



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

**Date:** 14 June 2023  
**Venue:** New Boardroom City Campus

Clerk to the Corporation  
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**Members:  
(Quorum 4)**  
Gill Alton (Chair)  
Peter Brooks, governor  
Angela Foulkes, Chief Executive and Principal and governor  
Kam Grewal-Joy, governor  
Amaan Saqlain, Student Governor (09.00 – 10.00)  
Paul Senior  
Phil Wymer, Staff Governor  
Sol Miah, governor

**In attendance:**  
Shaun Cook, Vice Principal FE & Skills  
Rob Dunn, Interim Deputy Principal  
Jean Harris-Evans, Vice Principal Higher Education  
Daniele Palacios, Vice Principal Apprenticeships (for report)  
James Smythe Vice Principal Student Experience (08.30 – 09.20)  
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to Governing Body  
Petra Williams, Vice Principal QTLA  
Beth Smith, Executive Assistant Governance and note taker

**Action**

**By whom      By when**

**23/2/01      Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 The committee received apologies from Sam Giove, John Mothersole and Andrew Hartley.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Mark Pearson, Executive Director Strategy and Systems Improvement, to the meeting. Mark would be taking executive lead responsibility for Higher Technical Education from August 2023 and would be providing the committee's termly HE reports.

**23/2/02      Declaration of interest**

- 2.1 The committee noted the standing declarations and agreed that no action was required in relation to the business for the meeting.

### **23/2/03 Minutes of the last meeting**

The committee confirmed the accuracy minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2023.

### **23/2/04 Matters Arising & Action Record**

- 4.1 The Governance Advisor & Clerk (GAC) presented the action record. The committee noted that all matters arising from the last meeting had been included on the action tracker. Progress on the following actions was reported in the meeting.

4.2 **Minute 22/3/6.4 refers: English and Mathematics Improvement Strategy**

The committee noted an update had been provided. It was agreed that the committee would continue to track progress against the strategy at least for the October and December meetings and therefore the action should be carried forward as “in progress”

AP  
QTLA

6/12/23

4.3 **Minute 22/3/6.7 refers: Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (QTLA) reporting:**

The committee noted there had been some rationalising of reporting between the Student Experience, QTLA and Technical FE reports and agreed that this action be closed.

- 4.3 The committee approved removal from the action record of the actions marked or agreed as completed/closed.

### **23/2/05 Student Experience**

- 5.1 The Vice Principal Student Experience (VPSE) presented the termly update on safeguarding, student behaviour and student voice for Term 3 2022-23. The VPSE highlighted the following developments
- The number of new safeguarding disclosures in Term 3 continued to reduce but the proportion of disclosures coming from male students or students from ethnic minority backgrounds had increased. This showed the positive impact of the work being done to raise awareness of safeguarding among these students
  - There had been fewer behaviour incidents escalated to a full disciplinary procedure compared to 2021-22 and none of these had resulted in exclusions.
  - 83% of students had completed the on programme student survey, the largest sample size recorded giving a high degree of confidence in the outcomes. The overall satisfaction score was 90% which was about the same as 2022.

5.2 The committee considered the report and the main issues discussed were

**Monitoring action on disclosures**, members asked how the college ensured that disclosures that took longer to resolve were kept under regular review. The VP SE said that cases were allocated on the working day they arrived in the inbox. All open cases were reviewed as a minimum on a fortnightly basis.

**Safeguarding training** for governors, the GAC reported that Search, Remuneration and Governance Committee (SRG) had agreed there should be a series of short online training updates for governors of about 30 minutes duration. The first one of these should be Safeguarding and KCSIE 2023. The GAC would be organising this and circulating a schedule.

**Resourcing for safeguarding**, the VPSE said that mental health first aid training for staff in student experience roles had improved the college's capacity to support students seeking help with their mental health. The appointment of student mentors in academies from September 2022 had also helped provide support to students identified as at risk of failing or dropping out. Executive Leadership Team (ELT) was in the process of reviewing the impact of the Student Mentor system and what if any further changes were required.

### 5.3 **Policy review: Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy**

The committee received the annual policy review of the Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy, which had been updated to reflect the adoption of trauma informed approaches to behaviour interventions. The committee approved the updated Student Behaviour and Engagement Policy on behalf of Governing Body.

