

QUALITY OVERSIGHT GROUP: 28th JUNE 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT	Anthony Smith (Chair), Amelia Sussman, Gemma Simmons-Blench, Simon Horne, Mark Isherwood, Ashton Milton (Student Member),
IN ATTENDANCE	Roy O'Shaughnessy (CEO), Kurt Hintz (Executive Principal), Gary Hunter (Deputy Executive Principal), David Dangana (Director of Quality and Compliance), Jackie Chapman (CCCT Managing Director), Graham Drummond (Director of Governance), Graham Cooper (Deputy Clerk)
APOLOGIES	Sarah Ebanja Anthony Impey, Sanna Jordansson, Des Corlis (Staff Member), Precious Agyei-Boateng (Student Member), Luke Willmoth (Student Member)
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	None

The Committee welcomed Anthony Smith to his first meeting as Chair and all present introduced themselves.

- 1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH MAY 2021** **Action**
The minutes were agreed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chair.
- 2. MATTERS ARISING**
The committee noted that:

With respect to item 3 and the correlation between application volumes and the number of enrolments, an explanatory note including relevant data had been circulated to the committee and further detail will be provided as part of the Quality update.
- 3. GROUP QUALITY UPDATE**
The Group Quality Update report was received and considered. The following aspects were noted and discussed:
 - As this was the last week of term, attendance and retention data is now unlikely to change materially. Attendance rates across the Group remain higher than last year, for both age groups and across all three colleges. Although there are some variations between colleges, the overall attendance is broadly on target (88%) for all ages at 88.1% (3.1% above 19/20). This was considered a good outcome in view of the context of the pandemic. Attendance is a significant factor in driving student achievement.
 - Retention, which is a driver of student achievement, is also strong and up on prior year for both 16-18 yr olds and 19+. Overall retention is 94.5% (1.0% above 19/20), with variations within each college. A month-by-month analysis shows that the improvement on previous year has been consistent throughout this year. It is understood that retention is higher generally across the sector, and that the Group has at least kept pace with or exceeded the sector-wide improvement.
 - The Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) assessments were submitted for all required qualifications by the deadline of the 18th June. The awarding bodies differ across Centres and between General Qualifications and Vocational & Technical Qualifications (VTQs). The awarding bodies are individually conducting quality assurance by random sampling. So far, samples had been supplied as requested by AQA, City & Guilds, Pearsons and UAL. No final reports from awarding bodies are yet due, but it is hoped that some feedback will start to be received from the end of the current week. The quality assurance process will continue until the end of July 2021 (and beyond if necessary, depending on the findings of the awarding organisations). An appeals process, details of which were outlined, is being put in place and will be available to learners immediately following the release of results on 10th and 12th August.

- With respect to Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA), 1087 (96%) of the scheduled 1132 classroom observations of teaching staff have been completed through the formal lesson observation process. A grade profile of formal lesson observations was provided and 83% of the lessons observed were graded good or better. [This excludes WKC, which does not undertake graded observations]. 147 teachers out of 919 have not been observed due to sickness or absence for other reasons. The level of observations at CONEL is lower than other colleges due to the higher number of teachers teaching online only – although these have been subject to other forms of observations, to ensure that all teachers have been observed in classes. These include themed lesson observations, learning walks, health checks and professional practice visits.
- The Committee discussed the Group's policy aim to move away from graded observations to a non-graded approach that involves more frequent routine classroom visits that allow for better observations through a less limited approach than the current one-off scheduled visits.
- A breakdown of the 12.5% of the Group's teaching staff on performance management due to TLA concerns was provided. All of these teachers have an action plan and receive support from their line managers, who monitor the action plans based on the risks posed by each teacher. The action plans include development activities specific to the teacher and may require attendance at CPD training, peer support, coaching or observation of other teachers.
- The committee challenged the executive team, that in light of the move to ungraded observations, data will continue to be available and reported which enables the committee to monitor the percentage of Outstanding teachers. The Executive Principal assured members that this would be the case. Members agreed that this is important, given the Group's ambitions in relation to excellence in teaching. The Executive Principal explained that whilst observations will be ungraded, the additional frequency of classroom visits, which will not be pre-advised to teachers, will allow for a more robust assessment of the quality of teaching. The committee advised that it would find it useful to receive as part of future reporting, a more granular level of analysis of the relative strengths of different aspects of teaching practice. Additionally, the committee advised that it wishes to see data presented in a manner that enables it to see progress specifically in those areas of provision identified as requiring improvement in the last Ofsted inspection. The Executive Principal reminded the committee that the Heads of Teaching and Learning from across the Group attended a recent meeting of the committee and presented the detailed individual college teaching and learning reports. He also explained the process by which data is reported and analysed using ProObserve, which will enable the requested level of reporting to the committee on a routine ongoing basis.
- The committee asked whether there is any correlation between the two areas identified for improvement in TLA practice [Stretch and Challenge of Individuals and Differentiation] and predicted Value Added scores. The Executive Principal explained that, whilst there had been a significant improvement in Value Added in the past couple of years, it is very difficult to make an accurate assessment this year due to the TAG process. There is a recognition, however, of the need not only to strive towards ensuring that all students pass their exams, but to focus on stretch and challenge and value added in order that more able students achieve in line with their potential.
- The Committee asked about the extent to which the number of teachers on performance management includes teachers for reasons other than the outcome of observations – e.g. due to poor assessment practice. The Director of Quality and Compliance advised that the number had increased during the TAG process. The Executive Principal undertook to obtain further detail and to report back to the committee.
- The Committee also advised that it would be useful to see any analysis that is available of the link between learner outcomes and teacher underperformance. The Executive Principal advised that, whilst this analysis is possible and is used appropriately to hold teachers to account, it is easier in cases where there is one teacher per subject, and more difficult when there are multiple teachers teaching a single group of students.
- The final version of the new Teaching, Learning and Assessment Development Policy, of which the committee had seen an earlier draft, was provided for information. The final 'reworked' version reflected the outcome of negotiations with the trade unions. Subject to ratification by the GLT, it will be implemented from 1st August, although it remains subject to objections by the NEU and UCU as explained later. The Executive Principal explained that the new policy provided the Group with the important right for managers to visit classrooms at any time to observe teachers for quality assurance purposes. It also set out the expectations upon managers and Heads of Teaching and Learning with regard to frequency of visits. In addition, the Policy

