

PETROC

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held via Teams on Wednesday 8 February at 16:30

Present:

Pat Denham	Vice-Chair of Board, Chair of Committee
Deborah Watson	External Governor
Dawn Stabb	External Governor
Bella Dash	Student Governor
Sean Mackney	Principal and CEO

In attendance:

Jason Jones	Deputy Principal Education and Learners
Bill Blythe	Vice Principal Finance and Resources and Regional Affairs
Sheena Murphy-Collett	Vice-Principal People, Organisational Development and Engagement
Joanna Boardman	Governance Advisor and Head of Executive Office
Gail Whenman	Director of Technical Studies
Jon Baglow	Faculty Manager (Apprenticeships)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Katerina Kolyva and Melinda Stacey

2. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were made in respect of the items on the agenda.

3. Confidential Items

No items were confidential on the agenda

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes and actions from the meeting of the 12 October 2022 were approved.

5. **Matters Brought Forward by the Chair**

No business was brought forward by the Chair.

6. **Apprenticeship Presentation**

22CQ09

In response to a deep dive on apprenticeships that had been requested by the Board a paper had been supplied which was taken as read and a presentation by the Director of Technical studies and the Faculty Manager for apprenticeships gave a presentation to the committee.

The presentation would be shared with the committee after the meeting.

It was noted that the use of acronyms should be avoided or explained in all papers and presentations to Board and its committees.

Questions and comments from committee

- **Could the college lose funding from non-completing learners?**
Yes
- **The paper discusses a Functional Skills role and administrator, have these now been recruited?**
The executive team are reviewing the apprenticeship processes and delivery now so no specific recruitment has been made to date.
- **What impact do learners who leave with their diploma, without completing the End Point Assessment have?**
The apprenticeship standard is made up of a variety of elements and where the students exist at a point that fulfils their employment aims and do not fully complete funding can be lost and employers can use apprentices as cheap labour.
- **It was asked if the college had an overall vision and strategy for apprenticeship provision in the future? It was noted that issues and short term fixes has been discussed, but not the wider view.**
- The college confirmed that it was looking at providing a strong quality provision of apprenticeships to a smaller high quality selection of employers. Where the focus from all involved was on curriculum led employability and skills development.

Further updates from the college included that the new apprenticeship accountability framework had been released that morning and whilst the full piece needed reviewing it was clear that both employer and apprenticeship satisfaction would be gathered. The college would need to score 3 or higher out of 5 to avoid receiving a requiring improvement grade which could lead to funding being withdrawn.

The committee noted the updates, thanked the presenters, and encouraged the college to focus on this as an issue due to the national focus and risk of underperformance that colleges were facing in the sector.

7. Deputy Principals Report

22CQ08

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal for the new style report and the committee agreed that it was a good improvement and provided a clear and concise method to share information and promote discussion.

The headline items were discussed as the Student Achievement report and clarification on the grading methodology used. The Ofsted standard is commonly used, however when it was applied the college felt that it did not reflect the work currently underway which would impact the result so instead the monitor for progress made by Ofsted was used. That method showed the improvement trajectory without masking any issues.

It was noted that if a grade of requiring improvement was attained in an inspection it would severely impact of the colleges ability to deliver and grow apprenticeships.

It was further noted that attendance and retention appear at odds with retention looking positive and attendance looking poorer. The college acknowledged this and stated it would be investigating this further. Links to register cleansing requirements was discussed as well as level 1 leavers.

The committee commended the positive results on student voice and community feedback in Higher Education.

Progression of students was discussed and where students move from level 2 to 3 seemed to be a pain point and the college confirmed that the MIDES data which had just been released seemed to confirm that and work was already underway looking at progression activity across the college. Moving forward progression would be a focus from a learner's starting point and include aspirational elements.

The committee questioned that point that 6% of learners felt unsafe at the college and were concerned. The Safeguarding Governor was absent from the meeting, but the Deputy Principal as Safeguarding Lead for the college confirmed that they were investigating the matter. There was some discussion that despite the question excluding Covid impact, some learners may still have anxiety around that. However more work would be undertaken.

The Committee commended the college on the results from the recent T-Level Thematic review

The Staff governor welcomed the note to review work experience, self-directed and online study.

8. Ofsted Readiness

22CQ10

The paper was taken as read and it was explained that an action plan and Gantt charts are the next things to be drawn up for staff and students.

It was shared that the executive aim to keep the college in a state of readiness without encouraging heightened panic.

The Governance Advisor shared that they were collaborating closely with the Deputy Principal on feedback from colleges who have been inspected as well as engaging it their network to discuss board led support and experiences of the visits. Activities being designed for Governors will include preparation sessions and mock interviews as well as ensuring all information is shared by the college to inform governors to discharge their duties to the highest standard.

