



SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE
FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

LEARNING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Approved minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Quality Committee
Held on Monday 13 November 2023
At Filton Campus, Filton Avenue, Bristol, BS34 7AT

Present:

Lynne Craig	Corporation Member & Chair
Matt Atkinson	Corporation Member
Douglas Blackstock	Corporation Member

In attendance:

Viridian Joseph	Student Member
Gavin Murray	Deputy Principal
Gary Parsons	Staff Member
Sara-Jane Watkins	College Principal
Sharon Glover	Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Paul Farrell.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest raised.

3. **Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 22 June 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. **Matters Arising From Those Minutes**

a) Corporation approval of the following was noted:

- (i) 2023/24 KPI targets.
- (ii) Learner Charter & Codes of Conduct; Positive Behaviour Policy; HE & Professional Student Code of Conduct; Anti-Bullying Charter and Freedom of Speech and Expression Code of Practice.
- (iii) Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Feedback policy.
- (iv) Learner Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy & Procedure.

(v) Professional Development Policy.

b) Members noted that there were no outstanding actions on the action log.

6. **Start of term update**

The Principal was invited to provide an oral update covering the start of the term. The following was reported:

- Recruitment has been positive, learner numbers achieved, with growth at Filton and WISE campuses. Stroud campus recruitment remains a concern and the need for SGS Create has been critical for viability of numbers.
- Although some learners have not been retained since half term there are no specific areas to highlight and Corporation will be updated at their next meeting.
- The Staff Governor reported that A Levels have reached their capacity and that accommodation will be a challenge for next year. The quality of learners has been very good and there has been a focus to ensure that learners are on the right course with a reduced hybrid model of teaching being delivered.
- Members also recognised that there are staffing challenges in particular in High Needs, Apprenticeships and Maths and English (more so English).

7. **Top 5 Areas of Concern**

Confidential Item.

8. **Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report**

Members were informed that the number of staff that require support is the greatest concern and further investment has been made into the teacher development unit. This is reflective of a national trend. Members raised that the support resources needed cannot be underestimated and that not all new staff will remain with the organisation. The number of people allocated to provide support to these staff was discussed and of the need to monitor their caseloads. The development of teaching resources was also discussed and assurance was received that the College aims to use different resources to increase staff time and for their time to be used effectively. Members also scrutinised the KPI data and revisions were raised.

The report was noted.

9. **Self-Assessment**

Members received the final KPI report and scrutinised the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR). The Deputy Principal was commended on its format, honesty, structure and how well it had been written. A detailed discussion ensued resulting in revisions to the SAR. Members raised that it would be helpful for governors to know what teachermatic is. When asked,

clarification was received that the red narrative related to areas of concern which are picked up in the action plan. Members were informed that the data summary is for internal purposes only.

Members scrutinised the Improvement Plans and provided feedback for inclusion in the plans. Members were assured that in support of the main Improvement Plans there are separate action plans and steering groups in place for the priority areas. Members also suggested that SMART targets are included to aide monitoring and demonstrating progress made.

The Committee also considered the Higher Education annual report and raised the need for reporting in line with OfS regulatory focus on continuation, completion and progression. It was noted that some attainment gaps had been closed and there had been very positive NSS feedback. Members raised that the report could be clearer about what had led to these positive outcomes. Members also suggested the inclusion of how the College detects and protects against plagiarism.

When asked, confirmation was received that the College did subscribe to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education and had not received any complaints to them. It was suggested that it would be helpful to invite Douglas Blackstock's review of the HE report in advance of next year's meeting. The Clerk reported that the College and Higher Education self-assessments will be presented to Corporation for approval, alongside the Improvement Plans for noting.

The report was noted.

10. **Stakeholder Engagement Report**

Members discussed the content of the report and would have like to have received detail on impacts and the links to the accountability agreement. It was agreed that this report added no value and that stakeholders and impacts are included in the College Self-Assessment Report and considered as part of the curriculum review. In light of this, members considered there is no need for a separate report going forward. Members also raised that consideration needs to be given in the curriculum review of changes in the working environment in that a number of learners will be in employment and working from home.

The report was noted.

11. **2022/23 Compliments, Suggestions & Complaints annual report**

Members received the annual report and policy and were informed that there were no changes proposed to the policy. It was proposed, and agreed, that the policy review cycle was moved from annual to 3-yearly unless changes required an earlier review. When asked, confirmation was received that the policy had taken into consideration OfS requirements. Members were informed of a new best practice guidance being worked on and the Deputy Principal agreed to check its current status and provided assurance that the policy would be reviewed in light of this.

Members asked if the report could include a table detailing the nature of complaints and any underlying themes. Members were informed that this was available but had been omitted to be added to convene. The Clerk agreed to circulate outside of the meeting. However, a reduction of complaints received compared to the previous year was reported. When asked if all complaints are being captured, the Deputy Principal advised that there are less formal complaints that are resolved locally.

Having recently received a couple of complaints direct to the Chair of the Corporation it was questioned whether it would be better to close off the complaint face-to-face rather than via e-mail. Members were informed of the importance to follow the process in place and to accept that some complainants are unable to be reasoned with.

It was resolved:

To recommend the Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure to Corporation for approval.

Action: Clerk.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 6 February 2024, 2.30pm, Stroud Campus.

The meeting commenced at 10.35am
The meeting closed at 12.23pm
The meeting was quorate.