Minutes of the ASQD Committee meeting

held on Thursday 17 June 2021 at 9.00 am
By Microsoft Teams

Birmingham Metropolitan College

Present	Apologies
Pat Carvalho (PC)	
Professor Prue Huddleston (PH)	
Sir Dexter Hutt (DH)	
Veronica Docherty (VD)	
Angela Myers (AM)	
Natalie Alleyne (NA)	
Christine Tolley (CT)	
Tracey Pearce (TP)	
Naghma Nadiri (NN)	
Kashema Wray (KW)	
In attendance	
Sue Hopewell (SH)	
Stephen Belling (SB)	
Simon Eaton (SE)	
Alison Jones (AJ)	
Sam Coles (SC)	
Hazrat Islam (HI)	
Hilary Barber (Clerk)	

	Agenda item
	Apologies
	No apologies were received. PH informed governors that after a long and extended period of office, VD will be stepping down from the Board shortly. PH thanked VD warmly for her immense contribution to the college and suggested that ways that VD could continue to support BMet are being explored. PH also thanked TP for her contributions and insights into the operational work of the college during her period of office which concludes at the end of the summer term. Both VD and TP thanked PH for her comments. PH welcomed SE to the meeting.
	Declarations of Interest
	No other declarations were received in addition to those contained in the College's Register of Interests.

1	**Minutes of previous meetings**
1 (i)	**ASQD: 11 February 2021**
1 (ii)	**Deep Dive: 28 April 2021**
1 (iii)	**Matters arising and Action Log** SB advised that the first item on the action log has been completed and the second item will be addressed under agenda item 8. **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** **AS 21: 05** **The minutes of the previous meetings be approved.**
2	**Principal's Update**
	PC referred to the presentation given to staff and circulated to governors giving an initial overview of first impressions after being in post two weeks and highlighted the following: ▪ Progress in 16-18 provision is moving well. ▪ Adult provision is likely to be a focus for Ofsted and will be given particular consideration in the coming weeks. ▪ Reports evidence that there are improvements ongoing in quality and recommendations from the Quality Improvement Group and Star Chamber discussions are being implemented effectively. ▪ Changes to the tutorial and support systems are part of the journey of improvement. **Governors Questions and Observations** *1. As part of your initial observations have you noted anything specific that surprised you? (CT)* PC advised it was difficult to judge the levels of quality in a short period of time and was yet to understand fully how the structures work, particularly in relation to the pressures of workload for the Department Managers and their day to day management of staff. Reporting is broad and comprehensive but there is value in assessing what is the focus of those reports. PC advised of the value of reviewing how joined up the initiatives are around Careers development and further staff training relating to industrial placements. *2. The following issues were noted by VD and AM during their learning their walks around the college prior to the last FE Commissioners inspection:* *- the barriers faced by some adults in having to undertake their learning at home during Covid restrictions and how much they appreciate being back in college.* *- the challenges for adults returning to education of the pace of 4-week programmes and the need to explore the possibilities of a more flexible approach.* PC confirmed that these issues had been picked up and that conversations were taking place around how further wrap around support could be provided to returning adult learners to boost their confidence and support success. Further discussions will be held with the WMCA regarding suggestions about initiating a pilot scheme with the focus of supporting the development and mentoring of learners and removing barriers to progression. PC acknowledged that it was critical staff had the appropriate training to give them the correct skills to support learners; issues around digital exclusion need to be identified; resources need to be targeted accordingly; and planning for September is crucial. **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** **AS21: 06** **The Principal's report be noted.**
3	**Quality Improvement Plan – report on progress**
	SH referred to the Quality Improvement Plan ("QIP") update report and advised that the QIP addresses six key areas that the 2019/20 Self-Assessment Report highlighted as requiring further improvement: i) Continuing to improve TLA across all provision.

	ii) Enhancing the curriculum for Adults. iii) Ensuring all students and apprentices acquire the intended knowledge, skills and behaviours over a period of time. iv) Continuing to improve the experience of apprentices to ensure they complete in a timely manner and are prepared for final assessments. v) Ensuring the digital strategy is effectively implemented to benefit both staff and students. vi) Monitoring the implementation of the changes to the work experience strategy. SH noted that there are three areas of particular focus: ▪ *Developing English and Maths skills for students and apprentices who already have a Grade 4 GCSE*. SH noted that this needs to be emphasised in the vocational offer. ▪ *The need for all assessors to use a consistent platform for tracking progress; the college will introduce E-Portfolio to achieve this.*SH reported that whilst staff locally are very aware of each student's progress, the new software will provide a more effective means of tracking progress by managers. ▪ *All staff to earn 1000 points to attain MIE recognition.*SH noted that whilst there was a doubling of staff achieving the standard by Easter, the process still requires acceleration. **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** **AS21: 07** **That the Quality Improvement Plan be noted.**
4	**Teaching and Learning Survey**

