



**USP College Corporation
Quality Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 1 March 2022
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams
Meeting commenced: 16.00hrs
Meeting ended: 17.30hrs**

Present

Ian Hockey	Independent Member	Chair
Vikki Liogier	Independent Member	
Nicola Curtis	Independent Member	
Trevor Hutchinson	Co-opted Member	
Dan Pearson	Principal and Chief Executive	
Julie Snelling	Staff Member	
Nicole Dragos	Student Member	
Mils Balcombe	Student Member	

In attendance

Gordon Haines	Chair of the Corporation
Clare White	Deputy Principal Corporate & Student Services
Jon Briggs	Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality
Stuart Coussins	Head of Higher Education (item 5 only)
James Parker	Director of Quality, Performance & Innovation
Andy Shepherd	Head of Student Services (item 8 only)
Clare Smith	Head of Quality

Clerk

Sue Glover	Clerk to the Corporation
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The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the opportunity to introduce the College's new Head of Quality, Clare Smith.

QC.01.22 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.02.22 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

QC.03.22 Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021

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

QC.04.22 Matters arising and action points from the minutes of the previous meeting
Members reviewed the action points arising from the meeting and agreed that all actions had been satisfactorily completed and that there were no other matters arising from the previous meeting.

Higher Education

QC.05.22 Partnership arrangements with Oxford Business College (OBC)
The Head of HE presented a report to update on the current performance of OBC with regard to their Higher National Provision.

Members were advised that

- OBC have requested to enter 'teach out' of its HND programmes with the College, which means the current contract will now terminate in July 2023
- OBC were issued a remediation notice in February for breaches to the required service level standards in relation to administrative practices
- the Partnership Manager continues to work closely with the OBC leadership team to implement early interventions and provide on the ground intelligence and early flagging of concerns, giving the College the best insight and ability to react
- Student satisfaction remains high based on feedback from End of Module feedback and Quality Visit focus groups
- Continuation of the February 2021 cohort is 77% with pass rate recorded at 83%

Members discussed the issues raised and, in response to questions, were advised that

- The reduction in service level standards have reduced the College's standing with external bodies, which includes students' loan company and Pearson
- OBC have until 11 March to respond to the remediation notice with a plan to address the shortfall in service level
- at this point the College will evaluate the response and either accept or reject the remediation plan, potentially moving to the next stage of indemnities that will include financial penalties
- the College is currently exploring options to expedite the termination date of July 2023 through sourcing an alternative delivery partner to transfer the learners to

The Committee agreed that the actions taken by the College to manage the OBC operation were very robust and had ensured continued scrutiny to the oversight of the partnership. However, it was concerning that there could be a large number of students who may have to be transferred to an alternative delivery partner and asked that the Committee be kept informed at the next meeting of progress made in this regard.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report, and that an update will be presented at the next meeting

QC.06.22 Docklands Academy London (DAL)

The Head of HE presented a report to update on the current performance of DAL with regard to their Higher National Provision.

Members were advised that

- there has been significant improvement following the appointment of a new Head of Academics
- Student satisfaction and attendance is high
- predicated achievement is above 90% on all programmes for the remaining students in learning
- DAL are currently risk rated as 'green' against the at risk metrics

In discussion, members agreed that this is an excellent improvement on previous performance and commended the work done by all staff involved.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

Stuart Coussins and Clare Smith left the meeting

QC.07.22 Education Recovery Plan

The Director of Quality, Performance & Innovation presented a report, which provided an update on the impact of the College's Education Recovery Plan (Transition T42).

Members were reminded that

- the College initiated an Education Recovery Plan as part of supporting students on their return to 'face to face' learning in September 2021
- the main aims of the plan were to
 - diagnose learning gaps
 - put in place the right course for their career aims and current skills and knowledge

The Committee was advised that as a result of the plan

- around 95% of students had an English and Maths initial skills assessment
- 100% of students had an initial skills and knowledge assessment
- SOW were updated to reflect skills gaps
- 701 course changes were completed and 259 students were referred for additional learning support

Members reviewed the detail of the report, noting the Intent, Implementation and Impact of the recovery plan and the next steps, which includes

- revising the plan and roll out in August 2022 to support new students to the College
- retaining measures taken this year, such as the use of BKSB to produce subject specific English and Maths skills gaps to support the embedding of these subjects within curriculum areas

In discussion, members agreed that the Education Recovery Plan has included a significant amount of good work to support students in their return to College following the Pandemic and lockdown restriction.

It was pleasing to note that the plan will be revised and rolled out to continue to support students. Members were advised that a number of different mechanisms to support students will continue to be embedded in the plan and the Committee will be kept advised of updates and progress made.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.08.22

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment delivered in 2021/22

The Director of Quality, Performance & Innovation presented a report, which provided an update on the current position of Teaching and Learning from September 2021 to February 2022.

Members were advised that

- 466 Learning Walks have been conducted assessing the quality of teaching and learning across the College
- Internal quality reviews have been conducted in Business and Health and Social Care/Early Years providing a deep dive on teaching and learning
- Supported experiments for each area on the theme of Active Learning are being run until the end of the academic year
- 12 members of delivery staff (including 4 agency staff) are RAG rated as 'red'

The Committee was advised that during the recent inspection, Ofsted had recognised the areas of good practices associated with the Internal Quality Reviews, which was pleasing to note.

Members reviewed the detail of the report, noting that

- Since September 2021, 91 members of delivery staff have accessed the Teaching Improvement Practitioners (TIP) support
- 8 members of staff are RAG rated as red, 2 of these are currently engaged in performance improvement plans with HR

In discussion, members were advised that there is a shortage of good teachers and finding those with the right skills is an issue across the sector. It was agreed that the practices in place by the College are very robust and appropriate to help support teachers and it was suggested that perhaps a 'buddy' system or peer mentoring could be considered.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.09.22

Key Performance Indicators

The Director of Quality, Performance & Innovation presented a report, which provided an update on current attendance, retention, achievement and value added and ongoing processes used to monitor these.

