

St Helens College

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Thursday 3 March 2022 at 11.00am

Present:	Liz Duncan (Chair)	External Governor
	Simon Pierce	Chief Executive Officer/Principal
	Julie Heap	Staff Governor
In attendance:	Bill Nixon	Chair of Governors
	Mark Doyle	Deputy Principal - Curriculum and Quality
	Nick Gribben	Vice Principal - Curriculum Development & Student Experience
	Julia Callaghan	Director of Customer Services, Marketing and Managing Director of Waterside Training
	Nicola Wareing	Head of Supported Learning
	Gillian Hayhurst	Governance Director (minutes)

The Chair welcomed Nicola Wareing to the meeting. It was noted that the meeting was not quorate as external governors were not in the majority.

12 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Sophie Littlewood and Alun Owen.

13 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

14 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 January 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted as an accurate record subject to the addition of Bill Nixon's attendance. These will be presented to the next quorate meeting for approval.

15 Matters arising and action tracker

RESOLVED: **The committee noted the action tracker update.**

16 Head of School presentation

The committee received a presentation from the Head of Supported Learning. This set out the school's core purpose, student and staffing levels across St Helens and Knowsley campuses and the curriculum intent for both supported and foundation learning. Committee members were advised of the school priorities for the 2021/22 academic year and its future developments.

The committee discussed the school's preparation for Ofsted. Staff have received further specialist training in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Staff sickness is being tracked and monitored. The College can evidence individual assessments and staff can talk confidently about study programmes. The Senior Leadership Team offered short-term administration support to assist with logging completed learner records where agency staff have been used. The committee suggested that the College should monitor retention in vocational areas once students have progressed from foundation learning as this provides evidence on the success of the programme.

Attendance levels were 87% at the end of February 2022. Staff are considering ways to challenge this and reward good attendance in a way that is meaningful to the students.

A discussion was held on engagement with employers. There has been engagement with the local authority and the Director of Customer Services, Marketing and Managing Director of Waterside Training will meet with the Head of Supported Learning to consider what opportunities there may be to develop this further.

The College is looking at ways to adapt and utilise its facilities to bring students into vocational areas of the curriculum, such as catering, health and beauty. There may be opportunities for students to meet with the supported learning students and talk to them about courses.

The committee queried the definition of complex needs and was advised that this includes individuals with profound learning difficulties. Developing this sensory curriculum will support students in small, incremental steps based on individual targets. The College has 21 days to assess its ability to support individuals based on their Education Health Care Plan outcomes. St Helens local authority is keen for the College to build its complex needs capacity, which would require investment in facilities and staff. Further clarity is needed on the local authority's expectations prior to further consideration of investment in this area.

The College will develop its staff to deliver more interventions for students with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). Students will receive additional support and training as part of the Preparation for Adulthood outcomes within these plans. Subject to resource and additional hours on student timetables, this will

extend across the College to all students with EHCPs who are studying on vocational courses.

The committee thanked the Head of School for their participation in the meeting. The efforts made by staff to improve the experience for students has been recognised by the Governing Board. The Chair of Governors will visit the school in March 2022.

RESOLVED: The committee noted the Head of Supported Learning presentation

Nicola Wareing left the meeting.

17 College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and progress against Education Inspection Framework (EIF) 'Good'

The committee was presented with progress against the QIP since January 2022.

The committee was informed that there is evidence that the teacher development coaches are having a positive impact on those staff who receive a not-effective judgement following initial observations. Two further re-observations have been undertaken since the report was published and formal capability proceedings have commenced with two teachers.

In response to a query on curriculum planning, the committee was advised that there are no courses at risk of removal but some may be subject to standard specification updates. The College is on track to expand its level three offer to increase progression opportunities and several curriculum areas are being re-introduced at the campus in Knowsley.

The committee considered the challenge of acquiring useful, current data for benchmarking purposes.

A discussion was held on the impact that sourcing industry placements has on Capacity Development Funding and the actions being taken by the College to address this. The College provides regular returns to the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the risk of clawback is being monitored.

Senior managers were asked how the College prepares adult learners and apprentices for future careers. Career aspiration discussions are built into the start of each programme. Regarding the wider study programme, adult learners and apprentices also have access to training on personal development curriculum such as safeguarding, British values and bullying and harassment.

On considering what the key risks are to the College, the committee considered what actions are being taken to address attendance levels, including the introduction of Attendance Officers. The College can demonstrate activity to improve attendance and how it reengages and supports students to catch up after a period of absence. The College is unable to fully measure the impact it is having on students as outcomes and positive destination data is not currently available.

RESOLVED: The committee noted the progress recorded in the Quality Improvement Plan.

The committee noted the progress against the College versus Education Inspection Framework 'Good'.

18 Teaching, Learning and Assessment update

The report presented a summary of the impact of recent activities to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

A discussion was held on the College's preparedness for an Ofsted inspection and improvements that have been made in many areas. The Head of Quality Improvement has been appointed as the Interim Head of School for Business & Professional and is working with the academic staff to drive up the quality of teaching.

With regard to the detailed update provided, the committee requested that consideration is given to how this information is presented to give a more balanced view of actions completed and those in development.

In response to a query on staff responses to increased Continual Professional Development (CPD), evidence suggests that it has been beneficial. Some heads of schools have instigated collective team CPD sessions.

RESOLVED: The committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment update.

19 Student Voice update

The report provided an update on student feedback and how it is used to improve the student experience.

The committee queried how the College is addressing the need for closer liaison between Progress Coaches and academic staff to ensure target setting is conducted with students. The responsibility for these discussions has not

transferred to the coaches and the College is sending a clear message to academic staff on the importance of minimum target grade discussions.

RESOLVED: **The committee noted the information provided and took assurance that appropriate actions have been identified to support improvement.**

20 Employer feedback

The report presented feedback collected and received from employers and demonstrates how the College is responding to the feedback provided by the Government apprenticeship online survey.

The committee was advised that the College is using QDP Survey Manager as its survey tool. Feedback is also gathered through progress reviews and the government survey. The initial onboarding survey has been issued to employers and results should be available after Easter 2022.

RESOLVED: **The committee noted the current employer satisfaction rating of the College as ‘Good’, and the KPI of achieving ‘Excellent’.**

The committee noted the actions being taken to increase employer feedback capture and to address the suggested areas for improvement.

21 Any other business

There were no items of any other business.

Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee will be held on Thursday 5 May 2022 at 11.00am.

The meeting closed at 12.36pm