### 5.4 **Policy Review: Student Support Fund Policy**

The committee received the annual review of the Learner Support Fund Policy. The committee welcomed the proposed increases to meals allowances and student award bursaries that reflected the increasing cost of living and approved the updated Student Support Fund Policy on behalf of Governing Body

### 5.7 **Safeguarding Policy and Annual Principal's Report**

The committee noted that the Annual Principal's Report was being finalized following review by the Link Governor for Safeguarding. The annual review of the Safeguarding Policy had not been available to the committee because the Department for Education (DfE) had only published the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) on 6 June 2023. The committee agreed to delegate to the Chief Executive and Principal final sign off of the Annual Principal's Report and updated Safeguarding Policy.

**ACTION:** report to Governing Body arrangements for annual governor updating on Safeguarding for 2023-24

GAC

12/7/23

## 23/2/06 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (QTLA)

- 6.1 The Vice Principal Quality & Standards (VP Q&S) presented the Term 3 update including progress on implementing the English and maths Improvement Strategy, QTLA improvement policy and the headline forecast achievement for 2022-23.
- 6.2 The committee considered the report and the main areas discussed were as follows.
- **Teaching observations for new teachers**, it was noted that these were ungraded, and a member said the number of these observations should be included in the data to help the committee understand the overall picture.
  - **Improved gradings**, it was noted that 89% of graded observations were assessed as good or better at first observation. The committee wanted to know if some staff who improved following interventions managed to sustain that improvement. The VP Q&S said that the number of staff whose performance dips back into intervention was reducing.
  - **Forecast outcomes KPI**, it was noted that headline forecast achievement rate was +1 percentage point higher than 2021-22. The committee noted that this was supported by a high retention rate and would reduce if there were late withdrawals. Attendance and pass rates for GCSE English and maths might also have an impact with the awarding bodies saying that grade boundaries would be at 2019 levels. The CEP said that attendance at the summer series GCSE exams had improved and that the forecasts reflected an honest assessment of students at a high risk of not passing.
  - **Complaints term 3**, the number of complaints had continued to decrease and there were fewer appeals against the outcome. This reflected the college's intent to investigate complaints thoroughly and resolve them at the first formal stage to reduce the need to appeal.
  - **Destinations Survey**, the participation rate had been lower and there was a small reduction in positive destinations but at 91% it was above the positive destination rate for college leavers in the most recent DfE benchmark data (74%). Members asked about the impact of the local employment market and how participants rated the college's advice and guidance in supporting them into employment. The VP Q&S said that participants had highly rated the positive impact of the college's guidance and advice on their destination. Younger students tended to be faring better than adults and ESOL students in the regional employment market and the college continued to ensure that all students had access to careers advice and guidance.

The committee received the report, members were assured that the college continued to focus its efforts on continuous improvement and agreed the following action:

**ACTION:** Include in termly reports, the number of staff with ungraded observations so TLQSE Committee has a full picture of the quality assurance activity.

VP Q&S 11/10/23

## 23/2/07 Technical Education & Skills

7.1 The Vice Principal Technical Education and Skills (VP TES) presented the report, including forecast achievement rates for 2022-23, analysed for different subject areas and student groups.

7.2 The committee considered the report and the main areas discussed were as follows.

- **Forecast achievement for young people** showed a 7pp increase in the predicted achievement rate which was based on a 5pp increase in the pass rate. Members asked what level of confidence managers had in achieving that improvement particularly with so many students taking GCSE exams. The VP TES said that curriculum teams met weekly to monitor student progress, there was a high degree of confidence.
- **Retention** had dropped for A Level students in Period 6 reflecting students who had not returned to second year. Members asked how the college supported students who found they were on the wrong course. The VPTES said that some students had transferred to other courses. The Careers Team followed up with all students withdrawing to provide careers information, employment advice and guidance.
- **Impact of defunding BTEC provision**, members asked if this would have a negative impact on young students as more provision would be two year courses making it harder for students to accumulate credit and transfer if their initial course choice was not right for them. The VP TES said that the college was exploring transition options for students not ready to progress directly to level 3 and small qualifications to run alongside T Levels and A Levels. The CEP said that this would be explained in more detail at the Governor mini strategy event on 13 September 2023.
- **Adult achievement rate**, it was noted that this was predicted to be maintained at 91%.
- **Benchmarking**, the committee recommended that to support the college's journey from good to great, it should develop a data set of similar outstanding colleges against which to benchmark. The VP TES said that the team were developing a comparator group and benchmarks to bring to the September Governor Strategy Event
- **Student voice**, overall satisfaction ratings were about the same as 2021-22 but the adult participation rate remained below that for young students. A member commented that

some adult ESOL students experienced language barriers to completing the survey. The VP TES said that they would be meeting with the Head of Student Experience to understand the barriers and adjustments to increase participation.

