



Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee
Tuesday 19 October 2021 18:00-20:30, Boardroom and Teams

Draft minutes

Committee	Mike Sutcliffe (Chair); Sue Kingman (VC, Board); Ian Valvona; Vincent Neate; Cait Orton; Jason Jones (Acting CEO & Principal); Will Whitmore
In Attendance	Rose Turner (interim Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality); Rachel Scarborough (Head of Student Experience); Chris Dearnley (ESFA); Sarah Connerty (interim governance advisor) Heads of School for items 1-5 (Sijul Miah - Business and Service Industries; Toni Whitehouse - Healthcare, Early Years and Supported Learning; Marc Dodi - Creative Industries; Lee Roberts - STEM; Mark Byerley (interim) - Sixth Form (inc. English & maths))
Apologies	Vincent Neate; Rachel Scarborough; Marc Dodi

Agenda item	Item Description	Action
1	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Committee colleagues and Heads of School to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.</p> <p>Apologies were received from VN, SFW and Marc Dodi.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the meeting would be an opportunity for governors to hear about the challenges faced on a day to day basis from the HoS.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>There were no declarations received.</p>	
3	<p>Safeguarding Annual Report</p> <p>CO reported that the annual summary report covers activity from the last academic year. There is a breakdown of figures overall and there have been no drastic changes in terms of figures but narrative is included around vulnerable students. Mental health remains the largest referral category and during remote delivery this provision was continued. There were no confirmed Prevent cases last year.</p> <p>[confidential item]</p> <p>The report provides an update on the various coverage on peer on peer sexual abuse. A review has been done and a summary of the cases are detailed. There is a range of different issues. The events of the last week have overshadowed some of these themes but they are very much in the forefront of the College’s priorities and action continues.</p> <p>Achievement rates have significantly declined for the cohort of care experienced students but this cohort remains above the College average achievement rate. The retention rate has significantly increased suggesting that students who may usually have been withdrawn due to poor progress were given extra opportunity to improve their performance by remaining on roll. This is representative of the flexible and child-centred approach the College demonstrates to its most vulnerable learners.</p> <p>136 students were referred to counselling services.</p>	

	<p>In total there were 539 students in receipt of financial bursary.</p> <p>The following staff joined the safeguarding team last year – Rachel Scarborough (Head of Student Experience); Beth Pattison (Student Engagement and Equalities Lead); Tina Ball (Attendance and Engagement Outreach Lead); Michael Clifford (Student Liaison Manager). All have Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead responsibility.</p> <p>An updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education was published by the DfE in September 2021. Part 1 has been circulated to all staff and governors to confirm they have read and understood it.</p> <p>The annual Section 11 Audit has been completed and returned to KRSCP.</p> <p>CO provided an overview of the Covid response for vulnerable students by the College.</p> <p>The Chair thanked CO and RS for coming to present in such difficult circumstances.</p> <p>CO and RS departed.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Emerging achievement rates (See presentation at appendix one for full details) [confidential item]</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Heads of School response to emerging achievement Sigul Miah – Business and Service Industries See presentation for details.</p> <p>SM noted that he is the new HoS for the area . He has spoken to staff about the journey to now. There has been a pattern of decline across all areas. There were some issues with staff performance that have now been addressed. SM ran through his presentation. IV noted it is very helpful and asked if the seven bullets on tracking and monitoring are fundamentally the priority and focus for the rest of this academic year. SM confirmed they are and that catching the learners before they fall is getting that real intervention and support for learners in place. There is inconsistency in how things are done with the area so a priority is for the learners to experience a consistent journey. SM noted that he has managed business study programmes for the last nine years at Stamford College where the achievement was 6% above benchmark and dropped 2% during Covid. SM noted that he did not experience working with the team last year to see how things were so he can't concretely say what happened, it is an assessment.</p> <p>The Chair noted that he had understood that Markbook had been rolled out across the College so is there a disconnect? RT noted that Markbook has been in the College for four years so it is a relaunch and what has happened is that some departments have been using it and others haven't. There is a working group to address this. There has been staff turnover and if there isn't the focus on using systems they will slip. The relaunch is behind schedule but is moving ahead.</p> <p>The Chair thanked SM for the presentation and noted that it is positive to see Business moving into line. SM noted that as a new member of staff he has received all the support required to do the job and this has been second to none with his ideas on management restructure fully supported by the College.</p> <p>The Chair noted that SM seems very clear on his role. The support is there and now the department need the outcomes.</p> <p>Lee Roberts STEM Anna O'Flaherty presented for LR (see presentation for details) The Chair asked about the recruitment process and if there are measures in place to improve this process. LR noted that face to face sessions with students on micro teach as part of the process are being reintroduced. The Chair asked if this gives confidence in the appointments and LR noted that it did. The Chair reported on the previous presentation and the importance of using Pro monitor and asked if this is a focus in STEM as there is no focus on this in the quality improvement</p>	

priorities. LR noted that Pro monitor was used in previous years and there was a name and shame for staff who were not using it but this wasn't done last year which didn't work quite as well. Pro monitor is used to focus on students who need to catch up and attendance will also be tracked down this year.

