

Minutes

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Date:	24 June 2024	Time:	4.00 PM
Chairperson:	Chris Wilson (CWl)	Location:	The Hart Room

Members	Name	Present	Role
	Professor Gavin Brooks (GB)	*Teams	External Member
	Iain Wolloff (IW)	*	Principal & Chief Executive
	Sally Osmond (SO)	*	External Member
	Chris Wilson (CWl)	*	External Member & Chair
	Khushi Ashwin (KA)	*Teams	Student Member (19+ & HE)
	Lesley Black (LB)	*Teams	External Member
Apologies:	Debbie Ferguson (DF)		External Member
	Nathan Hall (NH)		Director of Estates & Facilities (DEF)
	Tim Major (TM)		External Member & Vice Chair
	Roshani Jha (RJ)		Student Member (16-19)
	Shelly Van Meter (SVM)		Staff (Teaching) Member
In Attendance:	Jamie Morton (JMo)	*	Director of Finance (DF)
	Jo Houghton (JH)	*	Vice Principal – HE & Skills (VPHEs)
	Lee Hunt (LH)	*	Deputy Principal & Vice Principal – FE & Curriculum (VPFEC)
	Heather Large (GP)	*	Governance Professional (GP)
	Jatinder Matharu (JMa)	*	Director of Safeguarding and Support (DSS)
	Cathy Wright (CWl)	*	Vice Principal – Central Services (VPCS)
Quorum:	3 required		Meeting Quorate

AGENDA ITEMS

Item No.		Reports
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received and accepted for Nathan Hall, Debbie Ferguson, Tim Major, Shelly Van Meter and Roshani Jha.	Verbal
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS No declarations of interest were made.	Verbal
3.	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 18 March 2024. The Committee unanimously approved the Minutes of the 18 March 2024.	Paper - 3
4.	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES The matters arising were reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TM to provide comments and amendments to the Equality Duty Policy and Procedure. Complete • CW to provide comments and amendments to the Quality Assurance Policy. Complete 	Paper – 10

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VPHES to bring Safeguarding Policy back to Committee. Carried forward to September 2024. <p>Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the RAG rating assessment regarding Curriculum reflects the recent significant progress recognised by the recent Ofsted Monitoring Inspection. This was confirmed by the PCE and VPFEF. If Motor Vehicle attendance has risen. VPFEF will find out. For an update on the University of Reading Contract. The Committee were informed by VPHES that the contract for the Foundation degree from September 2024 has not been received to date and explained it is very challenging to find students for this course and the new contract drawn up ties the College in for six years and its effectiveness is questioned. The Committee asked if there are other options that could be accessed in two years' time. VPHES confirmed most probably but it would need to be scrutinised carefully in terms of quality provision, demand and need. There is a challenge associated with this in terms of achieving viable student numbers, a minimum of seven is necessary, anything below would not be financially viable, and the aim is to run on 12 students this coming academic year against a minimum contract of 16. College has never been able to achieve anything more than 8 since UCN has been running. 	
5.	SAFEGUARDING	
5.1	<p>SAFEGUARDING REPORT</p> <p>The DSS presented the College Safeguarding Report to the Committee which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviours and Attitudes of Students continues to be good, with significant improvement in the latest Ofsted monitoring visit My Concern has added value to the identification, monitoring, and use of safeguarding intelligence. Reporting on filtering and monitoring online activity is working effectively PPD programme in place; Foundation learning mirroring the PPD Attendance remains a concern for some students Strengthened Safeguarding team in place with appropriate levels of training. Developing structured dialogue with off-site provision through regular termly meetings Improvements to transitions and understanding student vulnerabilities at application stage and the work in progress to improve this. Ongoing case of sexual assault (offsite) currently under investigation. Risk assessments in place for both students to continue education whilst police investigation is concluded. No further update. Both students sat their exams this term. It is best practice for governors to undertake strategic safeguarding training. A wider discussion about this is required to understand if governors feel equipped with safeguarding knowledge through Skillgate training to provide effective challenge and scrutiny. For discussion. <p>The Committee confirmed they were encouraged by the progress the College is making in Safeguarding. The Committee noted that attendance is improved, and lateness is low. The Committee asked that the mental health support for students and staff be an agenda item for the next meeting.</p> <p>Action: GP to add Mental Health Support for Students and Staff as an agenda item for the next meeting.</p>	Paper - 11

