

**QUALITY, PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS COMMITTEE**
**Minutes of a meeting held 1500-1730 on 29 April 2024  
Held in HA05009, Waterfront Centre, Huddersfield**

Present	D Harding G Hetherington J Robinson P Singh	Independent Member (Chair) Independent Member Co-opted Member Principal & Chief Executive
Attendance	4/6 – 66.67%	KPI 80% Quorum: 3
In Attendance:	J Arechiga P Hughes K Pogson D Rayneau H Rose J Wilson C Tague	Deputy Principal of Curriculum & Innovation Vice Principal of Quality and Student Experience Teaching, Learning & Digital Innovation Manager Vice Principal of Business Systems, Information & Technology Vice Principal of External Relations & Apprenticeships Head of Faculty, Quality & TLA Director of Governance & Compliance (Clerk)

Item	Action/Synopsis
<b>PRELIMINARY ITEMS</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b>  <b>1. That D Harding be appointed as Committee Chair with immediate effect; and</b> <b>2. J Robinson be co-opted onto the Committee for this meeting.</b>  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
<b>2</b>	<b>NOTICE AND QUORUM</b>  Due notice of the meeting had been given and the meeting was quorate.
<b>3</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  Apologies were received from Independent Governors W Bailey and C George.
<b>4</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  All confirmed that, other than items previously disclosed and placed on record, they had no direct or indirect interest in any way in the business to be transacted at the meeting which they were required to disclose.
<b>5</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES</b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2023 were approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda.  <b>UPDATE ON AGREED ACTIONS</b>