Members were advised that

- Overall attendance is 84.1%
- Retention is 96%
- At risk students is at 10%

Members reviewed the detail of the report, noting that

- Attendance has shown a decline since November and has levelled out at 80%
- Retention since last reported has not had any significant changes, apart from level 2 retention is 4% below

- current predicted achievement is review via completion of Promonitor Risk Ratings on a half termly basis, current ratings indicate around 10% of students are at risk of not achieving on their course by the end of the year

Members discussed the issues raised and, in response to questions, were advised that

- the college's attendance strategy has been reviewed and a renewed attendance procedure put in place to tackle the decline in attendance. Where implemented effectively decline has been arrested and a small increase in attendance
- it is recognised that level 2 is a weak and measures are being put in place to improve this area

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.10.22

Destinations/progression

The Director of Quality, Performance & Innovation presented a report, which provided an update on progression and destinations.

Members were advised

- of the current level of progression and destinations:
 - Progression Level 1 – 71%
 - Progression Level 2 – 74%
 - Positive destinations – 91%
- an external research company has been commissioned to collect confirmed, sustained destinations data for the college
- there was a positive increase in progression level 1 to level 2 (5%), but level 2 to level 3 and level 3 year 1 to level 3 year 2 showed a slight decrease from the previous year

Members discussed the issues raised and, in response to questions, were advised that

- 15% leave between year and work will continue to support those students and is an area for improvement
- overall positive destinations for all level 3 year 2 learners is 93%, which is the same level as the previous year
- non sustained destination is unknown and could be a 'gap year' and so not a positive destination
- full analysis of destinations data by area, sector, level, qualification type and equality and diversity measures will be undertaken
- intended destinations data (including sector area) to be captured for current students between February and March

It was agreed that, overall, the outcome was very positive and asked that final destination information is presented when complete.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.11.22 USP College Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22/Post Inspection Action Plan

The Director of Quality, Performance & 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 2021. The top level SAR set the key areas for improvement in the QIP as:

- Quality of Education
- Behaviour & Attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership & Management

Members were advised that the objectives identified by Ofsted during their inspection in November 2021 as areas for improvement have been incorporated into the QIP.

Members reviewed the detail of the document and agreed that the top level summary with each area RAG rated was an appropriate level for governors.

It was agreed that good progress continues to be made against the key areas, but that attendance is still an ongoing concern. As discussed previously, a revised attendance process has been implemented and the latest review of the impact indicates there has been some improvement with no further decline.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report.

QC.12.22 ITEC Learning Technologies – Quality Recovery Action Plan

The Deputy Principal Corporate & Student Services presented a report, which provided an overview of the current position of apprentices and the plans to quality assess and track progress through the teach-out stage.

Members were advised that

- ITEC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the College, acquired to delivery apprentices
- in October 2021, the Ofsted inspection judged this provision to be inadequate and as a result can no longer provide apprenticeships
- the employers and the ESFA agreed that the learners could complete their apprentices at ITEC under the College as part of a 'teach out'
- the basis of this agreement was that the College would oversee a quality improvement plan and to improve the quality of provision in the remaining months

The Committee reviewed the detail of the action plan, noting

- there are a total of 87 learners across each standard and ITEC is currently working with a total of 73 employers
- the priority areas in the Quality Recovery Action Plan to ensure the needs of the employers and apprentices are being met during the teach-out phase.

Members discussed the issues raised and, in response to questions, were advised that

- there is also a comprehensive operational plan to support the action plan to ensure we stay on track
- monthly reporting will be provided to the senior management team and a regular report will be provided to this Committee with updates on progress

It was agreed that the action plan provided an excellent mechanism for the oversight of the teach-out process of apprentices and were pleased to note that a regular update will be provided for the Committee at each termly meeting.

Agreed

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

QC.13.22

Termly Safeguarding Report

The Head of Student Services presented a report detailing Safeguarding and Prevent related activities during the autumn term 2021.

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 autumn term compared to previous year
 - common mental reasons for interventions during autumn term and the highest priority reasons why support required
 - gender split
 - interventions by campus
- Child Protection cases
- Children Look After
- Prevent update
- Training status update

It was noted that there has been no significant change in the number of cases in key areas, although they remain high and are comparable to pre-covid activity.

In discussion, members commented on the recent unrest in Ukraine and Russia and were advised that the College has identified learners from these areas so that support can be offered where appropriate.

There have been 13 learners under Child Protection and were advised that there are currently 2 cases open.

Members were advised that an audit conducted by Thurrock on safeguarding, judged the College to be up to date, but there has been no formal feedback as yet. It was agreed that a top level summary of the audit would be presented to the next meeting.

It was noted the tremendous amount of training continuing to be undertaken by staff, particularly those involved with intervention and the wellbeing team.

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.

QC.14.22

Any Other Business

The Chair of the Corporation took the opportunity to commend the diligent work of the Committee and asked for feedback from the student members on the student voice reaction regarding attendance. Both students commented that a number of students do choose not to come into college and some take the view that as a lecture is being given virtually they then decided not to actually come into college.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to collect more data from students regarding this issue and perhaps conduct some focus group to gain a better of understanding of the reasons.

There were no other items of any other business

QC.15.22


Schedule of Quality Committee meetings 2021/22

Tuesday 21 June 2022

All meetings commence at 4pm

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

SIGNED AS A CORRECT RECORD:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gendall', with a horizontal line underneath.

DATE: 21 June 2022