The Chair noted that there is a lot of good practice going on in the College and will this be taken up by STEM. LR noted that this year panels have a specific date and time and will be submitting in electronically through Teams and moodle which will show when teachers should have marked work and any issues with students. That can be used to see if any students haven't caught up.

JJ noted that the key point is one of compliance of staff and tracking and monitoring students and accounting for where the gaps are and that needs to be a focus across the schools. The Chair agreed that really getting under the skin of it is important.

Mark Byerley – English and maths

MB noted that he started in the College on the 16 August 2021. There has been a significant decrease in E&M which is 31% of the total college provision.

See presentation for details.

The Chair noted that personal contact and different levels of engagement seem key to MB's work and MB confirmed that the whole areas has been revitalised and it has been enjoyable getting back in and getting to know the team and understanding the personalities and the plan is to take staff on a journey to where we need to be.

The Committee asked how responsive teachers have been to this new approach. MB explained that staff have been incredibly responsive. It was about understanding them as individuals, understanding the problems from last year and bringing together the team. It is not fixed but a lot of progress has been made in the last six weeks.

The Chair asked SM the same questions. SM noted that coming in new is challenging. Getting to know the teachers is a fundamental part of what is done and 121s with staff to understand what happened are taking place. There is a way to go to get to know teachers as there are 25 members of staff to line manage. The question to them is what were the issues and how those can be resolved.

RT noted that once the trust and respect is gained this gives impact because HoS can't do everything so it is about getting the team on board.

SM noted that because of several management changes staff need that stability now and it is giving staff the reassurance that he is here to stay and seeing the impact of the systems and measuring the impact of that now rather than more wholesale changes.

Toni Whitehouse – Healthcare, Early Years and Supported Learning

See presentation for details.

TW noted that Health and Social Care has expanded by 45% which has brought challenges. The Chair noted that TW's presentation had emphasised the softer skills and injecting fun for students. TW agreed this is a focus as these were skills lost during Covid. All Early Years students are now about to get back in the workplace and those placements are happening already. The practical element has to come back and needs some fun putting back in.

Marc Dodi – Creative Industries

See presentation for details.

RT reported that achievement is 94%. Of all the areas MD has had the most stable staff and moved to a UAL awarding body 3 years ago so the staff have got to grips with the quals being delivered. A lot of other areas have had unstable staffing and changes to quals over

	<p>this period. The area has very high retention rates. There is one course with poor retention but pass rate for those getting to the end was 100%.</p> <p>The Chair noted that people tend to stay in a successful environment. The challenge for the College is how this success is transferred to other areas. RT noted that this process has gone a long way in seeing what successes can be transferred. The concept of every student getting through and catching them before they fall is key. With the management team people now get this but RT noted that she hasn't been here long enough to see if every teacher gets it.</p> <p>IV noted that that this process has been really interesting. Compliance was a big theme in previous conversations with the Board and that is so important. The other word coming through this evening is consistency. He thanked HoS for the analysis put into the presentations. All HoS are all getting to the same key point and these all sit within the quality recovery plan, intent, implication and impact and all HoS need to be consistent in the delivery of that plan.</p> <p>The exercise of professional judgement is absolutely central to the delivery of the curriculum and getting engagement. If there is an approach to compliance then HoS need to be alive to professional judgement. It has to be about students wanting to come and learn and they can't stay away because it is so good.</p> <p>Staff turnover and the impact that has is key. How does the College ensure that these new staff aren't just thrown in at the deep end? Spending more time with staff to discuss more about change and why things are done is very important. The College is so busy but it is about spending enough time with staff on why we need to do this.</p> <p>The Chair noted the value from this process and the importance of sitting beside colleagues and getting the most out of them as a team and recognising that diversity.</p> <p>SK asked what a high stake lesson. TW explained that it is about making it unmissable, making sure students are there and engaging people to understand that they have to come. SK asked about tracking of the VA and is this being applied across all schools? RT noted there will be a different system of tracking. The College is moving to ALPs across A levels and BTEC. It is easier data to understand and is more timely to produce than waiting for government statistics. It has just started to be rolled out this year. It is a focus on target grades. JJ noted that it can track in year and look at what if for students so there is individual progress modelling and overall data.</p> <p>SK asked if other catching mechanisms would fall into that. JJ agreed that it would be part of that monitoring and tracking process.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all HoS for their work and there was a break in the meeting and the opportunity for the Committee to informally meet the HoS.</p> <p>HoS depart</p> <p>SK suggested that this session is revisited at a future time to see how progress is going. The Committee agreed that this was important. IV noted that looking back had been done at the extraordinary Board and had not been revisited this evening. But by individual school the Board is extremely interested in the Quality Recovery Plan and the achievement rates and he would definitely want to see the HoS again.</p> <p>JJ agreed that talking to them again is important and it is about showing the HoS that the Board is there to both support and challenge and looking to see the progression to the next level.</p>	
6	<p>Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) including the Curriculum and Quality Recovery Plan</p> <p>RT reported that the latest iteration has been uploaded this afternoon. The document will be updated on a monthly basis. CLT need to update their sections but in light of the issues at the College this week this is pending. [confidential item]</p>	

