



MINUTES OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Microsoft Teams
Thursday 27 April 2021 at 6 pm.

Present:

Darrell Bate (Chair)	Ruth Seabrook
Ian Leigh	Tom Webb
Berzek Sanda	Mark Nelligan

Helen Odhams (Advising Officer)
Dan Hards (Advising Officer)
Ken Kehoe (Clerk)

1. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of business interests from the Trustees.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Tim Oliver (ex officio). Evie Bennison did not attend the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of 26th November 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The committee considered the actions arising from the last meeting:

- The Deputy Principal would reflect on whether more could be included in the quality cycle document on learning to learn: The Deputy Principal confirmed this action had been completed;
- The Deputy Principal would report on this year's HESA statistics at the April meeting: The Deputy Principal explained that there was nothing further to report beyond the data that had been included in the SAR that had gone to the December Board. The Assistant Principal noted that there was a section on Destination data on the College website;
- The Deputy Principal to update the committee on staff training and development at the April meeting: The Chair noted that this would be covered under the Quality Improvement Process update (minuted below);

- The Deputy Principal to consider what additional data might be included in the SAR to set the results, particularly for maths, in context: The Deputy Principal confirmed that this had been done with further data for GCSE Maths added to the College SAR;
- The Deputy Principal to share figures on bullying and racism with the committee at the next meeting: The Assistant Principal noted that bullying and racism counted as peer-on-peer abuse. In 2019/20, there had been two reports of bullying from 6.2 students and one from a 6.1 student. There were no racism reports but an offer to a prospective student had been withdrawn as a result of concerns;
- The Deputy Principal would look at whether intended student destination data and HESA data could be incorporated into the SAR and whether target 6 needed to be updated: The Deputy Principal noted that intended destination data had been added to the College SAR.

5. STUDENT RETENTION REPORT

The Assistant Principal introduced the Student Retention report, noting that the number of students leaving was about the same. There were 2 student exclusions because of lack of academic engagement and substance abuse. In response to questions, the Assistant Principal said:

- It was relatively rare to have students transfer in from other Sixth Form colleges midcourse.
- In terms of students that were counted as leaving the College, there were a number of factors: some students kept their options open, dropping out at various points between enrolment and the start of their courses; some decided that they wanted the familiarity of their school sixth forms; and some students want to come to the College but the College did not offer the type of course they needed (e.g. BTEC Extended Diploma).
- The Deputy Principal commenting on the number of students that held places open until the last minute, said that the College took account of this behaviour when making its offers;
- The percentage of the cohort leaving between 6.1 and 6.2 had decreased further, reflecting the increased effort that the College had put into the Your Start at Esher and the Learning to Learn programmes;
- The College had generally outperformed the MIDAS benchmarks overall and for individual groups but was below benchmark for 'other ethnic group'.

For the future, the Assistant Principal noted that they were developing a new Leaving Form which would be processed via the College database which will aid future data management and processes. The College were also undertaking work to look at why the College was below the MIDAS national average for the other ethnic group to see if there were any issues or lessons to be learnt.

The Trustees thanked the Assistant Principal and noted that the report was very interesting and reassuring.

6. QUALITY PROCESSES 2020-21

The Deputy Principal updated the committee on the Quality Processes for this year, noting the many changes that staff and students have had to deal with over the last year. These changes had affected the quality assurance processes and the staff training programme. The Senior Leadership Team were very mindful, therefore, that the well-being of staff and students had to be a key priority. As a consequence,

the College had decided to amend plans for formal online observation, with lesson observations restricted to new staff joining in January, trainees and NQTs. They had also taken a number of actions to drive forward quality improvements in the new environment:

- The College have identified six members of staff to act as online champions to support all teachers including trainees and NQTs;
- Inset Days had been held in December and February to share best practice (including how to conduct assessments), to review QIPS, establishing areas of development and strategies for delivery; and
- The College plan to hold forums for 6.1 students to inform planning for next year and to assist with preparations for a new intake. The College had also surveyed the Learning Strategy groups.

The Trustees noted that the staff have been adaptive and flexible, and that the College had taken a very sensible approach but asked for reassurance that safeguarding protocols were being kept, given the SLT were conducting a reduced number of lesson observations. The Deputy Principal said that the leadership expected to pick up any concerns from student complaints and supervision by Heads of Department. Moreover, the Deputy Principal noted many lessons, and one-to-one sessions, were recorded and could be reviewed if any concern was raised. The Deputy Principal noted that staff preferred to have the lessons recorded and students found the recordings helpful as it allowed them to go back over topics that they might have found difficult in the lessons. The Deputy Principal, in response to a suggestion from a Trustee, agreed to look at how recordings of lessons could be kept using alternative means to Microsoft teams.