It was noted by the committee that the college has not graded itself on skills yet but will need to do so very soon as an addendum to the original submission.

The college nominee was confirmed as the Deputy Principal for Education and Learners and the Skills nominee would be the Vice-Principal for Finance, Resources and Regional Affairs.

9. Quality of Teaching and Learning including HE

22CQ11

The Deputy Principal described the approach that the new head of Quality was implementing at the college and that whilst new to the quality team they were not new to the college or quality issues. They have been undertaking a series of deep dives to help get to the core of current practices and understand what pedagogical improvements need to occur.

The process is grounded in evidence based learning and the college is already seeing some Continuous improvement moves and sharing of best practices. Next academic year will have built in time slots for development activity whilst this year a series of lunchtime 'educational snack' sessions will be provided.

It was noted that this will need to grow as the initial launch session was not well attended. The student governor shared that they had discussed some of this with their educators and they felt they had no time over lunch to dedicate to it as they would either be still teaching or undertaking other work.

This was acknowledged and this year was described as a short term best fix with dedicated time being found for the next academic year. It was also agreed that those delivering Aspire Academies would struggle with availability and that this would also be investigated. It was shared that short sessions would be recorded so a wider audience could share them.

The committee noted that there have been ten lesson observations so far and asked what the ambition was for that in terms of numbers and how many the college thought would provide a big enough sample size to clearly identify impactful improvements?

The college confirmed that the aim was for 90% of all educators to have an observation by the February half-term of each academic year, but that this year was a launch year for the plan. New staff and those new to Petroc would be prioritised.

The committee asked if the college was confident that it had the right people with the right skills acting as observers. It was confirmed that the observers had all had training to perform the role and were up to date on educational matters, although that would need to be maintained.

The staff governor shared that the aim to have schemes of work and curriculum written by the start of term was the aim for all the educators as well, however there are dependencies that they would need completed in central processes. The executive agreed that the tools and support would need to be put in place.

10. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

22CQ12

The QIP was taken as read and it was confirmed that the format would be maintained for this academic year and changed ahead of 2023/2024.

The committee asked that the Deputy Principals report cross references with the QIP to provide even more clarity and assurance and this was agreed to.

It was agreed that the Deputy Principal would present an updated report to the Board at the next meeting considering the requests and challenges from the committee. This was thought to be able to close the feedback loop faster and keep the whole board informed of key curriculum and quality matters.

The link governor shared that they talked to some students on their visit and that they were very positive about their experience and talked through their progression options with them.

11. Safeguarding and SEN update

22CQ13

The Link Governor for SEND confirmed to the committee that they had had an initial meeting with that college lead and attended the recent Safeguarding and Prevent session and raised some questions. The result has been that they will be conducting a joint meeting with the lead on Send and Safeguarding in due course to gain an overall picture of the provision and will be able to report back to governors. The main question for the committee will be to establish if high needs should be reported in a different way.

It was noted that there is discussion of any increase in SEN learners in Tiverton and the committee asked for reassurance that the college would be prepared for that. The Principal confirmed that with each learner a support plan is put in place with associated funding and staffing although there is a central overhead incurred. Reference was made to the Sustain and Grow Programme underway to securing the financial stability of the college and allowing for further improvements in the longer term.

The competing pressures of out of county placements and some learners effectively just experiencing being in day care rather than educationally challenging environments was discussed across the sector. Petroc feels that that this area as well preparation for adulthood is well provided for with a real vision and ambition for the learners involved. There is discussion about to begin about independent living opportunities for learners as well.

The link governor shared that they talked to some students on their visit and that they were very positive about their experience and talked though their progression options with them.

Action List

Action No	Action	Owner	Date Due	Status
1	Deputy Principal to present an updated report to the next Board meeting	JJ	19 April 2023	
2	Deputy Principals report to cross reference the QIP in future presentations	JJ	19 April 2023	
3	Governance Ofsted development plan to be developed and shared	JJ/JB	9 May 2023	Workshop on Board Away Day as culmination of work
4	Update on the actions from the apprenticeship improvement work to the next committee meeting	JJ	23 May 2023	
5	Report from SEND link governor to committee/board	DS/MW/PG	23 May 2023	
	Next meeting to have an in-depth report on Apprenticeships	Craig Litster	8 February 2023	Completed
	Next meeting to have an in-depth report on attendance	Craig Litster	8 February 2023	Completed

	College to undertake survey review and report learner information to this committee and staff information to the Finance and General Purposes Committee	Sheena Murphy-Collett	8 February 2023	Completed
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The meeting concluded at 18:04

The next meeting of the committee is on 23 May 2023