all learners particularly the most vulnerable.

- 5.3 The committee received the report and commended the impact achieved during a difficult year. It was gratifying to see all students receiving a thorough online induction and tutorial programme as well as responding effectively to individual safeguarding concerns. This is an area where the college is pushing for outstanding practice and so members agreed to

**ACTION:**

Review the Student Voice KPI targets for satisfaction with IAG to make it a stretch target

VP SE

23.11.21

**21/4/6 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: FE Outcomes 2020-21**

- 6.1 Elise Temple, Vice Principal Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (VP QTLA) presented an update on the outcomes for the college's further education students in 2020-21. It was noted that some results are still draft until the final ILR return. The results are consistent against the forecast presented in June 2021 and are the basis of the SAR.
- 6.2 Members considered the report and welcomed that the forecast improvement in pass rates for young people and adults are being realised. This contributes to an improvement in overall achievement rates for the third successive year bringing it within 1 percentage point (pp) of the National Rate (NR). The other main points in the discussion were progress in GCSE English

and maths, which is in line with forecast but not as high as members had wanted to see and how the college is helping students to catch-up missed learning.

### 6.3 GCSE maths and English pass rates (young people)

It was noted that although the high grade pass rate is broadly in line with 2019-20, the overall pass rate for young people had decreased for GCSE English and maths. Governors asked about the reasons for the decrease and what the college is doing to address this in 2021-22.

The VP QTLA said that the change was in the context of

- the change in methodology for determining GCSE grades in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20;
- the abrupt end to the school year in 2019-20 for Year 11 students who received a grade based on what they had done up to February 2020 but left with learning gaps, and
- that the college entered more students for GCSE in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20.

As previously reported, in Autumn 2020, the college had provided English and maths online as part of managing Covid virus transmission at college and attendance had been tracking below target. To improve attendance, the college had agreed that in January 2021, students should return to on-site lessons for English and maths as attendance was higher for onsite classes. However, due to the third national lockdown, this was delayed until Easter 2021.

The college used small group tuition online and onsite, to help students catch-up but the number of students progressing to the college with flattering grades and low starting points from 2019-20 meant that, on paper, many students appeared not to have made progress against their 2020 Centre Assessed Grade (CAG). However, calculating progress against diagnostic assessment at entry in September 2020, showed positive progress in 2020-21 of +0.33 in English and +0.05 in maths.

For 2021-22, the college is conducting individual diagnostic assessments of English and maths to establish students' starting point and gaps in knowledge. Staff will be using their CPD and materials developed during 2020-21 to provide on campus learning that encourages high attendance and learning targeted at their personal knowledge and skills gaps. Additional tutors recruited in spring 2020 will continue to work with eligible students to help eligible students to catch-up missed learning in small groups. All students would be given support to prepare for GCSE end exams, as many would not have experienced these over the last two years. There is a lot to do for November GCSE re-sits but the college's success in November 2020 in identifying which students are ready to re-sit and providing targeted tuition to help them to achieve gives confidence that the college's teaching, learning and assessment strategies for GCSE are right and having a positive impact.

- 6.4 The committee received the report and commented that overcoming the gaps in learning due to the pandemic would be a significant challenge nationally and particularly in areas of high deprivation. Members welcomed that actual grades are closely tracking forecast grades demonstrating that staff and managers have a strong understanding of the college's provision.

**21/4/7 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Self-Assessment Review 2020-21**

- 7.1 The VP QTLA presented the draft Self-Assessment Report 2020-21 for the committee to assess the extent to which it is rigorous, well-evidenced and an accurate evaluation of the college's provision against the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF). She commented that the evaluation had been built from subject and academy level position statements against each element of the EIF.

- 7.2 Governors received the report and commented

**Factual basis**, members said that they found the evaluation and supporting information compelling. The draft contains the right amount of information to back up the self-assessment. The data is consistent with the monitoring reports and forecasts members had reviewed throughout 2020-21.

**Aspects that might feature more prominently**, were suggested by members as follows:

- **digital poverty** and the work done by the college in 2020-21 to address this. Although some of the beneficiaries of this work had been younger children, it had developed the skills of current students and benefited our communities. Governors thought this is worthy of coverage in the SAR;
  - **executive summary** or preview section would help readers to see the most important achievements and areas for further development in the opening pages
  - **methodology**, members asked how the grading had been determined, discussion noted below, and recommended that a short description be included in the SAR.
  - **closing gaps for students declaring a disability**, the college is strong on closing gaps in achievement for young students who declare a disability and is doing more work to help adults. The SAR could reference its achievements on disability and disadvantage more prominently.
- 7.3 In response to a question about the methodology for validating the gradings in the self-assessment, the Deputy Chief Executive (DCE/DP) explained that the college assesses against the EIF, which is clear on what Ofsted expects of good and outstanding provision. Each area self-assesses its performance against the EIF. The Quality Team convenes a panel that validates the self-assessments and compiles the college SAR. Externality is provided by a consultant (an experienced HMI) as an expert reader. Governors are involved in the evolution of the SAR by commenting on the termly data reports, giving feedback on the

mid-year position statement in March 2021 and the forecast outcomes in June.