7.3 The committee received the report and

- noted the forecast student outcomes for 2022-23 and reported assurance that the college had a clear understanding, of its areas of strength and those requiring continued development
- endorsed the action being taken to create a benchmark comparator based on outstanding colleges that would support progress beyond sector-wide national benchmarks
- agreed that managers should explore changes to ensure that student surveys are accessible to adult ESOL students.

**ACTION** report back on the action taken to ensure student surveys are accessible to adult ESOL students.

## **23/2/08 Higher Education**

8.1 The Vice Principal Higher Education (VP HE) presented the report highlighting that:

- since the last meeting, the non-continuation of a small number of students had resulted in significant variations against targets in the Access and Participation Plan (APP). The Heads of Student Experience and Quality were taking action to find out the reasons for the withdrawals and improve the engagement of students particularly in target groups.
- The Office for Students (OFS) had not requested that providers review and update their APP this year. The OfS was developing a sector Equality of Opportunities Risk Register to identify gaps in performance between different student groups. IT would use the register to monitor performance of registered providers and their actions to reduce gaps.
- University of Hull was proceeding to validate the foundation degree in dental technology, and it was on target to be approved in time to admit a cohort in September 2023
- Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) was in the process of changing its academic course structure and this would mean revalidating all its provision including the courses externally validated for the college.

8.2 The committee considered the report and commented as follows.

**2023 HE Offer**, it was noted that the number of applications for some provision was below the threshold set for viability and members stressed the importance of giving applicants good notice if courses could not run. The VPHE said that they were still receiving applications from current college students and the college would communicate a decision in the next few days if any courses were to be withdrawn due to low numbers.

**Launch of Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)**, members commented that this seemed to be continuing more slowly than anticipated and asked what action the college was taking to launch and promote new qualifications particularly for the adult employed market. The VP HE said that the college was working with SHU on launching and marketing three HTQs in September 2023 with further routes launching in September 2024 and 2025. This was slower than envisaged in Higher Level Skills Strategy. The college had received additional funding to develop more HTQs in Engineering, Construction, Health and Social Care and Digital and had appointed a manager to support and coordinate the development and promotion of the new HTQs and the Higher Level Skills Strategy.

**Benchmarking:** the VP HE reported that the college was working with Bedford College Group to peer review the quality of higher education and prepare for the new OfS quality regime.

**Policy on preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct**, it was noted that the policy review was awaiting the outcome of an OfS consultation. The VP HE said that currently they were working with the VP Student Experience to develop a best practice policy that would support all college students.

- 8.3 The committee received the report and requested an update on the outcome of the National Student Survey and the TEF submission in due course.

## **23/2/09 Apprenticeships**

- 9.1 The Vice Principal Apprenticeships (VP Apps) introduced the report including that the college was maintaining a completion rate of 56% for overall achievement and predicting 66% completion by the end of the college year (+2pp improvement on 2021-22). With a number of End Point Assessments booked in June/July, the team was predicting a significant reduction in the number of students who were passed their planned end date by the end of the year.

- 9.2 The committee considered the report and the main points discussed were as follows.

**Systems improvements**, members welcomed the implementation of the E-sign-up system which would make it easier for employers and apprentices to sign-up as an apprentice. The committee thanked Chesterfield College for sharing with the college the lessons they had learned from implementing the same system

**Employer engagement** members asked what the college was doing to encourage employers to employ apprentices. The VP Apps said that Ofsted recognition of the college as a good college was having a positive impact on employers. The Engagement team had planned four sector forums including an Engineering Employer Forum and an event targeted at small and medium sized

employers to make them aware of the college's offer. TSC was also leading the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority funded virtual Employer Hub which would be a one stop shop for employer training needs.