	<p>1. <b>To reflect further on whether a ‘high grades’ target for 16-18 GCSE maths and English is required, taking account of Committee Members’ different perspectives</b> – Completed - the high grade will not form part of our targets but will be reported in self-assessment. All 16-18 will be measured using ‘progress measures’ only.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>2022-23 QUALIFICATION ACHIEVEMENT RATES (QARS) AND NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT RATES (NARS)</b></p> <p>6.1 P Hughes (PH), Vice Principal of Quality and Student Experience presented a report which outlined college performance against national achievement rates for all qualification types funded by the DfE. This included both national (for GFE colleges) and regional performance.</p> <p>6.2 In discussing the data, the following points were noted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College was ranked 27 out of 159 GFE colleges nationally and was the sixth most improved college in relation to education and training for all ages.</li> <li>• The College was the top performing college in the region for <i>Essential skills</i> which was a new category on the national achievement rate tables and covered Maths and English (GCSE, Functional Skills &amp; ESOL) and basic IT qualifications.</li> <li>• The College was the only one in West Yorkshire to have improved adult achievement since pre-Covid and was the top provider for Level 3 Art &amp; Design pass rates.</li> <li>• It was acknowledged that whilst the 16-18 position had improved, there was still work to be done in this area, particularly in driving further improvements in retention.</li> </ul> <p>6.3 The Committee welcomed the significant improvements in achievement rates and the drive to build on and maintain progress.</p>	Synopsis 1
<b>QUALITY, PERFORMANCE &amp; STANDARDS</b>		
<b>7a</b>	<p><b>CURRICULUM PERFORMANCE – current in year retention and predicated achievement 16-18 by type, level, area and high needs</b></p> <p>7a.1 J Arechiga (JA), Vice Principal Curriculum &amp; Performance, presented a report which outlined current student performance in year and identified areas that might be underperforming in order to inform discussions and swift actions to mitigate and improve.</p> <p>7a.2 Retention rates for young people for all levels had improved from the same point in 2022/23 with Level 1 seeing the biggest increase at 3.5%.</p> <p>7a.3 Apprenticeship current forecasting indicated an achievement rate of 68.3% as of the end of March, it was anticipated that this would reduce due to further withdrawals to the region of 62%, which would be a 1.5 % improvement on last year.</p> <p>7a.4 In discussing the data, the following points were noted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention rates were actively monitored through the performance management review (PMR) process and pre-PMR quality meetings which would include deep dive reviews into areas with the highest number of withdrawals.</li> </ul>	Synopsis 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bulge in the 16-18 year old demographic was predicted in 2025-26 and assurance was given as to the planning in place to respond to this, as well as maintaining provision post-bulge.</li> <li>• In response to inconsistencies in the completion of predicted achievements, all curriculum areas had been tasked with completing outstanding predictions by 26 April. There had been high compliance with 99.5% returns for the 16-18 cohort.</li> </ul> <p>It was anticipated that compliance would continue to improve with the introduction of a dashboard and revised reporting system which was now embedded. The submission of data would be evaluated at pre-PMR quality meetings and action logs would be devised as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was acknowledged that at this stage of the academic year it would be reasonable to assume that predicted achievements would be relatively accurate given a degree of tolerance.</li> <li>• The Committee asked that a short report be circulated on receipt of results to compare predictions with outcomes for this and the previous academic year, in order to provide confidence as to the accuracy of predictions.</li> <li>• With regards to the ethnicity equality gaps highlighted in the report, it was noted that national benchmarking data was not available in this respect. Whilst the Committee were assured that the findings would be followed up as part of the PMR process to identify whether the gaps were in particular areas or cross college, it was highlighted that there was not an action set out within the report to address this. It was therefore suggested that the ethnicity equality gaps set out within the report should be referred to the EDI group for further consideration.</li> </ul> <p><b>7a.5 ACTION:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A report be circulated on receipt of results to compare predicted achievements against actual outcomes for 2022-23 and 2023-24; and</li> <li>2. The ethnicity equality gaps set out within the report be referred to the EDI group for further consideration.</li> </ol>	<p><b>JA/LB</b></p> <p><b>JA/LB</b></p>
<p><b>7b</b></p> <p>7b.1</p> <p>7b.2</p> <p>7b.3</p>	<p><b>CURRICULUM PERFORMANCE – apprenticeships, starts, retention and achievement</b></p> <p>H Rose (HR) Vice Principal of External Relations &amp; Apprenticeships, presented a report which provided an update on current apprenticeship performance in year as well as regional and national data for apprenticeship performance.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that the College was reaching a position where many of the legacy issues surrounding apprenticeship retention were coming to an end. However, retention was still challenging due to the long nature of many of the apprenticeship programmes.</p> <p>In discussing the data, the following points were noted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current forecasting indicated an achievement rate of 68.3% as of the end of March, which demonstrated an 8% improvement on last year. However, this position was continually monitored and was unlikely to stay at this level due to further withdrawals, with the College planning for a 1.5 % improvement on last year to achieve 62% against an achievement rate target for 2023/24 of 63%.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Synopsis</b> <b>3</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In April 2024, the Department for Education published changes to four of the ten intervention thresholds under the Accountability Framework to drive-up quality of apprenticeships. Whilst there were no changes to retention and achievement measurements, thresholds on withdrawals, breaks in learning and going over planned end dates had been reduced and these changes would come into place June 2024.</li> <li>• When considering retention, it was important to be mindful of the DfE Apprenticeship Accountability Framework which set out that any provider with 52-62% retention would be assessed as 'Needs Improvement' and a retention rate below 52% would be assessed as 'At Risk'. The College's overall retention, which included all apprentices currently active as of the end of March was 73.3%.</li> <li>• The low forecast achievement rates in both plumbing and plastering were highlighted, particularly when compared to other areas such as electrical. It was acknowledged that there were some legacy issues in these areas and changes were being implemented to mitigate this. In-year retention, quality of education and issues such as skills shortages would be considered as part of a multi-layered approach in the quarterly PMR and pre-PMR quality meetings and updates would be brought to the further meetings of the Committee.</li> <li>• The vagaries of enrolment and reporting end dates which had been exacerbated when reporting periods were not adjusted during the pandemic were acknowledged. It was suggested that an additional note be added to future reporting to highlight where this was applicable.</li> <li>• The Committee welcomed the retention figure of apprentices active in the current year (2023/24), which as of the end of March 2024, indicated an in-year position of 95.5% against the College's target of 88% and acknowledged the strong position that the College was now in, in both traditional further education and apprenticeship provision.</li> </ul>	
<b>8</b>	<b>QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE</b>	<b>Synopsis 4</b>
8.1	J Wilson (JW) Director of Quality, presented a report which set out the Term 2 position in relation to the cross-college Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for the academic year 2023/24.	
8.2	Attention was drawn to the progress headlines for each of the QIP's six key areas, namely the quality of education, behaviours and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management.	
8.3	Whilst progress against the QIP was welcomed, a number of questions were asked as to the impact measures and the actions that sat underneath them and whether they were the right actions to drive forward the desired improvements, given that it was currently possible to achieve all the actions detailed in the QIP without actually delivering the impact measure.	
8.4	The need for challenging but realistic and achievable targets was discussed and whilst it was acknowledged that every curriculum area had its' own plan which sat underneath the QIP and set out specific actions and targets in individual areas, it was agreed that the measures within the QIP should be reviewed to (i) avoid unnecessary work on actions that may not have a positive impact; (ii) determine what was possible for the College to achieve within the current context; and (iii) to review the end of year target dates given that it was likely that a number of actions would not be achievable in-year.	