- 7.4 The committee approved the SAR subject to the comments made in the meeting.

**ACTION**

Consider members' suggestions in a final edit of the SAR.

VPQTLA 22.10.21

**21/4/8 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Improvement Policy 2021-22**

- 8.1 The committee received the review and proposals for updates to the policy to reflect the blended learning model in 2021-22. The VP QTLA confirmed that the policy is applied to all people providing learning to college students and apprentices. The college also works with workplace supervisors of apprentices to ensure effective sequencing of the curriculum to work tasks.
- 8.2 The committee approved the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy for 2021-22

**21/4/9 Complaints Annual Report 2020-21**

- 9.1 The VP QTLA presented the annual report on the implementation of the complaints policy. Members were satisfied that the policy is being effective in enabling students and others to raise issues with the college and find a resolution. The committee noted that the complaints policy remains compliant with the requirements of regulators and agreed it should continue in effect, with the next review in June 2023.

9.2 **ACTION**

Update review date on Complaints Policy and re-publish on college website.

VPQTLA ASAP

**20/4/10 GCSE Exam Series 2021**

- 10.1 The CEP reported on how the college had resolved discrepancies in some of the results students received on GCSE results day in August. Most of the discrepancies had occurred due to a technical issue in the software used for collating grades resulting in some earlier forecast grades being submitted instead of actual grades. The college had completed a review of the process and although the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) process was not expected to operate in 2021-22, the college is implementing actions to improve the accuracy of registration data, in-year tracking and timely reporting to improve student records practice in future.
- 10.2 The committee welcomed that only a few appeals are still in progress and that others have been resolved in the students' favour. Members were reassured that the college has completed the review and is implementing the findings so it is well-prepared

should there be any further adaptations to national exams procedures in future.

## 21/4/11 Technical Education & Skills (16-19)

11.1 The Chair welcomed Shaun Cook, Vice Principal for Technical and Vocational Skills (16-19) (VP TVS 16-19) to his first meeting of the committee. The VPTVS (16-19) introduced a report on the outcomes for young people in 2020-21. It was noted that the report is RAG rated amber because the college is still awaiting confirmed outcomes of around 600 vocational qualifications. These are mainly for students in Brickwork, Plumbing, Motor Vehicle and Gas Engineering who, due to the impact of COVID-19, were unable to complete their final assessments in summer 2021 and returned to college early to complete final assessments in September.

11.2 The committee considered the report and the main points in the discussion were:

**Priority groups**, governors welcomed the progress made on closing performance gaps between different demographic groups. It was noted that despite pass and achievement rates improving, there remains a small gap in the performance by ethnicity. This is in the context of a good improving trend over the last three years. Members commented that they are keen to see this trend continue to close any remaining gaps.

**Level 3 retention**, members asked about the decline in retention in 2020-21 and were told that this mainly relates to first year students dropping out of two-year programmes. In response to this, in April 2021, the college started deep dives in the Academies of Science and Engineering and these will continue in 2021-22. The college is also reviewing some course structures to replace two year courses with one year courses where this is more appropriate to students' needs.

**Level 2** is the college's highest enrolment category for young people and members were very pleased to see the 5pp increase in Level 2 achievement rates (excluding GCSEs as above). This is a milestone for the college, as reported by Ofsted in 2016.

**A Levels**, members congratulated the college on bringing A Level outcome up to national rate (NR) which supported the decision in summer 2018, supported by the committee, to invest in the quality of A Level provision after a period of decline in the mid-2010s.

**Recruitment** of young people is strong in most areas and is above ESFA target for this stage in the process. Managers are monitoring group sizes to ensure they are appropriate. Business and Inclusion are below target, although Inclusion recruits through the year so is less of a concern. Members will be able to review more information on recruitment against targets in the papers of the next meeting of Finance, Employment, General Purposes Committee on the Governor SharePoint site.

- 11.3 The committee received the report and approved the KPI targets for 2021-22, with the change agreed earlier in the meeting (minute 21/4/5.3 refers) to increase the ambition of IAG targets. It was commented that the committee saw these targets as the minimum expected to continue the year-on-year sustained progress the college had achieved over the last three years.