Interviews have taken place for the Director of Quality and Compliance role and the College appointed this morning an excellent candidate who is an Ofsted inspector which the CLT are thrilled about. A quality manager who is extremely experienced and is happy with a one year contract has also been appointed. Suzanne Davies has joined the College and is already having impact at five days a week. RT noted that there is now good coverage at CLT level. [confidential item]

RT noted that the College have implemented a Covid delivery policy but it has been difficult to see the impact of that. There have been teachers having to isolate and students having to work remotely. E&M has to be amber because when students are being taught remotely there isn't yet a solution in place yet. This is moving on and is still being worked through. At the moment RT is focusing on areas where there has been an impact. The College induction plan is in place but was not effective. It went according to the plan but is amber and may go to red because the College made the decision to have the induction the week before teaching started and attendance was incredibly poor with a significant number not going through that programme. A lot was learnt from that process.

IV noted that student tracking is fundamental. As Chair he had reported that the Board has lost confidence in the data so in relation to these milestones he asked when RT felt the Board could be confident in this data. RT noted that by the next CQS everyone will be on Markbook and the first round of assessments will have taken place. Until staff start putting their assessments on Markbook it can't rate as green and see impact. RT confirmed she can monitor it very easily. IV asked if it shows correct monitoring. JJ noted that that is where more qualitative data with the HoS and RT is done. IV asked if audits and dip checks will take place to ensure data is being entered accurately and it was confirmed they would.

RT noted that the Attendance officer does have impact and there will be more impact when everyone is working together. Attendance is red because it is nowhere near where it should be for this time of year. This is a focus at CoG meetings but still attendance is not improving. An attendance project was started at the end of last week and all of this week centrally students with attendance below 60% have been focused on. It is a serious problem. As part of the project a lot of students have been withdrawn. IV asked if this means the College is now below its allocated numbers. The Chair asked if the College could be seen to be over claiming funding for students that have been withdrawn and does it need to be reported. RT noted that the College withdrew most students on Friday, it would have been better to have a clearer process in place but it is all above board. JJ noted that there are likely to be more withdrawals. JJ noted that the withdrawal is backdated so won't be funded. JJ reported that the current numbers are 2014 which is 79 below allocation.

RT noted there is a correlation between attendance and the bad behaviour, especially in construction and engineering and the College has made the decision to block students cards with attendance below 60%. When a student does attend they will be interviewed by HoS with a clear target for attendance put on Promonitor to monitor. This will lead to more student being withdrawn. There were 360 students with attendance below 60%. This will be looked at monthly as the year progresses. The correlation between attendance and behaviour is very strong. There is a need to examine why the tutorial process has not worked and why the HoS didn't pick it up and deal with it. RT's gut feeling is that staff give people too many chances and don't go through the disciplinary process fast enough. The evidence is there that some very disruptive behaviour is in the College this year and this has to be worked through with the students.

The Chair noted that it is another example of professional judgement versus policy. JJ talked about the need to have a different policy in place to suspend students during the first six weeks.

The Chair noted that there seems to be a historic cultural issues of not wanting students to fail. JJ agreed that he wanted to eradicate that by now but agreed there is still a cultural issue.

