

QUALITY OVERSIGHT GROUP: 28th JANUARY 2022

TELEPHONE CONFERENCE NOTES

PRESENT	Anthony Smith (Chair), Amelia Sussman, Roy O'Shaughnessy, Gemma Simmons Blanch, Desmond Corlis, Ashton Milton, Simon Horne, Jenessa Chin, Ashton Milton, Sinem Bozkurt
IN ATTENDANCE	Kurt Hintz, David Dangana, Jackie Chapman, Graham Drummond (Clerk)
APOLOGIES	Mark Isherwood, Asfa Sohail, Gary Hunter

The Chair introduced the meeting by explaining that the purpose of this meeting was to receive an update on quality issues facing the Group. It was to be a one item agenda that should last one hour. He asked the executive, when presenting the paper, to consider what aspects of teaching and learning were going well and why, and then to focus on the areas or issues that were causing concern. Committee members were asked whether there were other areas of focus that they would like the executive team to focus on. In response, it was requested that future reports give an indication as to the likely Ofsted grade that a curriculum or cross group theme was performing at. It was also suggested that the inclusion of the curriculum aspect of the Group's risk register might also assist members in honing their attention to the key issues facing the Group. **Action: KH**

With this in mind the Executive Principal presented the paper that had been circulated to members during the previous week. The following was noted:

- The data contained within the report is the same as reported to the last Board meeting and in some cases is a few weeks out of date, however it provides a good picture of where overall quality currently stands;
- Since the Christmas break, there have been a considerable number of public examinations, mostly for Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs). In the majority of cases, attendance has been around 90% which is a good indicator, because students are only provided with one re-sit opportunity;
- Overall classroom attendance is currently 89.3% (which is 1.3% lower than the same time last year). It was further noted that:
 - the industrial action which took place last term has impacted on attendance rates and it is likely that the overall annual rate will be 1-2% below last year's rate;
 - GCSE attendance is 76% which is higher than in previous years;
- Overall retention is marginally higher than last year's figure (96.2% v 96.1%). It was further noted that the retention rate reported for WKC needs to be adjusted however there is considerable management focus on improving attendance and retention at WKC, particularly at the Kings Cross site where the impact of industrial action was at its greatest;
- Included within the report was an analysis of in year progress with respect to maths and English (Functional Skills and GCSE) based on first half term formative assessments. Level 1 maths is a concern at this stage of the year and is a focus of management intervention. Mock exams started in the previous week and the results are due shortly; if previous trends are followed the number of passes should increase, particularly with respect to functional skills.

The report included some value-added analysis which indicates that 56% of students were operating close to or above their aspirational target in October; this is broadly in line with what is expected. The analysis also shows that a significant proportion of students are operating at a level which is at least one grade below their aspirational target; this is a concern. It was further noted that teachers are commenting that students are not performing at the level they have formally been assessed at, for example those who have been awarded a grade 3 at GCSE tend to be performing at level 2, and therefore the distance travelled to gain a level 4 is greater than in previous years. This has been caused by inflated grades being awarded as a result of the use of the Centre Assessed Grade (CAG) and Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) systems that have been used for the past two academic years. The committee therefore challenged the legitimacy of value-added analysis because the baseline assessment has not been consistent in comparison to previous years. Members emphasized the importance of using student views of their own progress and achievement when making judgements about the distance travelled. Students also undertake diagnostic assessments at the start of their course and the outcome of these plays a central role in determining the students' starting points.

It was further noted that tutorials are used as an opportunity for students to assess their progress based on feedback that they receive and that students should be aware of where they are at in terms of progress and what they need to do in order to achieve their targets. The student governor commented that this had not taken place

as part her course and it was agreed that the Executive Principal would discuss this with her outside of the meeting

Action: KH

The Executive Principal continued to present the contents of the report and it was noted deep dives on areas of concern have started this term and the outcomes of these exercises will be reported to the committee's next meeting – **Action KH/DD**

A summary outcome of the student survey which took place in the Autumn was included within the report. It was noted that:

- The response rate was 48% with 9,603 student participating in the survey;
- Even though the satisfaction rates were above the target of 90% the survey indicates that there has been a decline in satisfaction;

It was further noted that a more detail analysis would be considered at the committee's next meeting. Whilst members recognised that the last two years have been a difficult period, due to the pandemic and the industrial action, the following requests were made:

- That if possible, some analysis is provided over the last five years, so that members can gauge the trend against pre-pandemic satisfaction;
- Analysis of progressing students' satisfaction is included;
- More detail is provided – what are they being asked and why?;
- Assurance is provided that management is following up on issues that the survey has highlighted e.g. in the summary analysis it indicates that satisfaction with respect to 'feedback on the quality of my work' has dipped and therefore members requested that assurance is provided that this is being addressed. **Action DD/KH**

It was noted that two professional development days have recently taken place, a focus of which has been the Group's 'One Thing' approach, which is a coaching model where teachers concentrate on improving one aspect of their pedagogical approach and provide feedback to their colleagues about what they have learnt.

Included within the report was an update on Higher Education. It was noted that:

- The outcome of an autumn student survey indicates that satisfaction rates have improved in comparison the National Student Survey (NSS) outcome in 2021. The Group has adopted a 'you said, we did' approach to demonstrating to its HE students that it is actioning concerns raised and ensuring that a differentiated approach is taken to the HE student experience;
- Some HE courses have not recruited well, particularly at WKC and are being taught out. Some of these courses are being used to form a micro-credential approach i.e. certain modules are being taught as stand alone courses that can then be combined (if the student wishes) with other modules to form a qualification in a flexible manner;
- The committee asked about whether progression routes would be affected by the close of HE courses, particularly Higher Apprenticeships – it was agreed that the committee would be informed about this outside of the meeting **Action – KH/JC**
- It was noted that a consultation on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is currently underway. It was noted that the Group would be making a decision as to whether to participate in the TEF once the outcome of this consultation was known.

At the next meeting it was agreed that the following would be considered:

- A detailed report on the quality of apprenticeships
- The outcome of other deep dives e.g. A level provision at Kings Cross
- A detailed report on student satisfaction including what is being put in place to ensure learner progress
- College level rapid improvement plans

It was noted that Ofsted could notify the Group of a monitoring visit at any stage – and it was likely to take place this term.

The Chair thanked members for their participation and it was noted that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 15th March at 5pm.