#### **21/4/12 Technical Education & Skills (Adult)**

- 12.1 The Chair welcomed Trevor Hewlett, Vice Principal Technical and Vocational Skills Adult (VPTVS Adult) to present a report on Adult outcomes. This showed an overall improvement in achievement with decreases in performance in GCSE maths and some gaps emerging between different groups by ethnicity and disability. The paper also reported that recruitment is on target and sought approval of KPI and targets for 2021-22.
- 12.2 Members discussed the report, noting that it appeared that recruitment is below the annual target, although rated green. The VPTVS Adult said that this is because most adult students enrol on shorter courses (English for Speakers of Other Languages and basic skills) which recruit cohorts throughout the year. Staff are monitoring enrolment of students funded via Adult Learner Loans because of the added complexity of National Skills Fund support and the Mayoral Combined Authority funding. As above, the highest demand is from adults seeking to improve their basic skills whereas the regional devolved budget is prioritising funding for qualifications at Levels 2 and 3.
- 12.3 Regarding analysis of outcome gaps for adults, the committee welcomed that the college has identified the continuing gap in performance for adults declaring a disability and putting in place additional interventions to ensure that students with a disability are better prepared to overcome the effects on their disability.
- 12.4 The committee received the update on 2020-21 student outcomes and enrolment and endorsed the next steps. The committee also approved the 2021-22 KPI targets in the report.

#### **21/4/13 Higher Education**

- 13.1 The Chair welcomed Helen Molton, Vice Principal Technical Higher Education and Academic Studies (VP THEAS) to her first meeting of the committee and invited her to present a report on
- Higher Education outcomes 2020-21 which saw a much improved retention rate but with some pass rates being below target, particularly for creative arts;
  - Recruitment, predicted at 77% against target for 2021-22;
  - KPI targets for 2021-22 for approval;
  - Regulatory updates on new Office for Students (OFS) requirements and an update on the college's review of its validation arrangements;



- The draft HE Self-Evaluation Document for 2020-21 reporting on HE activity, compliance with OFS requirements and evaluating teaching quality and student outcomes.

13.2 The committee considered the report and the main issues discussed were:

- **Recruitment**, the impact of below target recruitment on the quality of the student experience and delivering the targets in the Access and Participation Plan. The VP THEAS said that group sizes will enable high student support. The financial implications of having two years of smaller cohorts are being working through in business review. The curriculum changes in the Technical Higher Education Strategy are still being developed to implement a distinctive and competitive curriculum with new routes from T Levels. In the meantime, some additional course starts in January and February will boost recruitment somewhat.
- Staff are following up all college students who applied for progression to college HE but did not enrol to find out their destination and, where necessary, to offer post level 3 information and advice to students.
- **Regulatory update**, it was noted that the college had submitted the annual fee data collection return to OFS in good time and had received confirmation from OFS of approval of Provisional TEF Grade status.
- **Validation partners**, members noted progress on the review. The HE Link Governor commended the work done on legal due diligence and recommended that the college assess its options carefully to find the best fit for its strategy.
- **Self-Evaluation Document**, members noted the evidence that the college's higher education provision is compliant with regulatory requirements, well managed and supported by an appropriate policy framework.

13.3 The committee received the report, confirmed the KPI targets (previously approved in the APP submission) and recommended approval to the Governing Body of the Self Evaluation Document for 2020-21.

## 21/4/14 Apprenticeships

14.1 The EDCO and Nick Rudkin, Vice Principal Apprenticeships (VP Apps) introduced the update, including:

- **Apprenticeship outcomes for 2020/21**, an improving picture on the last report although some 80 apprentices remain on a break in learning. The team is confident in its forecast of a 63% achievement rate, with a very high success rate for apprentice standards
- **Recognition**, the college receiving an NOCN award for being in the top 25 training organisations in the Sheffield City Region.
- **Removal of the ESFA minimum standards notice** for apprenticeships, and that such movement was rare during the pandemic when a lot of providers had been static.

- **Apprenticeship voice surveys** showing generally high satisfaction with apprentices speaking highly of college training and support services. The results of the employer survey are being analysed for reporting to the next meeting;
- **Proposed KPI targets for 2021-22**, which are ambitious. Taking account of previous withdrawals, these KPI set a high expectation that apprentices currently in learning will achieve their potential. The Link Governor for Apprentices reported that he had met with the VP Apps and had been assured by the improvements the college is making in areas such as construction.

14.2 The committee received the report and commended the progress to achieving national rate and on securing removal of the ESFA minimum standards notice during a challenging period for apprenticeship providers. The committee approved the KPI targets commenting that they are suitably ambitious. Members emphasised the importance of the college having high expectations of apprentices for attendance and success.

#### **21/4/15 Review of meeting and closing remarks**

15.1 The committee discussed the impact of the meeting as follows. Members were pleased to input to the final draft of the SAR to help the college prepare for its next full Ofsted and to hone the priorities for 2021-22

The streamlined papers had enabled a better focus on key issues. In future, the committee would like to sharpen members' focus on the ensuring that "next steps" in the reports are rigorous and then following through on their implementation and impact at later meetings.

#### **21/4/16 Date and time of next meeting**

1 December 2021 08.30 – 11.00