

**Minutes of the meeting of the South Bank Colleges Quality & Improvement Committee
held at 4pm on Wednesday 8 November 2023
in Board room, Clapham campus, Gateway College**

Present

Sue Dare (Chair)
Nigel Duckers

Apologies

Thesia Kouloungou
Mario Meizah
Deborah Johnston

In attendance

Fiona Morey	Executive Principal
Wayne Wright	Principal LSBTC
Monica Marongiu	Principal LGC
Clare Dignum	Director of Teaching & Learning
Jacqueline Mutibwa	Clerk to SBC Board

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed the Committee Members to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted the update on matters arising from the previous meeting and that most actions had been completed.

The Committee noted the appointment of Elaine Smith as the new Director of Student Engagement and Well-being to replace Michael Smith who had left SBC in September 2023. The outstanding actions on safeguarding would be addressed by the new Director of Student Engagement and Well-being. The updated Behaviour Policy (Career Ready Standards) had been launched and was being implemented. An update on the policy would be provided to the Committee at its meeting in June 2024.

On the proposed changes in the safeguarding and prevent policy 2023/24, the outstanding actions concerning the Online checks/searches of staff for the shortlisting process of new colleagues and the Gender transition matter would be progressed by the College Leadership team and the IT team.

5. Final Achievement Data 2022/23

The Committee received an updated results analysis on the full and final set of achievement data for 2022/23.

The Committee discussed:

- the final 2022/23 achievement data which was 85% and though below target (by 4%), there was a slight improvement from last year and above both the national average for general FE colleges (1.3%) and the provider group average (1.1%). 16-19yrs achievement was at 80.1%, a 2.4% improvement compared to the previous year. Adult achievement was at 86%, a 0.1% improvement compared to the previous year and could have been better if learners had completed the course work. The 3-year trend data and breakdown by gender, ethnicity, qualification type was noted.
- the overall retention which was at 94.4%, had dropped (1.2%) compared to the previous year but above the FE national average.
- the apprenticeships achievement which was low at 20.8% due to the relatively high number of apprentices who lost their jobs during the pandemic.

The Committee noted the challenges concerning the retention and recruitment of staff and the impact on student learning.

6. Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022/23

The Committee discussed the 2022/23 SAR which reviewed and self-assessed the College's performance during the preceding academic year for recommendation to the Board. It also identifies the College's strengths and areas for improvement.

The Committee discussed:

- the SAR for 2022/23 (prepared in October 2023) which had been reviewed and validated by the Chair of the Board, Chair of the Quality & Improvement Committee, the College Leadership Team and external validation from an Ofsted inspector. It was agreed that the overall effectiveness continued to be rated as 'Good' using the Education Inspection Framework. The Education Inspection Framework grades remained the same as last year and assessed as good, except for personal development which was assessed as outstanding. Apprentices continued to be assessed as requires improvement. The SAR also summarised the grades for each curriculum area.
- the key areas of strength, improvement and development. The key areas of strength were noted and the section on curriculum intent would include the progression data. Key

areas of concern included achievement outcomes especially in science, IT, Level 3 and apprenticeships. Other areas were attendance and a new strategy to address the matter was being implemented and the gap in achievement between adult male (88.2%) and female students (83.9%) which needed to be narrowed. The curriculum intent section needed to be reviewed further to consider the areas for improvement and those for development. The key areas for improvement identified in the SAR 2022/23 would be addressed in the updated QIP 2023/24.

The Committee reviewed and endorsed the 2022/23 SAR and that it was recommended to the Board for approval at its meeting in November 2023.

7. Updated Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24 and Review Plan for 2022/23

Quality Improvement Plan 2022/23

The Committee reviewed the final QIP for 2022/23 which sets out the College's operational objectives that must be achieved within the academic year along with the progress made. The plan addressed the areas for improvement identified in the College's SAR 2021/22, the Ofsted inspection in March 2022 and actions that had been brought forward from QIP 2021/22. The plan detailed the actions put in place by the College along with the progress made during the academic year 2022/23.

