USP College Corporation
Quality Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 18 June 2024
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams
Meeting commenced: 16.00hrs
Meeting ended: 17.30hrs

Present

Vikki Liogier	Independent Member	Chair
Rachel May	Independent Member	
Perry Sansom	Staff Member	
Evie Naylor	Student Member	
Amber Carter-Andrews	Student Member	
Dan Pearson	Chief Executive	

Apologies for absence

Nick Patterson	Staff Member

In attendance

Clare White	Principal
Luke Brewster	Head of Higher Education
James Parker	Vice Principal Quality & Innovation
Cherie Brightwell	Vice Principal Technical & Professional
Chris Murgatroyd	Vice Principal
Craig Davidson	Assistant Principal Student Experience
Andy Shepherd	Head of Student Services
Paul Nutter	Governor Designate

Clerk

Sue Glover	Clerk to the Corporation

The Clerk advised that as the previous Chair of the Committee had resigned suddenly from the Board and a replacement has not yet been secured, it will be necessary to appoint a Chair from the independent members of the Committee to act as Chair. It was agreed that Vikki Liogier would act as the Chair of the Committee for this meeting.

The Chair welcomed Paul Nutter who will be serving on this Committee once their appointment as governor has been formally approved by the Board.

QC.14.24   Declaration of Interest

Members and officers were reminded of the need to declare any personal or financial interest in any item to be considered during the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

QC.15.24   **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from

- Nick Patterson

The Committee agreed to accept the apologies for absence

QC.16.24   **Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

QC.17.24   **Matters arising and action points from the minutes of the previous meeting**

Members reviewed the action points arising from the meeting, noting those that will be picked up at this meeting and those that will remain on the schedule until they are complete.

It was agreed there were no other matters arising from the previous meeting.

QC.18.24   **Termly Higher Education update**

The Head of Higher Education and Access presented a report, which provided an update on the College's HE provision.

Members reviewed the current HE enrolments and applications, noting that

- HTQ in Digital Technologies has been withdrawn due to a lack of recruitment and applications
- the partnership with Docklands Academy London (DAL) continues to demonstrate high quality and collaboratively has passed the annual monitoring review and external examination with Pearson, which means a greater number of students can be recruited in the autumn term
- the College is hosting Coventry University to validate the BA (Hons) Games Art (Top Up) for the HND Games Development for students to progress to
- over the last term the College has sought approval for a collaborative partnership with Arts1 Performing Arts College in Milton Keynes

The Committee discussed the issues raised and, in response to questions, were advised that
- at least 12 students will progress to the BA (Hons) Games Art (Top up) course should the College be successful
- Pearson have approved the partnership with Arts1, and the College is awaiting confirmation for enrolment, which is anticipated to go well
- a recruitment event is being held at the beginning of July for Higher Education and Access to HE

Members were further informed that DAL is a private provider, which means that the College is subject to the franchising provisions of the Office for Students (OfS). The numbers expected to be recruited will be circa 40 and with the good quality measures in place it is unlikely the OfS will raise any concerns.

The Committee thanked the Head of HE for a very informative update on the College's HE provision.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

Luke Brewster left the meeting

QC.19.24 **Ofsted Inspection – 30 April-3 May**
The Principal presented the final report from the Ofsted inspection which took place 30 April-3May.

Members were advised that each area of the inspection had secured 'Good', with the exception of Personal Development, which had secured 'Outstanding'. The overall effectiveness grade is 'Good'. The grade awarded for contribution to meeting skills needs was 'strong' and safeguarding is effective.

Members were informed that college management have now been fully debriefed following inspection and the recommendations made will be included in the College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), which is monitored by this Committee at each meeting.

The Committee reviewed the report, commenting on the number of positives and areas of good practice demonstrated by the College. It was noted that the recommendations made were around personal development targets for high needs students, attendance and continuing to develop stakeholder engagement in the very small number of curriculum areas where it is less well advanced.

The positive outcome relating to governance was noted as:

- Governors have a range of backgrounds and experience that enable them to contribute effectively
- Good understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- Challenge appropriately and support leaders to make improvements

Agreed
The Quality Committee agreed this was a very pleasing outcome for the College and took the opportunity to congratulate the CEO and his team for all their hard work in achieving such an excellent outcome for the College.

QC.20.24 **Cross-college Student Survey Feedback**
The Vice Principal Quality & Innovation presented the outcomes of the student voice survey 2023/24.