	<p>IV reported that there is the operation of optimism bias and the impact it has and issues of competency. The management response might be different but both are having a significant impact.</p> <p>The Chair noted that dealing with underlying issues is key and JJ reported that these are being worked through but where there are culture issues and competency they don't have quick fixes.</p> <p>RT noted that she doesn't know what the culture was like before, but JJ has a very inclusive way of managing and people seem to be rigorously following policy rather than being pragmatic. People are afraid to stand up and stray from the policy and see what the young person needs so they can improve.</p> <p>IV noted there has got to be zero tolerance on systems to allow the CLT to monitor but then it is important not to interfere with professional judgement. It is about differentiating between these two areas.</p> <p>JJ noted the culture is a learned lack of initiative because the previous regime did not allow professional judgement. In a situation where everyone is in a pandemic and delivering in unprecedented circumstances people reverted to their own way of doing things.</p> <p>The Chair noted that there is a culture of not setting students up to fail but it is about people understanding their duty of care to the students which is not holding onto them until the bitter end.</p> <p>It was agreed it is important to keep a close eye on tracking to ensure the programme is going to plan.</p> <p>RT noted that the template for the plan works well as it makes you really examine what is being done and did it have impact. This format has been passed down to HoS to do their own QIP for their areas so it should be easy to see the impact.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that HoS would be invited back in three months to update the Committee. It was agreed that HoS should then feel ownership and accountability for their areas and be able to report on progress made.</p> <p>IV noted that the quality of the teaching workforce is a key point and a hard question. JJ reported that is about learning walks and GOAL walks to see what is going on. It is about the T&L advocates and what the College does with them as they have been dormant until now and that focus needs to be redone. IV reported that it is not an easy thing to do as it gets harder when decisions need to be made around quality of teaching and this is in the context of all other areas the CLT are managing. It is about calibrating of bandwidth and the resilience to keep going when it gets harder.</p> <p>RT reported that there will be more lines and actions coming through as the plan progresses and Suzanne Davies has more ideas of what needs to happen and that will start appearing here.</p> <p>The Chair thanked RT for the update and noted that a real working document with HoS is a positive step.</p> <p>RESOLVED: HoS to be invited back in three months to present to the Committee against the Quality Recovery Plan and actions being rolled out</p>	RT
7	<p>The minutes from the meeting held on the 29 June 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>	
8	<p>Actions and matters arising</p> <p>Action 15 and 21 – Careers strategy – deferred to November</p> <p>Action 17 – Diversity of the student council – update to be circulated by email from RS</p> <p>Action 19 - JJ to give thought on how the College can help build resilience and independence in young people – JJ to update as progress is made</p> <p>Action 22 – update on careers and employability progress – appended to the papers at 04a</p> <p>Action 23 – student experience – Rachel will provide an update on email</p> <p>Action 24 – Rachel to circulate student voice feedback to the Committee – Rachel will provide an update on email.</p>	RS