8.5	<b>ACTION:</b> The impact measures and actions set out within the cross-College Quality Improvement Plan to be reviewed to ensure that they are challenging but realistic in driving forward the desired improvements.	PH
9	<b>ATTENDANCE UPDATE</b>	Synopsis 5
9.1	P Hughes (PH), presented a report which outlined the college-wide activity taken to address instances of low attendance in order to provide assurance that the College was adequately controlling the risks of low attendance, particularly in relation to achievement and retention.	
9.2	The report outlined that as of 9 April 2024, overall college attendance was 81.5%, study programmes 79.4%, Adults 84.5% and Apprentices 91.1%.	
9.3	The Committee were advised of a series of external quality review activities that were commissioned over a three-week period during February and March, with one area of focus being behaviour and attitudes which included attendance. Heads of Faculty were meeting on a weekly basis and were key in driving forward improvements and a 'walk the floor' culture.	
9.4	A member commented that 85% attendance on a 36-week study programme equated to a 5 weeks absence from learning and went on to suggest that attendance should be a strategic priority and at the forefront of discussions given the risk to the College.	
9.5	In response it was noted that this had been discussed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) when drafting new strategic priority proposals for the Corporation's consideration. One of the priorities proposed was in relation to student personal development and it was intended that attendance would form part of that priority.	
9.6	Members referred to the areas for improvement highlighted within the report and the lack of consistency in applying the attendance procedure, ad hoc monitoring and the expectations set around attendance and behaviour. It was agreed that consistency across the College was key and that the setting of high expectations which everyone bought into, was the route to becoming an outstanding college.	
9.7	In conclusion, the Committee were assured that this was an area under continuous review and if the strategic priority in relation to personal development was approved, a scoping exercise would be completed with an identified lead governor and monitoring reports brought to the Committee for scrutiny.	
10	<b>INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – APPRENTICE PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING</b>	Synopsis 6
10.1	D Rayneau (DR) Vice Principal of Business Systems, Information & Technology, presented the findings of the recently established internal audit team's report which focused on apprenticeship participation in learning.	
10.2	In discussing the report, it was noted that compliance with apprenticeship delivery was an issue across the sector due to the complexities of funding arrangements and requirements.	
10.3	To enable the College to track progress against the risks identified, another similar audit would be conducted by the College's internal audit team in October 2024 and would include 2024/2025 apprenticeship starts. This would enable a comparison to be made to ensure progress was being made around funding compliance.	

10.4	It was noted that the Apprenticeship Manager would have responsibility for ensuring the implementation of all recommendations. The Committee asked that a rolling action tracker be prepared and a brief update on progress circulated. It was also agreed that the Apprenticeship Manager be invited to the next meeting of the Committee to provide an update on progress against the actions.	
10.5	<b>ACTION:</b> the Apprenticeship Manager to:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Circulate a brief update as to current progress on the recommendations; and</li> <li>2. Attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide a progress update.</li> </ol>	HR HR
<b>TEACHING LEARNING &amp; ASSESSMENT</b>		
11	<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION POSITION (INCLUDING THE EXTERNAL QUALITY REVIEW (EQR) FINDINGS)</b>	Synopsis 7
11.1	K Pogson (KP) Teaching, Learning & Digital Innovation Manager and J Wilson (JW) presented a report which set out the Term 2 position of the quality of education for the current academic year.	
11.2	In considering the report, it was noted that 12 active individual support plans had been instigated as part of the College's performance management coaching mechanism. It was recognised that this was not enough and areas that had been slow to respond would be picked up through the PMR process.	
11.3	Eight practitioners were due to complete the Aspiring Advanced Practitioner Programme in June and work was ongoing to improve participation. In response to a member's question, it was confirmed that there was a relationship between participation on the programme and departmental performance. It was noted that take up varied across the departments and the potential risk of increasing the gap in performance where areas were more/less engaged was acknowledged. As a result, interventions were ongoing in those less well-performing areas to tailor specific action plans for support and to 'engage the unwilling'.	
11.4	The breakdown of departmental direction of travel was noted, with Hair and Beauty highlighted as a significant risk. This was consistent with the attendance and retention data presented earlier in the meeting and further quality and leadership actions were required in this respect.	
11.5	The positive direction of travel indicated for Plastering and Joinery was questioned as other in-year indicators did not appear to support this. Members were advised that work with the CAMS indicated that achievements had improved in comparison to the previous year and work to support the area and update practice had seen significant improvements.	
11.6	It was noted that assessments in the area of Business and ICT were due to be undertaken.	
11.7	It was clarified that the PMR meeting was a snapshot in time and performance could vary from term to term. Therefore, a dashboard was in place to analyse data across the quarters to identify patterns and trends and if applicable, determine if interventions were having an impact in-year. Performance against the previous year was also analysed.	
11.8	As the External Quality Review had been discussed earlier in the meeting, it was reiterated that 'a warts and all' approach had been taken to the review and was viewed as part of the learning process.	

