

ASQD Committee

Notes of Deep Dive Session held by Microsoft Teams on 19 May 2020

In Attendance.
Veronica Docherty (Chair) (VD) Professor Prue Huddleston (PH) Sir Dexter Hutt (DH) Cliff Hall (CH) Angela Myers (AM) Sam Coles (SC) Tracey Pearce (TP) Connor Curtis (CC) Hazrat Islam (HI) Sue Hopewell (SH) Stephen Belling (SB)

1. Introduction (PH)

- a. The original plan for the deep dive plan had to be adapted as it was not possible to meet at the James Watt campus and it was deemed important that Governors considered the impact of Covid-19 on the teaching and learning provided by the College and the well-being of students and staff.
- b. **Part 1** of the Dive involved staff reporting to Governors on how the College was responding to Covid-19, taking into account questions submitted by Governors in advance of the Dive and questions raised during the dive.
- c. **Part 2** of the Dive involved consideration of:
 - i. what the Corporation will need to consider longer term in the wake of Covid-19; and
 - ii. how the College hears the student voice.
- d. The notes below capture the key points considered during the dive.

PART 1: Impact and Response to Covid-19

2. Assessments.

- a. The College has had to navigate a great deal of turbulence because exams were cancelled.
- b. BMet took part in all relevant consultation exercises with Awarding Bodies to consider how assessments would be made.
- c. Grades have to be assessed with reference to a number of factors:
 - i. Qualifications on entry.
 - ii. AS levels where relevant.
 - iii. December Mocks.
 - iv. Regular assessments undertaken throughout the year.
 - v. Regular reviews and testing of learning and skills development.

- d. Staff have to make assessments in accordance with those factors, ensure there is an evidence base to justify that assessment and then rank students.
- e. The Quality team have reviewed staff assessments to ensure consistency and guard against grade inflation.

3. How is late development taken into account?

- a. A grade must be based on evidence. (SH)
- b. In respect of ranking, staff are encouraged to consider what they think a student's ultimate grade would have been if they had been in class. This enables staff to take account of a range of different considerations including late development. (SH)
- c. Department Managers with responsibilities are reviewing learner by learner the rationale for an assessment, If the rationale doesn't match an assessment its being challenged further (TP)
- d. Prior to lock down assessments were being done on a weekly basis so there was a lot of material available for consideration. (TP)

4. Will historical performance affect grading? (VD)

- a. Approval of results by the exam boards will be a huge data analysis exercise.
- b. The College is on an upward trajectory regarding A level results and so less vulnerable than may have been.
- c. If students are unhappy with grading, the intention is to allow examinations to be taken in the Autumn.
- d. PH noted that City and Guilds are working hard to ensure that underestimating and over inflation of grades is minimised
- e. SH advised that the Association of Colleges ("the AoC") has provided good and helpful guidance on a range of issues and Ofqual have taken part in a number of their sessions.

5. What impact would Autumn exams have on start dates at Universities? (DH)

- a. SH noted many offers have been made to students on the basis of predicted grades.
- b. Universities are currently reviewing their position taking into account the impact of Covid-19 including for example the impact on future recruitment of overseas students
- c. In the worst-case scenario, it is possible that students will have to defer their place for a year.

6. Technical Vocational Qualifications

- a. The position regarding vocational qualifications is more complex as there are over 9000 qualifications and over 160 awarding organisations.
- b. There are three main forms of assessment:
 - i. Calculating grades based on evidence (this method will be used in the majority of cases.)

- ii. Alternative assessments identified by awarding organisations where grades cannot be awarded from evidence; and
 - iii. Identifying situations where there is no alternative to delaying because for example, the award involves a licence to practice following an assessment of actual practice e.g. podiatry. be made and that's determined by awarding organisation.
- c. BMet has engaged with all relevant consultation exercises with awarding organisations.
 - d. Pearson is the College's main awarding organisation and their requirements involved submissions by 5th June followed by a ranking exercise to be completed by 19th June: The ranking exercise is being done by each College rather than across all 3 campuses.
 - e. - their deadlines for submissions was extended due to demand to be 5th June- which in practical terms means 2 weeks

7. Will secure audit trails be created for grading decisions? (VD)

SH advised that:

- a. The College is not permitted to advise a student of what assessment it has made.
- b. Pro- monitor is being used to maintain a record of grades.
- c. All staff members have trackers with audit trails so that when a management review takes place with an awarding organisation such as C&G and Pearson the College will be in a position to respond to questions about the process it used and refer to an audit trail.
- d. The Quality team is also working with the assessment teams, to make sure the College can respond to Awarding Organisations questions.
- e. Trails and audits have to be retained for 5 years.