The Committee discussed the risk areas at the end of the academic year 2022/23 where the desired impact had not yet been achieved or had aspects that still needed improvement (red and amber). The key risk areas were attendance and achievement rates for all learners in particular apprenticeships and would be a key priority for 2023/24. There was discussion about the reasons for the low achievement on some courses such as IT and Sciences which was due to a number of issues including staffing issues and would be included in QIP 2023/24.

Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24

The Committee was presented with the updated QIP for 2023/24 for approval.

The updated QIP 2023/24 would address the areas for improvement identified in the College's SAR 2022/23 and the actions that had been carried forward from QIP 2022/23. The plan detailed the actions that the College is proposing to put in place for 2023/24 academic year.

The Committee noted the key focus for 2023/24 which was to continue to improve attendance for both 16-19 and adult learners, improve outcomes for all learners in particular Level 3, English and Maths (achievement target of 5% increase) and apprenticeships. The QIP would also include staffing issues which had an impact on student learning and actions to address them.

The Committee discussed Level 4 provision and that there were regular meetings with LSBU subject Heads. The Committee asked that it receives a quality report which would be a standing item on the agenda of the Committee from February 2024.

The Committee recommended the updated QIP 2023/24 to the Board for approval at its meeting in November 2023.

8. 2023/24 English and Maths Update

The report set out the teaching, learning and assessment initiatives and strategies in place to improve English and Maths outcomes in 2023/24.

The Committee discussed:

- the overall English and Maths achievement which was 68.5%, a slight improvement from last year (63.4%). GCSE English and Maths achievement was 72.3% which was below the previous year (81%) and national average (79.3%). Basic Skills English and Maths achievement was 66.5% which was above the previous year (60.3%) and above national average (66%).
- the overall English and Maths attendance. 16-18yrs was 64.6% and adults was 84%. Overall retention was very positive at 98%.
- the strategies in place to improve English and Maths outcomes and attendance which was the main cause of low achievement. The improvement plans, attendance strategies, teaching, learning and assessment strategies and the CPD programme that would improve outcomes in 2023/24 were noted. There was discussion about other initiatives that could improve the performance and make the subject vocationally relevant. The key risk related to staffing issues due to growth in student numbers on English and Maths courses i.e. the challenges concerning class sizes and staff recruitment.

9. 2023/24 Apprenticeship Update

The Committee received an update on the 2023/24 apprenticeship provision.

The Committee discussed the growth in apprenticeships, there were currently 158 apprentices, a 50% improvement compared to the previous year. The increase was mainly due to growth in brick work apprentices through the Lee Marley partnership and also in civil engineering, construction trades and the building environment. A breakdown of the apprenticeships by age and gender would be provided in the next report for the meeting in February 2024. It was noted that although growth was still below the planned target, income had slightly improved from the previous year. Attendance had improved mainly due to the relationship with the employer liaison.

The Committee noted the current apprenticeship offer and the new programmes that would be delivered during the academic year which included dental nursing, orthodontics, healthcare, green skills, electrical and early years. The new programmes would have a positive impact on the recruitment performance.

10. Attendance

The Committee received an update on 2023/24 attendance performance as at October 2023.

LSBTC

The Committee discussed:

- the changes to the way in which attendance data is recorded at the College for 2023/24. The change in reporting had greater emphasis on the importance of English and Maths for 16-19 learners on study programmes. The new study programme attendance figure for 16-19 year olds would be based on the whole of their programme which typically includes a vocational course, English & Maths and a tutorial session but would also provide a breakdown of attendance by each course (young learners tend to have better attendance on their vocational programme than for English & Maths or tutorial sessions). The change in reporting would shift the emphasis to managers so that they are more accountable for the study programme and would also address the issues concerning attendance in English and Maths.
- the overall attendance which was 77.5% (83.8% for the main programme but the performance lower for English, Maths and tutorials). Though there was no comparative data due to the reporting being new, scrutiny of the figures showed that the performance was higher than reported at the same period last year (3%) though still below the 90% target.
- the work being done to improve the performance especially in English and Maths. The role of LDCs in improving attendance and incentives to motivate students would also be considered.