STUDENT EXPERIENCE		
12	<b>TERM 2 SURVEYS REPORT 2023/24</b>	Synopsis 8
12.1	J Wilson (JW) presented a report in relation to the term 2 surveys which were carried out during January and February in the 2023/24 of 23/24 academic year, for students, apprentices, parents and employers. The report provided an analysis and highlights response rates and key findings from the surveys conducted.	
12.2	It was clarified that the variation in respondents and number of responses to individual questions would arise when a student chose not to answer a particular question, for example if it were not applicable to their programme of study.	
12.3	The survey findings clearly indicated that there was an issue with the College's catering and refectory services and it was suggested that consideration be given to taking this forward as a strategic priority to ensure progress in this area and to view as part of a student's curriculum and learning experience, rather than through a technical and facilities lens.	
12.4	Whilst a stakeholder partnership meeting between the curriculum and business partners had been arranged, it was acknowledged that work in this respect should have moved forward at a quicker pace given that the survey was completed in January/February. It was also felt that given the impact on student experience, ownership should sit with the CAMs, who when made aware of their students' dissatisfaction of the refectory service should have the confidence to advocate on the students' behalf and provide challenge to ensure the experience for their students	
12.5	In response to a question as to whether the student survey asked relevant questions as to the broader student experience, it was noted that the 3 surveys were carried out across the year and were tailored and pertinent to that period in time eg induction and entry support etc.	
12.6	As to survey outputs, it was noted that once a survey was closed, the results were recorded and the data, including qualitative comments, were sent out to the departments for dissemination and consideration. Actions at a college level would be considered as part of the Quality Improvement Plan and those at a curriculum level would be discussed at pre-quality PMR meetings. The need to ensure that the same rigour and metrics were applied to support services was acknowledged.	
12.7	It was agreed that further discussion would take place as to how areas of improvement and sustained performance could be celebrated and whether there were opportunities to link to the Festival of Learning in July.	
12.8	<b>ACTION:</b> Consideration to be given as to how areas of improvement and sustained performance can be celebrated and whether there are opportunities to link to the Festival of Learning in July.	PH
GOVERNANCE, MATTERS TO NOTE & ADMINISTRATION		
13	<b>PUBLICATION OF AGENDA PAPERS</b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> All items marked confidential on the meeting Agenda shall not be published.	
14	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>  25 June 2024 at 1500	

	<p><b>CLOSE</b></p> <p>In closing the meeting, the Chair referred to the significant improvement in quality evidenced throughout the meeting and welcomed the maturity of approach in accepting and acknowledging where further work needed to be done to address the more difficult challenges and move forward on the journey to excellence. The Chair congratulated those officers present and their colleagues on the progress made.</p> <p>There being no other business, the Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and the meeting closed at 1730.</p>	
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AGREED ACTIONS				
	Who?	Action	Min	By
1	JA/LM	A report be circulated on receipt of results to compare predicted achievements against actual outcomes for 2022-23 and 2023-24.	7a.4.1	25/06/24
2	JA/LB	The ethnicity equality gaps set out within the above report be referred to the EDI group for further consideration.	7a.4.2	25/06/24
3	PH	The impact measures and actions set out within the cross-College Quality Improvement Plan to be reviewed to ensure that they are challenging but realistic in driving forward the desired improvements.	8.5	25/06/24
4	HR	The Apprenticeship Manager to circulate a brief update as to current progress on the recommendations, and attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide a progress update.	10.5	25/06/24
5	PH	Consideration to be given as to how areas of improvement and sustained performance can be celebrated and whether there are opportunities to link to the Festival of Learning in July.	12.8	25/06/24