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included a section on quality improvement using the 'One Thing' improvement cycle model. This model, proposed by the trade unions, has been developed by Guernsey College, and had been presented to, and well received by, a number of other colleges. It is hoped that implementation of the model would gain the support of the Group's teaching staff. The Executive Principal provided further clarification with regard to how the model will work in practice - and the benefit to teaching staff of having the support of an advanced practitioner who is not their line manager.

- The Executive Principal explained further the position of NEU and UCU, both of which were opposed to implementation of the policy in view of the provisions relating to open access to classrooms, notwithstanding that this is now a common expectation across the sector. UCU were already in dispute with the Group on other matters including pay and were currently balloting members in relation to strike action in September, with the TLAD policy listed as one of the areas with which they are unhappy. NEU had not gone to ballot as yet, although this was to be expected.
- The Committee asked about the extent to which students and apprentices have been involved in the development of the policy and how it is to be shared with students so that they can understand the expectations of their teachers. The Executive Principal explained that there has been little involvement by students in the development of the policy, but that the policy will be talked through with students whilst it is rolled out.
- The June update of the QIP was also provided to the committee, with the curriculum scorecard appended. The committee asked about areas where improvement targets are not being achieved. Based on predicted grades, targets have been met or exceeded for Overall Achievement for all age groups. Current achievement rates that are below targets are still mainly above the current national benchmarks, except for Diploma L1(19+), Certificate L2 (16-18), Diploma L3 (16-18) and Apprenticeships (overall). The A Level achievement rate is above the target but below the national benchmarks.
- The committee advised that it considers that there is a great deal to celebrate in the predicted outcomes. It also commended the generally small achievement gaps between qualifications and between levels, but noted that this is significant in Functional Skills Level 1 where there is a 30% disparity between predicted achievement for 16-18 year-olds and the predicted achievement for adults. The Executive Principal explained that experience over the past few years had been that achievement is impacted by the fact that attendance by adult students (who are mainly mature adults), is a matter of personal choice, compared to 16-18 year-olds for whom attendance is compulsory.
- Due to lockdown, predicted achievement in maths Level 1 is expected to be lower than in previous years; there had only been two exam sittings during the year, rather than the normal three, with poor results at the first sitting. This would be a significant area of focus for next year. The committee also discussed the importance of progress data being split between GCSEs and Functional Skills in order to highlight where progress is taking place. It was further noted that consideration is to be given regarding the future use of Functional Skills, taking into account the impact of low levels of literacy skills.
- The CCCT Managing Director confirmed that she was confident of reaching a minimum of the 60% Achievement rate indicated for Apprentices.
- The Committee noted that it would expect detailed scrutiny and sign-off of the 2021/22 Quality Improvement Plan on behalf of the Group Board to fall within its remit and that this will be presented to the committee in the autumn term

4. APPRENTICESHIPS

A report was presented by the CCCT Managing Director. The committee noted and discussed as follows:

- For 2020-21 there are 1,358 apprentices in scope [expected to have an end date this year]. At present, there are 538 of these still continuing and their outcomes will determine the overall achievement rate. Of these:
 - 64 (updated from the date that the report was written) are now Gold, having passed their End Point Assessment (EPA) or having been ACE certified, with the outcomes being processed.