	<p>The Committee asked if there was a particular safeguarding training programme that the DSS had in mind for Governor Safeguarding training. The DSS confirmed she did not as yet but would certainly look for suitable programmes.</p> <p>Action: DSS to investigate potential Governor specific Safeguarding training programme.</p> <p>The Committee asked about the arrangements for student study support. The DSS explained that the College implements a whole College approach to behaviour to ensure groups/classes learn and then implements specific wrap-around support depending on the student's identified needs.</p>	
5.2	<p>SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR REPORT</p> <p>The Link Governor reported on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The safeguarding concerns were related to students' mental health and well-being, especially end of course anxiety and uncertainty as to the future. Exam concerns focus on next steps after the course had ended rather than any extraordinary anxiety. Attendance at English and maths resits had improved on previous years. • Work done to rationalise the many open cases encountered and reduction in the backlog. Work had been undertaken to clarify with staff the different roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding and, as the team and the staff as a whole became more knowledgeable and confident, more cases could be closed from active engagement to a watching brief. Work is being undertaken in college to encourage prospective students to declare any additional needs including SEND, attendance issues, safeguarding concerns, any behavioural interventions, work with external agencies as well as mental health needs at enrolment, before they join the college, so that arrangements for support can be made earlier but this also requires the engagement of feeder schools and more certainty regarding the transfer of information with the attendant checks and safeguards in line with GDPR requirements • The college referrals as needed to the outside agencies including VIA for treatment of cannabis use and alcohol dependency, both contributory factors in poor mental health for some students. Workshops for students on consent had been arranged (16-19) and, including a focussed session for Foundation Learning students and High Needs students. These students require more targeted teaching about one-to-one situations, recall and retention of learning and the transferability of appropriate behaviours from one social situation to another. • A series of brief bitesize, "lunch and learn" events alongside 7-minute briefings to all staff. This term focused on harmful sexual behaviour and harassment as part of the ongoing safeguarding CPD Plan. • The plans to strengthen safeguarding within the sports academies to reinforce the college-wide approach to the culture of safeguarding. • Staff completing their mandatory safeguarding training and had signed that they had done so, and for assurance that any that had not been being rigorously pursued as a contractual matter. 	Paper - 27
6.	QUALITY	
6.1	<p>OFSTED MONITORING VISIT REPORT</p> <p>The Deputy Principal summarised the Ofsted monitoring visit and how the recommendations were reviewed thematically as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1- What progress have leaders and managers made in making sure that students on education programmes for young people are taught a full personal development curriculum, including through work-related activities. • Theme 2- What progress have leaders and managers made in making sure that the quality of English and mathematics courses is improved so that students make good progress in these subjects. • Theme 3- What progress have teachers made in improving their use of assessment to monitor progress and inform future teaching. 	Paper - 29

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 4- What progress have leaders and managers made in making sure that staff in foundation learning receive effective training, so they can support students to make good progress • Theme 5- What progress have leaders and managers made in improving behaviour around the college. <p>The findings of the visit were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 – reasonable progress made. • Theme 2 – reasonable progress made. • Theme 3 – significant progress made. • Theme 4 – reasonable progress made. • Theme 5 – significant progress made. <p>The verbal final feedback from the lead inspector was very positive with many notable improvements made. There are some areas of focus remaining and these will be outlined in the quality improvement plan.</p> <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does reasonable progress mean. VPFECE explained it was good and strong overall. • Does the Monitoring Report get published to the College website. This was confirmed by the PCE. <p>The Committee recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A whole College budget to be set to recognise the strong plans proposed. PCE explained that College had been working hard over the last three weeks to provide a budget that ensures the needs of staffing and quality are met in a reasonable way that can be managed. 	
<p>6.2</p>	<p>COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p> <p>The Deputy Principal outlined to the Committee that there is a nervousness around staffing as the budget is pending finalisation. The Committee requested that risk should be identified giving an example of if six staff were needed but only four were accommodated. The Deputy Principal highlighted a further concern that some students starting in the new academic year who need significant support are currently unknown.</p> <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 40- the actions are currently all rated green and how does that tally with reasonable progress made as identified by Ofsted. VPFECE explained that it represents that it is all on track. Amber represents on track with minor issues and the focus is about implementation of the plan. • Ofsted Report commented that English and Maths learning walks have only just started in May, why has it taken so long when English and Maths were realigned back in November. VPFECE explained that the Plan started in December with two new agency staff, given their inexperience it would not have been sensible to have conducted learning walks then. • How does the College benchmark its assessments. VPFECE pointed out that the feedback from Ofsted have confirmed how effective it is. Committee recommended an impact statement be provided to give assurance on the progress of Maths and English. Committee felt the RAG rating for English and maths should be set at Amber. • That tracking be provided on the number of students with a grade 3 in English and Maths that are estimated to achieve a grade of 4 or above. • Explanation of the 0.4 score for English progress. PCE explained. • Confirmation of the maximum groups in English and Maths. VPFECE explained the maximum in a group is 25 and there are eight sets a day. 	<p>Paper - 39</p>