SH referred to the Teaching and Learning Survey and advised:

- The annual survey had been delayed this year because of Covid
- The survey took place between March and April.
- Staff encouraged students to participate, and texts were sent to students to remind them.
- The questions were those used in previous surveys with the addition of two new questions around tutorials and how well students understand their progress.
- Outcomes of the survey link with previous knowledge regarding progression and identify areas for initiatives for the coming year.
- Students were asked to confirm their agreement with a series of statements about their experience. Strong agreement was given a weighting of 1, simple agreement 0.5 and disagreement / strong disagreement were weighted as zero.
- The ratings provide a greater in-depth judgement on satisfaction.
- The information acquired from the survey has been disseminated to inform future action planning.
- The overall response rate was 71% against a target of 90%.
- Analysis has shown that a high number of non-responders correlate with those students who are unlikely to complete their courses or return to college.
- The measure used from the survey for the college KPIs ("Students agree teaching is good") exceeded the target of 97% by 1% and demonstrates that despite the challenges of the Covid pandemic, most students who responded felt they had had a good experience.
- Other positive features of the survey were the number of students who would recommend the college to friends; perceptions of student behaviour (up by 8%) and; that students feel safe.
- Less positive outcomes were around students' understanding of target grades; their tutorial experience and not being clear about how to make progress; that students were unclear about how to make a complaint and; that their sense of improving maths skills was decreasing.
- These less positive outcomes will be discussed and addressed by Curriculum Directors and DMs.
- Some aspects of the survey need further interrogation, i.e. the perceptions of female students, LGBT students and certain ethnicities, e.g. Caribbean students. This data will be analysed and feed into a high priority report to identify groups of students and link with other initiatives.

Governors' Questions and Observations

1. Why is the level of response lower at James Watt, than, for instance, Matthew Boulton? (AM)

SH advised that there were fewer responses from students studying in the engineering, Health and Creative departments. The Vice Principal is having discussions with the managers in these departments to explore why.

2. *During recent lesson observations it was encouraging to see evidence of students taking ownership of their targets. (AM)*

3. *Why does the survey not include an ethnicity option for Jewish students? (AM)*

SH agreed to investigate the ethnicity options

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

AS21: 08
That the results of the survey be noted.

| 5 | **College Performance Forecast** |

SH referred to the College Performance Forecast report produced by Luke Adams in collaboration with the Vice Principals and advised:

- the Quality team meet with the Department Managers (DM's)and Curriculum Directors three times a year to monitor student progress and attendance.

- DMs are very conversant with their students' performance.

- progress is generally good despite the challenges of the last year and students have worked very hard, particularly in the last ten weeks.

- Staff have worked extremely hard to support students to accrue the evidence they need for their College Assessed Grades (CAGS).

SH noted the following predictions (*based on an updated report following the meeting*):

BMet Predicted E & T Achievement		
	% Achievement	**Best case % Achievement**
College	84%	92%
JW	80%	91%
MB	85%	93%
SC	86%	91%

Overall E&T Achievement by age		
	% Achievement	**Best case % Achievement**
Predicted 2020-21 16-18	86%	93%
2019-20 16-18	83.8%	
Predicted 2020-21	77%	91%
2019-20	70.7%	

Predicted E&T Achievement by Level for 16-18		
	% Achievement	**Best case % Achievement**
Entry	83%	95%
Level 1	81%	93%
Level 2	87%	94%
Level 3	87%	91%

Predicted E&T Achievement by Level for Adults		
	% Achievement	**Best case % Achievement**
Entry	77%	91%
Level 1	75%	92%
Level 2	72%	92%
Level 3	81%	88%

GCSE Achievement		
	% Achievement	**9-4 Achievement %**
GCSE English 16-18	84%	14%
GCSE English Adult	86%	29%
GCSE Maths 16-18	89%	24%
GCSE Maths Adult	99%	92%

SH highlighted the following:

- GCSE Achievement: outcomes for % Achievement at 99% and 9-4 Achievement at 92% is very pleasing.
- The overall A Level ALPs score is 3 which is in the upper quartile.
- Vocational/L3 ALPs score is 5/6 which is in the middle quartile and represents progress against previous years.
- There is a steady improvement in A Level grade profiles due to various management actions to improve teaching and learner experience.
- Overall E&T Achievement by age: Adults – the drop from 83.2% in 2018-19 is a concern and needs a strong focus.
- Predicted E&T Achievement by Level for Adults – Level 2 predictions are a concern.
- The following table shows the predicted Apprenticeship Achievement both in total and excluding students transferred to Dudley College following the sale of Stourbridge College. Confirmation of these grades will be obtained in due course from Dudley College.

	% Achievement	**GFEC %**	**% Achievement Ex Dudley**	**GFEC % Ex Dudley**

16-18	46%	68%	55%	68%
19-23	69%	69.6%	73%	69.6%
Adult	67%	63.5%	70%	63.7%

IT WAS RESOLVED:

AS21: 09
That the report be noted.

6	**Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report**

AJ introduced the Annual Report compiled in June 2020 to report on the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy developed for the 2020 – 2024 period.

SC highlighted some of the positive impacts related to the strategy's four strategic objectives:

- The college's response to Covid, was praised by both Ofsted and Unison.
- The improvements in monitoring of student attendance which has led to positive interventions where appropriate.
- The reduction in the achievement gap between disabled and non-disabled groups.
- The provision of well-being strategies for staff and students.
- The success of Black History month which acted as an example of how the college celebrates diversity and continues to more deeply understand different cultures.
- Although the group of students who are 19+ and in receipt of Free Meals is small, this group is likely to represent those who also struggle to access digital resources. Data can inform where additional support is needed.

Governors' Questions and Observations

1. *The report contains a great deal of useful information. It breaks down achievement by gender and disability. Should a similar breakdown be provided in relation to ethnicity? (DH)*

   SC advised that this data is available and agreed it would be useful to include in the report.

2. *Staff have developed their skills in relation to disabled students but are perhaps less confident in their approach to ethnicity. (NA)*

   SC agreed and noted that the four-year strategy includes actions around integrating all groups more effectively.

   PC noted this would be the subject of future discussions on how to measure the impact on students of informed teaching.

3. *"Do you feel that staff's awareness of diversity and different cultures is moving forward? Is there a correlation between how receptive a DM is and their team?" (DH)*

   SC advised that awareness is moving forward but could be quicker. There are "pockets of excellence", but greater consistency is needed.

   AJ advised that further challenge is needed to achieve engagement in some areas and that the need for Diversity and Inclusion is always considered as part of any discussion around the development of new strategies.

   SH advised that initiatives need to be driven by DMs, but success is dependent on the team's engagement. A more explicit approach is sometimes needed to model and embed improvements.

   AJ suggested that one of the most successful strategies, in addition to formal training, is to facilitate conversations where staff have the opportunity to pursue questions about their practice and can raise concerns. Some Department Managers are not overly confident in addressing issues, and this can be reflected in their teams. Conversely a confident DM can promote positivity in the team.

	4. *There is a danger that diversity, gender and ethnicity can be seen as one issue, but separate strategies are needed to address each aspect. (AM)* SC acknowledged the danger of issues being "pitched together" and there was a need to ensure there was no "hierarchy of issues" 5. *Equality and Diversity should be the focus of a future Deep Dive* (PH) **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** **AS21: 10** **That the Equality and Diversity Report be approved.**
7	**Review of Terms of Reference**
	SB referred to the legal obligation to review the Terms of Reference on an annual basis and advised that there were no recommendations for change this year **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** **AS21: 11** **That the existing Terms of Reference be approved for continued use during the next year.**
8	**2021/2022 Deep Dive Programme**
	The Committee identified the following subjects for consideration during Deep Dives during the next academic year: - Approaches to Blended Learning - Equality and Diversity - The new Tutorial system (Spring term) - Professional Development
9	**Matters for Referral to Corporation**
	The following were agreed: - Approved Terms of Reference - The Key points noted during the meeting under each agenda item
10	**Any Other Business**
	PH thanked everyone for their contributions to a productive meeting. There being no other business the meeting was closed at 11.00 am.

Signed: *PHuddleston* Prue Huddleston (Nov 5, 2021 15:47 GMT)

Chair: Prue Huddleston