Action: The Deputy Principal to explore whether there are any significant advantages to using alternative means to store lesson recordings.

Turning to staff training, the Deputy Principal updated the committee on staff training activity:

- Heads of Department and course leaders had attended course subject meetings with other Sixth Form Colleges; This had been very helpful;
- The Inset Day in December had also focussed on student and staff well-being; and
- New staff, in addition to the normal induction training, had been given an enhanced package of IT training.
- Additional training and guidance had also been provided for all staff on particular IT packages and ways of working to support learning in a remote and blended environment.

Looking to the future, the College had set up Back to Normal working groups to identify the lessons learned from the last year's experience and what should be retained.

The committee commended the Deputy Principal on all the work that have been done at this difficult time.

7. QUALITY ASSURING TEACHER ASSESSES GRADES

The Deputy Principal explained the latest thinking on how this year's system for providing teacher assessed grades for A levels, BTEC and GCSE qualifications would work. The main difference from last year was that the grades have to be based on evidence of work carried out, rather than an assessment of the student's potential in a subject, as had been the case last year. It was up to each Centre to

determine the evidence that was used, and this was a complex process. The guidance that had been provided to centres is continually being updated. The College's approach was to ensure that the teacher assessed grades were accurate but also gave the best possible outcome for students.

The College had produced a centre policy document, following the JCQ template, and this had to be submitted by 30 April for review by the JCQ. If there was a problem, then JCQ would arrange a virtual visit with the centre. From the overarching policy document, the College had also developed a detailed, internal operational guide. They were also running training for staff on how to produce the grades and on ensuring objectivity and absence of bias. Once the teacher assessed grades had been produced, the College had set aside two days in June to standardise and moderate across courses within the College to ensure consistency. The IT Department had been doing a fantastic job to facilitate the process and staff are, as a consequence, able to do trial runs to see how the system worked.

Once the teacher assessed grades for 2020-21 are submitted then the Exam Board will check to see whether the results were out of line with previous experience. There was currently no guidance on how out of line was defined. Only exam data from 2017 to 2019 would be used as comparators. If the results were out of line, then the Exam Board would explore the reasons. Within the College, before the results were submitted to the Exam Board, if a department's grading was significantly out of line with previous experience, the Head of Department would be required to write an explanation of the deviation. All work would also be kept.

The nature of the process meant that benchmarking these results against previous years and against those of other institutions would be a problem once again as each institution would be using different sets of data. Also for the College, it would not be clear what the TAG GCSE grades of the new 6.1 Students would mean.

In discussion, Trustees applauded the staff's very impressive work and made the following points:

How was the examination workload being handled? The Deputy Principal explained that they were trying to break down the tasks into manageable segments. The College had also gone to a block timetable to allow staff more time to get the examination work complete;

Will there be consistency across students and courses within the College? The Deputy Principal noted that the process being put in place for departments to follow aim to achieve this;

For 6.2 students, would their leaving date be different? The Deputy Principal explained that 6.2 students would leave on 21st May;

Was there any allowance for students affected by Covid or other issues? The Deputy Principal explained that there was a special consideration process which would allow alternative evidence to be provided or for certain items to be excluded from the basket of evidence. Any such actions had to be recorded to ensure consistency;

Has there been any pushback on the use of a block timetable? The Deputy Principal said that they were mixed views, but she noted that the College would be reverting to the normal timetable after half term; and

Would the Deputy Principal let the Trustees know if there are any issues raised with the Centre policy? The Deputy Principal agreed to contact the Chair if there are any problems.

Action: The Deputy Principal to inform the Chair of Quality and Standards if any problems are highlighted with the Centre policy.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9.DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 25 November 2021 TBC

*The meeting closed at 7.14pm.
Attendance was 86 %.*

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Q&S2-001	The Deputy Principal to explore whether there are any significant advantages to using alternative means to store lesson recordings.
Q&S2-002	The Deputy Principal to report to the Chair of the committee if there were any issues raised with the Centre Assessed Grades Policy.

SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Minute	Topic
C	6	UPDATE ON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES The Trustees asked for assurances that the reduction in lesson observations would not reduce the SLT's ability to ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures were being adhered to.
S	6	UPDATE ON QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES The Trustees commended the Deputy Principal and all the staff on all that they had done during the past year.