	<p>Action: VPPEC to add staffing recruitment risks to the College Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Action: VPPEC to provide an impact statement on English and Maths progress.</p> <p>Action: VPPEC to provide tracking on students with a grade 3 in English and Maths that are estimated to achieve a grade of 4 or above.</p>	
6.3	<p>QUALITY DATA – IN YEAR</p> <p>The Committee were informed of the potential improvements in quality data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at English and mathematics exams has improved. • Attendance for EPYP is above the college benchmark and has improved by 1% from 22-23. • Performance of apprenticeships continues to be above the national average. • HE performance continues to be good. • More robust tracking of English and mathematics for EPYP allows for targeted interventions linked to one grade progression – impact still needs to be seen but early indicators demonstrate an improvement from last year. • Achievement for EPYP is predicted to improve 	Paper - 43
6.4	<p>TERMLY REPORTS</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the termly reports and were informed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPYP has potential improvements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved attendance across the main programme and English and mathematics. ○ Student behaviours and attitudes linked to participation improved across all sites. ○ Introduction of the Bicester Exam Centre, leading to improved attendance at exams. ○ Overall attendance at English and mathematics exams was 86%, improvement from 22-23 of 15%. <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Attendance included the Foundation Students. VPPEC confirmed it did. • If curriculum is meeting the skills needs. VPPEC felt it did but with regard to Apprenticeships there has been a reduction in students leaving their apprenticeships mid-year but there is a new concern in that these students will not achieve until the following year. There will be a positive impact on income and the introduction of key development coach roles must continue. • For an update on UCN. VPPEC explained there has been some movement around the management structure for UCN with teacher training becoming the responsibility of the Head of UCN. • Why there were four withdrawals from the Sports Academy and if there was a common thread. VPPEC confirmed these were all down to personal reasons and that retention is positive. The skills to success team have increased which will increase capacity for the number of students who need wellbeing support. The Committee asked if this will be a put pressure on the budget. VPPEC confirmed that both assumptions were correct. • Asked for the issues around BNU be recorded as a risk. <p>Action: VPPEC to record the risk issues around BNU in the risk register.</p> <p>It is to be noted that the DSS left the meeting at 17.20 hours and returned at 17.31 hours.</p>	Paper - 47
7.	CURRICULUM	
7.1	<p>CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS AND PLANNED COURSES 2024-25</p> <p>The Deputy Principal introduced the proposed curriculum developments to the Committee and highlighted some potential improvements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance learning course offer reviewed in consideration of the local skills needs for 23-24 to include more focus on health and care skills. 	Paper - 61

- New essential digital skills course commenced and being developed to expand to level 3 Access to HE to meet government's 'Care workforce pathway for adult social care' plan.
- Adult Skills Fund (ASF) collaboration work commenced to support the 2024-25 implementation plan.
- Sport HE provisions introduced and expanding to level 5 for 2024-25.
- LSIF funded intro to Machine Learning and AI short course commenced and being expanded to L4/5 from September 2024-25.
- Two Robotics modules identified for full cost delivery from September 2024.
- The College has been successful in the next round of Skills Bootcamp funding and is contracted to deliver 6 Engineering Skills Bootcamps (£130K) between April 2024 and May 2025 and 3 Engineering Welding Bootcamps between September 2024 and March 2025 (£120K).
- Successful £133K bid received from the Office for Students to support the development of a L6 degree apprenticeships, specifically Chartered Manager, Manufacturing Engineering and Product Design and Development Engineer and a subsequent successful Wave 2 bid of £91K to support the development of the Embedded Electronic Systems Design and Development Engineer (Degree) Apprenticeship.
- Development of HE learners support through funding streams and the implementation of a new software analysis package (Cognassist).
- Funding received for the development of the L4 Building Energy Maintenance Systems Apprenticeship transferred to the development of the L3 Building Services Engineering Apprenticeship.
- Introduction of two new T level routes. Catering and Hospitality 25-26 and Media, Broadcast and Production 24-25. £72K SEA Grant funding allocated for the latter T level.
- Continued growth in Sport courses at level 3.
- Development of the Public Services offer for 25-26.
- Introduction of AAQs.
- FE Curriculum Strategy design and development for 2024 to 2027 underway.