- 9.3 The committee received the report and welcomed the work being done to raise awareness amongst employers. The committee noted progress on the Quality Development Plan and the forecast reduction in the number of apprentices past their planned end date by the end of the year.

### **23/2/10 Committee Self-Assessment 2022-2023**

- 10.1 The GAC presented the draft self-assessment report which included quantitative data on the activities of the committee in 2022-23. Members commented on the performance of the committee and its impact on the college as follows.
- Members' skills set, the committee had benefited from the board recruiting governors with strengths in different education sectors and particularly a new Chair for TLQSE with recent experience of successfully guiding colleges to outstanding
  - In terms of impact, the committee had played its part in valuing and fostering good education practice and now needed to consider how best to support the college to ensure all aspects of student experience were consistently high quality. Members recognised that doing the same might not take the college to being a great college. Striving to be great across all services as an anchor organisation for the city meant a commitment to ensuring that all college services were great
  - Members recognised the importance of the college's contribution to meeting skills needs. Governors had been disappointed by the judgement that the college was making a "reasonable contribution" to meeting local skills needs and were ambitious to improve on this. The committee would be focusing on meeting skills needs in 2023-24.
- 10.2 The committee agreed
- The committee had been properly constituted with suitably experienced governors, including staff and student governors. The addition of new members had strengthened the collective expertise in education management and improvement.
  - The committee had fulfilled its Terms of Reference. It would be appropriate to increase the powers of the committee to approve updates to policies where this did not impact on educational character to reduce duplication and free-up Board time for strategic discussions.
  - The committee had completed its workplan and in doing so had continued to support managers to maintain the pace of improvement by having a rigorous work plan; raising



appropriate actions and giving impartial feedback on how the college is demonstrating impact.

- The agenda and papers had been received in line with the deadlines in the standing orders and members agreed further improvements for 2023-24 (see below).

10.2 As a result of the review, members recommended the following improvement actions for next year.

- creating more space for the considering progress against a new Quality Development Plan for achieving a great college
- maintaining regular oversight of how the college is meeting skills needs
- a key theme for 2023-24 would be looking forward to what managers and curriculum teams will be doing differently to get from good to great
- At a practical level, committee reports would benefit from more references to national data comparators. To aid benchmarking, reports should consistently include the actual percentages for pass and achievement rates, not just the percentage point change on the previous year. This would ensure that members were clear on the college's position in relation to national achievement rates. As previously benchmarking against a collection of similar outstanding colleges would also be useful.
- RAG ratings and the criteria for assessing areas as Red/Amber/Green were not clear to new members. The reports needed to be clear on the rationale for ratings, and where used, the action being taken to move an indicator to Green.
- With so many areas now benchmarking as good against the sector, the committee needed to take a risk based approach and focus on the issues where governor oversight and challenge could help drive further improvement. There should still be room to recognise and appreciate outstanding achievement.

10.3 The committee approved the committee self-assessment, subject to the addition of the comments and actions made in the meeting. The committee also approved the draft committee work plan for 2023-24 and agreed to recommend approval to GB of the Terms of Reference for 2023-24.

**ACTION:** finalise the Committee Self-assessment report for reporting to GB and inclusion in the Governance Self-Assessment.

## **23/2/11 Review of meeting and closing remarks**

11.1 The committee noted that it was Amaan Saqlain's last meeting for as a student governor. The committee thanked Amaan for his service, noting that the Student Union President had been trying to combine the role with full-time study. The committee commented that the student governor played a key role on TLQSE

Committee, and it would be better if the SU President were in a full-time sabbatical role with the time to focus on representing the student voice in decision-making. The Chief Executive & Principal said that Student Union elections had been completed, the intention was for the President to be a full-time sabbatical role. The committee recommended that student governors be allocated an experienced governor as a “buddy” for next year.

- 11.2 The committee thanked Jean Harris-Evans for her service to the college as Vice Principal Higher Education. It was noted that the Executive Director Strategy and Systems Improvement (EDSSI) would be providing strategic leadership for higher education as they were well-placed to lead on the technical and compliance issues attached to the role. Oversight by the EDSSI, would also provide stability and progress while the college was recruiting a new Assistant Principal for the area.

**23/2/12 Date and time of next meeting**

11/10/2023 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus

06/12/2023 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus

28/02/2024 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus

12/06/2024 at 8.30 – 11.00 in the New Boardroom, City Campus