Members were advised that
- the survey focussed on three key areas
  - ➢ teaching and learning experience
  - ➢ safeguarding experience
  - ➢ careers aims and support
- a participation rate of 64% was achieved facilitated by rollout strategies through personal tutors and progress coaches

The Committee reviewed the detail of the outcomes, noting that
- Mid-year teaching and learning assessment (TLA) scores maintained high agreement percentages with slight decrease in interactivity and opportunities for questions noted and recommendations including enhancing interactivity and exploring methods to increase engagement in online/hybrid TLAs
- Students demonstrated strong awareness of online safety and the college's support services with recommendations including continued promotion of support services and regular assessment of factors impacting students' perceptions of safety

- Students showed good awareness of career support resources with fluctuations in perceptions of career information and course support Recommendations involve promoting awareness of career support services and enhancing communication regarding career choices and course support
- Access and HE sectors received high ratings for the likelihood of recommending courses, while variations across campuses within the same sector highlight the need for targeted improvement efforts

In discussion, members agreed that the survey indicated a positive picture of student responses. However, the Committee commented on the 64% response rate and suggested that ways could be found to encourage more students to participate in the survey. It was suggested that the survey could also be emailed to students and perhaps a lack of understanding with some of the language used could prevent some from completing the survey. It was agreed that the wording would be reviewed.

Agreed
The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report.

QC.21.24   **Key Performance Indicators**
The Vice Principal Quality & Innovation presented a report, which provided an update on current attendance and predicted outcomes for 2023/24.

Members were advised that
- Attendance is at/above last year across campuses
- Overall retention is 90%
- Projected achievement for the current academic year is 83.8%

Members reviewed the detail of the KPIs, noting that
- Attendance at Palmers and Xtend is above last year and Seevic is 1% lower with rates decreasing each month, significantly in April and May
- GCSE A level retention is lower at 85% and Access to diploma and certificates also below average
- The driver for predicted achievement is lower GCE A level retention and that targeted at-risk and course interventions is underway

In discussion, members commented on the drop in attendance to 80% but recognised that this is a sector wide issue, and this level is currently the sector average. The key actions currently being considered are

- Development of a new attendance strategy
- Improvement of GCE A level retention
- Monitoring certificate/diploma retention
- Addressing achievement gaps through focused academic support

Agreed
The Quality Committee were pleased to note the key actions being considered and agreed to receive and note the report

QC.22.24   **Destinations and Intended Progression**
The Vice Principal Quality & Innovation presented a report, which provided an update on progression and destinations for the 2022/23 academic year.

Members reviewed the detail of the report, noting that
- The college has successfully partnered with a new data capture provider, which has achieved 95% response rate from 1,500 learners
- Key findings include
  - 88% of departing students have positive outcomes, with 36% in employment, 35% in higher education, 10% in Apprenticeships
  - 62% of students are in roles related to the USP studies, peaking at 84% for those in education
  - Top employment sectors – retail (23%), Business (16%), Health & Public Services (12%)
  - Data on barriers faced by NEETs enables targeted assistance
- Areas for improvement have been identified as
  - Student satisfaction – USP rating (6.8%) is below the UK average (8.0%)
  - Net Promoter Scores vary significantly across curriculum areas

The Committee agreed that, overall, the level of intended destinations is a positive picture. The report highlights the College's strengths in student progression and identifies opportunities to enhance satisfaction and support, particularly for at-risk students.

Agreed
The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.23.24   **Careers and Skills Education update**
The Vice Principal Technical & Professional presented a report, which provided an update on the progress made by the College against the agreed KPIs with the Employer Involvement Strategy.

Members were reminded that the strategy was developed in response to the Skills for Jobs white paper and subsequently the Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan to ensure the College is meeting the local and national skills needs of employers.

The Committee was advised that
- Although the LSIP has only been in place for 10 months into its 3-year timeline, it aligns with the college's career focused strategy
- There has been significant collaboration with key stakeholders, employers, local authorities, other providers of education and training
- This collaboration ensures learners are well prepared for their next steps in both education and the workforce, which was recognised by Ofsted in the recent inspection who highlighted the extensive work, focus and high expectations for quality of education and how we ensure we meet the skills needs of our local regional areas
- The college achieved a 'strong contribution to meeting skills needs' which is the highest sub grade for this judgement in inspection

Members considered each of the ten KPIs and the RAG rated progress, noting that good progress continues to be made. It was helpful to review the case studies presented.

In discussion, members commented on whether the college supports employees who are delivering masterclasses to students and were advised that teachers offer support through the structure of lessons. It was agreed that other ways would be discussed with the Vice Principal outside of the meeting.