- Retention is currently good at 73%, but with a marked difference between Standards and Frameworks. Retention on Frameworks is 81.4% and retention on Standards is 70.3%, the difference being consistent with the differences in national averages of c. 10%. As three quarters of the Group's apprentices are on Standards, the Group's average retention is therefore likely to be below national average. Provided the Group achieves last years' national averages for both Standards and Frameworks, the Group's overall group achievement rate will be just above 60%. There is a high level of confidence therefore in achieving a minimum of 60% for overall achievement, and hopefully a higher figure.
- The committee discussed the matter of continuing learners, and the importance in due course of this years' self-assessment report articulating the strong support that has been provided to apprentices throughout the difficult period of being furloughed, and the difficulties with EPA organisations. The latter include, for example, hospital apprentices, where restrictions on access has prevented observations taking place. A survey to obtain further feedback from apprentices to augment and compare with the results of a survey undertaken in January will also be undertaken.
- The committee asked whether there has been any systematic feedback from employers and whether, in anticipation of the Ofsted inspection in the next academic year, external feedback and validation is being incorporated into planning for next year. The CCCT Managing Director advised that current feedback from employers was generally positive and will be supplemented by feedback from new sector forums that are being set up. The Executive Principal also highlighted that additional feedback will be gathered during the next Ofsted monitoring visit due to take place in the first term of next year. There will also be external validation as part of the SAR process.
- The Committee asked about the percentage of apprentices that fall within the 16-18 years age group, noting that quality data in relation to other learners is split according to age (16-18 and 19+). The CCCT Managing Director agreed to revert to the committee with this information and also to provide the split as part of ongoing reporting.

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5. **QUALITY OVERSIGHT GROUP DRAFT WORK PLAN 2021/22 – PLUS REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee received and considered a draft work plan for the committee for 2021/22, noting the intention to hold six meetings and the key matters that will comprise the main substance of agendas for those meetings. The Chair stressed the importance of the committee ensuring that it covers all aspects of its Terms of Reference, and that it reminds itself of those terms of reference at the first meeting of each academic year - including matters such as student engagement and student surveys. Also, the committee shall review its effectiveness against the Terms of Reference at the end of each academic year. The Chair invited suggestions of any matters to be added to the workplan, to be provided now or by subsequent email to the Director of Governance. The following suggestions were made:

- Curriculum strategy: The committee agreed that there should be some governor oversight of curriculum development and planning on behalf of the Group Board and that as this was highly relevant to the main business of the committee, it would be appropriate for this committee to do so. The Executive Principal supported this view. It was agreed that this should be added to the work plan, and that the most appropriate timing, to fit with the Executive's management of this, would be to add this to the business for discussion at the November, February and April meetings of the committee.
- Quality Targets: The committee also asked about the timing for setting targets for quality related KPIs for 2021/22 and the Board approval process for these. The Executive Principal advised that this process would commence in August and it was agreed that the targets should come to this committee for review for recommendation to the Group Board. The committee also asked that reporting against KPIs includes leadership and management as well as quality of education.

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The committee noted that the November meeting will be a full day dedicated to the Group and college SAR validations. A discussion on the agenda and how to get the most out of the day will be held at the October meeting

The Committee reviewed its terms of reference and agreed a number of minor amendments. The Chair highlighted one significant addition, being the requirement in relation to the Quality Report to each Group Board meeting to include the recommendations and outcomes of discussions by committee. It was also noted that increasingly it is hoped that the committee chairs will take the lead in presenting reports to the Group Board.

With regard to membership of the committee, it has been agreed that Asfa Sohail, recently appointed governor, is to join the committee, with potentially further changes to be agreed by the Search Committee.

7. FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 7th October 2021 5:00pm

Friday 26th November 2021 9:00 – 4:00pm [Full day re SAR validations]

Thursday 27th January 2022 5:00pm

Tuesday 15th March 2022 5:00pm

Thursday 12th May 2022 5:30pm

Tuesday 28th June 2022 5:30pm

Signed as a correct record: _____

Professor Anthony Smith