9	<p>Ofsted preparation</p> <p>RT reported that more updates will come through on this. Suzanne Davies is going to lead on this and is looking at the training for HoS on deep dives. IV noted that the join up with HCUC may be useful as they are expecting Ofsted at any minute and are well prepared. RT noted that Ofsted are way behind and an inspection this time next year would be the best scenario to allow time to show impact.</p>	RT/SD
10	<p>Enrolment update</p> <p>The Chair noted that the College is behind target in terms of learner numbers. SFW wrote this report prior to the attendance review and withdrawal of students for behaviour issues. The numbers are emerging and have moved on. JJ noted that STEM has the largest enrolment and A levels but both have seen withdrawals. An analysis of where we are at now will be provided for the Board.</p> <p>The Chair noted that it would be helpful to have targets included on the updates. The Chair thanked JJ for the work on cleaning the data.</p> <p>SK asked if the College is still above the levels for in year growth and if there will be clawback. JJ reported that the College is nowhere near the levels for in year growth funding. The College is now below its allocation at 2104 which means there will be clawback next year.</p> <p>IV noted that it will be about cash flow modelling in terms of merger. JJ noted that he is keeping DDS up to date on numbers weekly. HCUC only just hit their target.</p> <p>SK asked if it is because more students stayed at school for sixth form. JJ noted that the College did expect far more students to enrol in the first place. This narrative is being played out across the sector. There is the attendance project and behaviour issues that are having a further impact on attendance decline.</p>	JJ JJ
11	<p>CQS KPI target setting for 2021-22</p> <p>JJ noted the proposed targets. The three year trends are included and 2020-21 targets as requested by the Committee last year. Attendance is targeted at 85% which is challenging in the current context; achievement and timely achievement is targeted at national rates. The Chair noted that it is one thing stretching or giving a pie in the sky target that staff would disengage from. JJ noted that the College were not far off the targets for achievement rates last year and it is clear on what was broken last year. The College dropped achievement by 11% in one year so there is no reason why it won't improve this much again. JJ noted that he can't give an attendance rate that is below 85% as it would be non-aspirational.</p> <p>RT confirmed that all targets are set at the national average or sector average which is not aspirational but is realistic. RT noted that attendance tends to go down through the year and she would expect it to start much higher than it has. The College has now withdrawn students which will impact further on attendance.</p> <p>VA has moved to ALPs. The Chair questioned how reliable ALPs is for vocational quals and JJ noted that it is now far more sophisticated.</p> <p>JJ reported on the work experience target of 80% which has been redefined to include work related activity. The policy for work experience was amended more than 12 months ago which aligns with Ofsted's definition. The challenge will be recording and providing evidence and that comes down to ProMonitor compliance. JJ noted that he will amend the title to clarify this change.</p>	JJ
12	<p>Risks relating to CQS from the College and merger risk register</p> <p>JJ reported that the majority of red risks on college risk register are quality and curriculum ones. The majority have been covered in the meeting already.</p> <p>IV questioned the likelihood rating on failure to secure a RI grade and how that sits with the SAR which is self-assessing as RI. JJ agreed and felt that possible is a more accurate grade, dialling down to a two which makes it amber.</p>	JJ

	SK asked about the comments in column K. JJ reported that he didn't believe the College was inadequate but if some of the red items don't get sorted out it is a risk.	
13	<p>Behaviour update</p> <p>JJ noted that since the start of term there have been significantly more problematic behavioural issues. JJ has been discussing these with the Chair on a weekly basis. [confidential item]</p> <p>The College haven't cracked this issue but it will not tolerate it and there is a really good team in place to deal with this. Today at CLT Michael Clifford and Rachel Scarborough talked about behavioural issues and agreed that there are students involved in criminal activity which has been confirmed by the police who should be excluded permanently, in a proportionate way. This is a time for the CLT to exercise that professional judgement.</p> <p>IV noted that the scrutiny on the College is going to be intense over the next few months. This will be around behaviours and about groups feeling safe – students, staff, parents and the wider community. All these measures being put in place to make the different groups feel safe as well as measuring the impact is going to be critical. IV proposed that the Board discuss this as in November as a discreet conversation.</p> <p>JJ reported that the College has been asked to arrange and host a public meeting with local residents, the Council and the police and this event is proposed following half term.</p> <p>IV reported that investment in that is so important. It is not the time to take a deep dive into behaviour but that reputational impact is critical and it is important to ensure that it doesn't impact on parents' views of the college. The team have dealt with this without going to professional organisations but this event is major and as a tragedy will need to be revisited. JJ noted that the Head of Marketing has already provided a presentation to CLT around this. [confidential item]</p> <p>The Chair asked if there is any safeguarding and changes to the way the College is operating that needs to be reported to the Committee and JJ confirmed that safeguarding processes will continue unchanged.</p>	IV/JJ/SC
14	<p>CQS terms of reference</p> <p>SC noted that the terms of reference are usually updated in the summer term but due to the proposed dissolution this had not taken place. There are no statutory changes to include and no proposed updates. The Committee considered the terms of reference and agreed that there were no areas for update apart from job title updates.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The CQS terms of reference were considered and recommended for approval to the Board subject to updates to job titles.</p>	
15	<p>Complaint's update</p> <p>The report was noted. It was agreed that there were no items that required further discussion and as JJ was distanced from the complaints process in case of appeal it was agreed to receive a fuller update at the November meeting.</p>	
16	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There were no items raised. The Chair thanked the Committee for their resilience during this long meeting, in particular to staff who have had such a long day in difficult circumstances. The Chair noted that it was a really useful meeting which had achieved its objective of bringing HoS to this forum effectively and they seemed keen to continue engaging. The Committee agreed that it is important that they do continue to engage with the Board during the Quality Recovery Plan period. JJ agreed and noted that it is important for the HoS to see the Board as a body that can both support and challenge them.</p>	
17	<p>Meeting dates for 2021-22:</p> <p>25 November 2021; 9 March 2022; 21 June 2022</p> <p>All 18.00 start</p>	

Meeting closed: 21.16