The Committee were informed that the issues of concern were:

- Development of facilities to support the expanding sports offer and development of the catering and hospitality provision.
- Expansion of support staffing to manage growth; this includes the inclusion of two Pastoral and Personal Development full time equivalent posts to support the delivery of the planned PPD course commencing 9th September 2024.
- Further increase of English and mathematics staffing to support the increased hours for mathematics and the newly imposed delivery model. This is linked to both the growth of the Sports Academy and requirement for 30 hours increase of planned face-to-face teaching ready for first teaching 9th September 2024.
- Staff recruitment to support the delivery of the new Production and Broadcasting T Level for first teaching 9th September 2024.
- Impact of lagged funding on future development opportunities.
- Investment in the further development of our online A Level Platform and delivery.

The Committee asked:

- If the Government expectation of three hours of English and 4 hours of Maths face-to-face provision can be achieved. VPFEC felt it could which would necessitate increased staffing. Having a year's grace is useful but the aim is to get this implemented in the new academic year.
- If the College has plans in place for transitioning Media students from BTEC to T Levels. VPFEC confirmed around 30 students were involved and work has already gone on.

7.2	<p>STUDENT APPLICATIONS</p> <p>The Committee were informed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications for 16-18s are very high, for both the Newbury Career Academy (+189 applications) and our regional sports academy (+142 applications). • Applications for adults (full and part time) are marginally higher than that for 2023. • Applications for the UCN are very positive, with an additional 42 applicants • Apprenticeship applications are good against forecasted targets in most areas. <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the increase in 16-19 student applications are from the local area. PCE confirmed that for the career academy it was the case and that it was not from one particular school. • If the College has difficulty in getting into any of the schools in the area. PCE confirmed they did not and that this was an area that has improved in recent years. • What are the plans for growth for UCN. PCE explained this is being addressed and investigations are being conducted into options. • What are the most attractive courses. PCE confirmed multi skills such as construction, engineering and health care. 	Paper – 66
7.3	<p>COLLEGE OUTCOMES</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the College outcomes and detailed in year benchmarks outlined within the Quality Framework Strategy (procedure) which supports the Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy.</p> <p>The Committee asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If data is collected on destinations and their cost effectiveness. VPPEC confirmed it is and there was a national measure in place before COVID hit and there are suggestions it will be brought back. Currently, the College aims to restore its 'good' rating with aspects of outstanding. 	Paper - 67
8.	SKILLS	
8.1	<p>LOCAL SKILLS NEEDS</p> <p>The VPPEC advised the Committee on the reports submitted explaining that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights of the current College provision mapped against courses highlighted as a priority in the 2023 – 24 Thames Valley Berkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (TVBLSIP) and identified courses that have been identified for future delivery. • Progress made against the College Accountability Statement, provides information on the College's successful bid for Local Skills Improvement Funds (LSIF) and an update on LSIP and LSIF meetings that have happened since the start of this term. • Information on the key employers that have engaged with the College so far this term that has led to developments and new business or additional opportunities for our students. • The Roadmap on the ongoing work that is being carried out to develop the College Skills agenda and to progress toward the College making a 'Strong' contribution to Skills at the next Ofsted inspection. <p>The Committee noted that there has been some really good events in the last couple of weeks and it would be good to see the employer engagement which was really positive.</p>	Paper - 69
8.2	<p>ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT</p> <p>This is subject to a separate Board Minute.</p>	Paper 74
9.	POLICIES	
9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Protection Plan (HE) – Approved • Extenuating Circumstances – Approved 	Paper - 87

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment – Approved • Quality – Staff Handbook. Further discussion needed • English and Mathematics Strategy - Approved <p>Action: SO & CW to forward comments to SLT on the Staff Handbook.</p>	
10.	<p>AOB There was none.</p>	Verbal
10.1	<p>Approve Curriculum and Quality Work Plan for 2024-2025 The Committee recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP to add Complaints Summary for June 2025 to the Work Plan • PCE to discuss and review Work Plan with GP <p>Action: GP to add Complaints Summary on the C & Q Work Plan for June 2025 Action: PCE to discuss and review the C & Q Work Plan with GP.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting Closed at 18:27 hours</p>	Paper 177

Signed:

Chris Wilson

(Chair) Date:

02 Dec 2024

Chris Wilson (Mon, 2nd Dec 2024
15:38:59 GMT)



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