Items of report for Corporation		
	Details	Min
1	<p>The Committee received a report which detailed college performance against national achievement rates for all qualification types funded by the DfE. Key highlights included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the highest overall achievement in education and training of the GFE colleges in West Yorkshire;</li> <li>top college in West Yorkshire for the new 16-18 Essential Skills category, with achievement well above national rate and in the top 25% of colleges nationally;</li> <li>the only college in West Yorkshire to have improved adult achievement since pre-Covid; and</li> <li>in the top 25% of colleges nationally for 16-18 GCSE English achievement.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee welcomed the data presented, which demonstrated significant improvements in performance across a wide range of areas and indicated that the College's journey towards excellence was moving at pace.</p>	Item 6
2	<p>The Committee considered current in year retention and predicated achievement 16-18 by type, level, area and high needs and noted that retention rates for all levels had improved from the same point in 2022/23.</p> <p>Retention rates for young people for all levels had improved from the same point in 2022/23 with Level 1 seeing the biggest increase at 3.5%. Apprenticeship current forecasting indicated an achievement rate of 68.3% as of the end of March, it was anticipated that this would reduce due to further withdrawals to the region of 62%, which would be a 1.5 % improvement on last year.</p> <p>The Committee were assured that management actions were in place to address inconsistencies in the completion of predicted achievements but have asked for further reporting in this respect to provide confidence as to the accuracy of predictions.</p> <p>Whilst assured that the ethnicity equality gaps highlighted in the report would be picked up as part of the PMR process, the Committee has recommended that the findings be referred to the EDI group for further consideration.</p>	Item 7a
3	<p>The Committee received an update on current apprenticeship performance in year, as well as regional and national data for apprenticeship performance.</p> <p>The Committee heard that the College is now reaching a position where many of the legacy issues surrounding apprenticeship retention are coming to an end. However, retention is still challenging due to the long nature of many of the apprenticeship programmes.</p> <p>Forecast achievement rates in both plumbing and plastering are low, particularly when compared to other areas. This will be addressed as part of the quarterly PMR and pre-PMR quality meetings and reported back to the Committee for further review.</p> <p>The Corporation are asked to note that the DfE Apprenticeship Accountability Framework sets out that any provider with 52-62% retention would be assessed as 'Needs Improvement' and a retention rate below 52% would be assessed as 'At Risk'. The College's overall retention, which includes all apprentices currently active as of the end of March is 73.3%, so is currently above those thresholds.</p> <p>The Committee believes that the College is now in a much stronger position in terms of apprenticeship provision, highlighted by the retention of apprentices active in the current</p>	Item 7b

Items of report for Corporation		
	Details	Min
	year (2023/24), which as of the end of March 2024, indicates an in-year position of 95.5% against the College target of 88%.	
4	The Committee welcomed progress against the cross-College Quality Improvement Plan but recommended that the impact measures and actions be reviewed to ensure that they are challenging but realistic in driving forward the desired improvements.	Item 8
5	<p>The Committee considered a report which outlined activities currently being undertaken to address instances of low attendance across the College and advised that as of 9 April 2024, overall college attendance was 81.5%, study programmes 79.4%, Adults 84.5% and Apprentices 91.1%.</p> <p>Whilst the Committee noted that student attendance was a challenge across the sector and welcomed the commissioning of an external quality review in this respect, concerns were raised as to the areas for improvement identified which included a lack of consistency in applying the attendance procedure and the setting of expectations around attendance and behaviour. Given the risks associated with poor attendance, the Corporation are asked to give due consideration to the issue of poor attendance when setting the College's new strategic priorities. This is an area that will be kept under close review by the Committee.</p>	Item 9
6	The Committee received a report in relation to the College's internal audit team's report on apprenticeship participation in learning and asked that a progress update be brought to the next Committee to monitor progress.	Item 10
7	<p>The Committee received an assurance report on the quality of education including key teaching, learning and assessment themes emerging from the quality assurance activities undertaken. The Committee heard of a number of effective processes and initiatives, which are contributing to continuous improvement.</p> <p>The quality review of areas based on activities at Term 2 indicate an overall positive or neutral direction of travel. An improvement notice remains in place for both Science &amp; Access and Motor Vehicle, which is consistent with the previous report, but Hair and Beauty has seen a decline in the quality of education which is concerning particularly when considered in the context of attendance and retention data for this area.</p>	Item 11
8	<p>The Committee considered the term 2 survey results which were carried out during January and February in the 2023/24of 23/24 academic year, for students, apprentices, parents and employers.</p> <p>There is clearly an issue with the College's catering and refectory services and it is suggested that consideration be given to taking this forward as a strategic priority to ensure progress in this area and view as part of a student's curriculum and learning experience, rather than through a technical and facilities lens.</p>	Item 12