The contribution to meeting skills needs was a very pleasing outcome from the Ofsted inspection and members asked that thanks are passed to those at the College who were involved for their hard work and contribution in achieving this result.

Members were asked to consider how future reporting on Career and Skills Education is presented to the Committee and whether there are any additional measures that should be included. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the request outside of the meeting inviting members to comment.

The Committee thanked the Vice Principal for the update and agreed this helps to demonstrate that the College has strong partnerships and collaborations across schools, community and employers. There is strong alignment to priority skills needs supported by a strong pipeline of employer partnerships.

Agreed
The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.24.24   **USP College Quality Improvement Plan**
The Vice Principal Quality & Innovation presented the College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), detailing the progress made on the key areas for improvement.

Members were reminded that the Corporation approved the College self-assessment report (SAR) and the QIP at the meeting held in December 2023. The top-level SAR set the key areas for improvement in the QIP as:

- Value Added
- Stretch and Challenge
- GCSE English & Maths 4+ grades
- Attendance to GCSE E&M
- Attendance
- Apprenticeship implementation plan
- English & Maths Leadership & Management
- Continue to develop the support internship programme
- Provide a flexible learning offer for adults
- Implementing innovative and evidence-based curriculum delivery models to engage diverse learners and improve outcomes
- Developing staff capabilities and student competencies leveraging leading edge educational technologies like artificial intelligence

It was agreed that good progress continues to be made against the key areas and the QIP is an effective mechanism to monitor improvements.

Agreed
The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report.

QC.25.24   **College self-assessment for 2023/24**
The Vice Principal Quality & Innovation presented, for consideration and approval, a report giving an overview of the initial outline and timeline for the College self-assessment report 2023/24 and governor involvement.

Members were advised that the process in place for 2023/24 is designed to
- ensure ownership of standards and improvement requirements by all staff at all levels
- ensure department and whole College priorities are aligned
- allow governors to be complicit in the process and be able to monitor and challenge progress
- ensure the final SAR report is focused on improvement needs without too much distracting detail

Members reviewed the projected timeline, noting governor involvement to ensure sign off by the Board in December. Members advised they would be happy to be involved with the moderation panel. The Clerk would ascertain dates and circulate to the Committee.

Resolved
The Quality Committee
- agreed to receive and note the report
- approve and recommends to the Corporation Board the process and initial timeline for the College SAR

Andy Shepherd joined the meeting

QC.26.24   **Termly Safeguarding Report**
The Head of Student Services presented a report detailing Safeguarding and Prevent related activities from January to March 2024.

Members reviewed the detail of the report, noting the
- Summary of wellbeing activity and support
  - the number of individual learners supported by the Wellbeing Team compared to previous year
  - the number of monthly wellbeing interventions compared to previous year
  - total interventions by type during the term compared to previous year
  - common mental health reasons for interventions during the term and the highest priority reasons why support required
  - common reasons for wellbeing intervention during the term compared to previous year
- Child Protection cases
- Children Looked After
- Counselling update
- Internet monitoring and filtering
- Prevent update
- Training status update

The Committee was informed that there had been a significant drop in the number of students presenting with anxiety. The College has been working with Essex on an award to help with mental health for learners and members suggested the use of 'Mood Tracker'.

Members were advised that the next update of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) in September would be mainly technical changes around the auditing of safeguarding requirements.

On behalf of the Board, the Quality Committee asked that thanks are passed to all members of the safeguarding team for their continuing hard work and contribution to the safeguarding of students.

Agreed
The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report.

Andy Shepherd left the meeting

QC.27.24   **Terms of Reference and Annual Schedule of Business for the Quality Committee 2024/25**
The Clerk presented a report, which outlined the need to review on an annual basis, the Committee's Terms of Reference and Annual Schedule of Business.

Members reviewed both documents, noting minor date changes proposed, and agreed these were appropriate and there was nothing further to add.

Agreed
The Quality Committee approves and recommends to the Corporation Board for approval the Terms of Reference and Annual Schedule of Business for the Quality Committee for 2024/25

QC.28.24   **Any Other Business**
As this was their last meeting of the Committee before the end of their term of office, the Chair of the Committee took the opportunity to thank the two student governors for all their hard work and contribution to the work of the committee.

There were no other items of any other business.

QC.29.24   **Schedule of Quality Committee meetings 2024/25**
Tuesday 15 October 2024
Wednesday 4 December 2024
Tuesday 4 March 2025
Tuesday 17 June 2025

All meetings commence at 4pm

As there was no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.

SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD: P. Nutter, Chair of the Committee

DATE: 15 October 2024