8. HE- Assessments

- a. Assessments have involved a thorough and complex process. QAA guidance has been very clear and centres have provided good support and advice in a timely way.
- b. The College was asked to provide sampling for 5 assessments or 10% of a cohort, whichever was the greatest.
- c. In April the College had to submit all actual achieved prior to March in the usual way.
- d. In respect of any units taught after March assessments have involved needing to calculate grades using documents and frameworks provided by the Assessment Centres.
- e. BMet assessors have reviewed all learners work rather than samples to guard against anomalies. (TP)
- f. Some of the smaller awarding organisations such as CACHE have not yet developed their assessment criteria and it is expected there will be delays in making those assessments. (SH)

9. End Point Assessments. ("EPA's")

- a. The College is dealing with a range of scenarios. Some Students are taking a break from learning; others are continuing with their theory work whilst they are furloughed.
- b. It will be a priority to get students back in where on-site practice is integral to the programme.
- c. BMW have been able to carry out EPAs.
- d. C&G have confirmed that EPA's can be done remotely through their EVOLVE Platform.
- e. Updates and guidance is being issued on a daily basis and the College is risk assessing quality assurance on regular basis. Department Managers and Directors are all aware that this is a priority and are responding really well given the responsibilities of dealing with this and ensuring that students are continuing to be provided with the appropriate degree of support.

10. English and Maths Initiatives

- a. SH confirmed that English and Maths initiatives are continuing and staff are not disheartened.

11. Engagement with Students.

- a. Engagement has been better than expected at around 70- 80 %
- b. It has of course varied from course to course.
- c. It has been more challenging in respect of vocational training where practical work has not been so easy.
- d. In respect of students with special needs, staff have been in regular contact with both students their carers.
- e. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has been meeting twice a week where monitoring reports are provided and issues raised.
- f. The intention is to prepare to open the building on the 8th June where is necessary to do so e.g. where functional and practical skills needed to be assessed such as dentistry and podiatry. The Estates Team is assessing safety and processing all guidance to ensure full compliance.
- g. Consideration is also being given to the viability of being able to host Level 1 and Foundation Students before the end of the academic year.

12. Ofsted

CH has been in contact with the FE Commission who have advised that:

- a. A full inspection will not happen in the Autumn;
- b. Ofsted are mindful of the current pressures on staff and students:

- c. The most likely next step would be a monitoring visit with a potential full inspection later in 2021. (Full inspections likely where whistleblowing or safeguarding issues arise.)
- d. It is hoped that unpublished reports will be published soon.

13. Future Planning

- a. It is important to ensure the College has an awareness of how it is performing.
- b. Work will be done on identifying measures that Governors can use to scrutinise and assess performance.
- c. It will be good to involve Link Governors in the self- assessment process and use it as an opportunity for them to attend other Colleges.
- d. Staff are currently reviewing the impact of Covid-19 on future time tabling, teaching methodologies, use of space and how the new academic year will run.
- e. The College is liaising with other colleges to synchronise start dates and share good practice
- f. Consideration is being given to the requirements of the Combined Authority and the Local Enterprise Partnership to gear up and respond to peoples' loss of employment and need for re- training.
- g. Consideration is also being given to mental well-being and what support may be required for both those students who will return to the College and those who may not return to the College before the end of their studies. It is envisaged that longer induction periods may be needed to ensure that skills from earlier in their courses are embedded.

14. Enrolments

- a. There doesn't appear to be a sudden drop in applications.
- b. Keep warm activities are continuing
- c. Virtual open days are being planned
- d. A programme of events and activities is being developed for June and July.

PART 2: Future Considerations and Hearing the Student Voice

15. What would ASQD want Corporation to consider at a future Strategy Session in November?

- a. Key points to factor in to forward planning.
 - i. A lot needs to be processed in the next few months.
 - ii. It will be necessary to take account of the appointment of a new Principal.
 - iii. There will be a lot to consider over a period of time and it will be necessary to do it in bite- size chunks.
- b. Potential Subject Areas
 - i. How the first part of the Academic year went.
 - ii. The Enrolment position the next Academic Year.
 - iii. BMet in a post Covid-19 world.

16. Student Voice: How do we hear it; what further developments would be good?

- a. It will be helpful to have:
 - i. An understanding of how other colleges hear the student voice.
 - ii. An understanding of how we currently hear the student voice.
 - iii. Feedback from students generally.
 - iv. Specific feedback from Connor and Ritik about their experiences.
- b. Feedback from the AoC regarding places where they think capturing the Student voice is done well.
- c. It is important to note that students can feel intimidated by the environment of Corporation and Committee meetings.
- d. Significant development work was undertaken by Gill Caldicot.
- e. Chichester College and Walsall are regarded as having an exemplar approach to ensuring the student voice is heard and how students are engaged in decision making.
- f. Technology may be a helpful way to address some of the challenges surrounding students being located in 3 dispersed campuses.
- g. Some research was undertaken by Leicester who have:
 - i. produced some good case studies;
 - ii. developed the concept of Super- reps who were invited to choose a development project to drive improvement and work with the relevant staff team to implement it. This lead to students feeling their voice had been listened to and had led to a change that could be seen.
- h. It has been noticeable that during lock down, a number of students had “found their voice” and been more engaged through the use of technology. (SC)

Signed: 
Prue Huddleston (Jun 29, 2020 12:10 GMT+1)

Chair: Prue Huddleston

Date: Jun 29, 2020

ASQD Minutes for signing

Final Audit Report

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