LGC

The Committee discussed:

- the attendance strategies and procedures that were in place to address the low attendance. The reasons for low attendance were discussed which included a poor culture of tolerating students' absences and the lack of a clear attendance reporting system had made it very difficult to effectively monitor attendance and punctuality and hold staff accountable; these matters were being addressed. The new attendance strategy had been enhanced by clear procedures, processes and reporting system and provided staff with guidelines on dealing with poor attendance. The work being done towards creating a whole-college culture that promotes good attendance and through a greater communication with parents and guardians was noted.
- the overall attendance at LGC which was 85.5%, a significant improvement from the previous year though still below the 90% target. A break down by age group, directorate and department was noted.

The breakdown by college/site and curriculum area was noted. Future reports would include the percentage of persistent absence rate.

11. 2023/24 Recruitment Update

The Committee received an update on 2023/24 enrolment as at November 2023.

The Committee discussed:

- the enrolment figures which were positive compared to this period last year. In particular 16-19 year olds (ESFA); a 42% growth which was due to the Good Ofsted report and the opening of the new LSBTC. On adult recruitment though growth was 21%, there was a risk that the budget target may not be achieved.
- the admissions and enrolment process which continued to improve with initiatives that had significantly streamlined the student journey. The conversion rates from application to enrolment was positive compared to the previous year; 16-19 year olds was 28% and adults was 11%.
- the risk areas where growth was lower than planned included adults, apprenticeships, Level 4 and T level provision. Adult recruitment was below target and was a risk to income on the GLA AEB provision which would be addressed by increasing the adult offer in other areas and the use of subcontractor delivery. The new programme offers for Level 4 and T level provision where growth was anticipated for 2023/24 were noted. The College was working with LSBU on how to address the issues affecting Level 4 growth. Both colleges would need to focus on in year recruitment to ensure the budget targets are achieved.

12. Safeguarding and Prevent Monitoring Report

The Committee received a verbal update on SBC's safeguarding provision since its last meeting in September 2023. On safeguarding disclosures, mental health was the highest disclosure type followed by knife and violent incidents which had occurred outside LSBTC.

The Committee discussed the risk concerning knife crime and how the College was addressing the safety concerns which included random searches and a knife arch search had been carried out at LSBTC. The College was working closely with external agencies to address the concerns. The Board would be informed about the risk concerning knife crime at its meeting in November 2023.

13. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report

The Committee received an update on Teaching, Learning & Assessment work undertaken as at October 2023.

The Committee discussed:

- the key challenges which relate to staffing issues in particular, English & Maths, Business and Creative & Digital Arts. This was due to growth in student numbers on the courses than planned for which had resulted in bigger class sizes. The challenges concerning staff shortages and staff recruitment especially in English and Maths were noted.
- the Digital induction and the work being undertaken on the development of digital skills and knowledge which underpinned the induction period. The student survey on induction and enrolment would commence on 1 November 2023.
- the Going for Gold, a new initiative which aimed at supporting the College achieve outstanding for Quality of Education. It was a set of Quality of Education benchmarks (Bronze, Silver & Gold) which would be used as a self-assessment tool for Curriculum Heads and Directors when preparing their SARs and during the Curriculum Performance Reviews. The initiative would commence in September 2024.
- an update on learning walks and observations. The 2023/24 Observation of Teaching and Learning 3-year cycle which would commence in November 2023 was noted.
- an update on staff development, the CPD programme. This year's CPD programme was a curriculum-based model based on the educational framework concepts of the '9 Elms' and 'Gateway to Learning'. The programme also included T levels and Level 4 training.

The Committee noted the development of an SBC anti-racism manifesto which staff were being consulted on. The Committee noted the work undertaken on teaching and learning which would address the areas for improvement and development identified in the 2022/23 SAR and would be addressed in the 2023/24 Quality Improvement Plan.

Date of next meeting
Wednesday, 7 February 2024

Confirmed as a true record

(Chair)