

PETROC

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held via Teams on 8 May 2024 16:30

Present:

Pat Denham	Vice-Chair of Board, Chair of Committee
Lindy Stacey	Chair of Board
Deborah Watson	External Governor
Dawn Stabb	External Governor
Katerina Kolyva	External Governor
Melinda Stacey	Chair of Board
Keira Keen	Student Governor
Sean Mackney	Principal and CEO
Jon Price	Staff Governor

In attendance:

Jason Jones	Deputy Principal Education and Learners
Bill Blythe	Vice Principal Finance and Resources and Regional Affairs
Joanna Boardman	Director of Governance
Jeanne Gollop	Head of Quality
Caroline Chipperfield	Director of HE (for item 6.1 and 6.2)
Hannah Rollins	Faculty Manager (for item 6.2)
Jon Baglow	Faculty Manager (for item 6.2)

1. Apologies for Absence

No Apologies received – all members present.

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

23CQ06

The minutes and actions from the previous meeting were approved.

It was noted that all actions were up to date.

5. Matters Brought Forward by the Chair

None

6. Office for Students (OFS) Conditions of Registration

23CQ07

The Director of Higher Education attended the meeting to present the item and took the attached paper as read. They clarified that as Petroc delivers a Higher Education (HE) provision it is required to be registered with the Office for Students (OFS). The OFS registration is dependent on the provider complying with a set of conditions (the conditions of registration).

It was shared that Petroc has around 300 students enrolled on HE programmes currently and charges the maximum fee available to it of £9k per year. Institutions who take part in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and receive a grading may charge a higher fee, but Petroc does not have a TEF rating at this stage.

To date it was shared that no college based HE provision had revied a review from the OFS so very few comparators existed, however 8 full HE institutions had, and it has been through student complaints triggering an inspection.

It was reported that Petroc is generally compliant with the conditions, however two areas to watch would be the IT offering and support as well as keeping programmes up to date. As the HE provision is validated through Plymouth University it was shared that it can take a considerable amount of time to complete the process.

They shared that the faculty has developed an action plan to monitor and test the conditions register to ensure compliance and welcomed any questions, comments, or input.

KK commented that the paper was well presented and clearly explained complex issues in a succinct way using benchmarked data.

They shared concern around the digital and estate infrastructure risks and asked for a reflection in the future on where it had been strengthened already and what progress had been made as well as what might be looked at for improvements going on.

The committee suggested writing more on the areas of success and strength to balance out any negatives and to provide a stronger narrative on the positive aspects.

JM shared that they had recently been in a meeting with the OFS working through lessons learnt and that there may be a move from deep dive compliance reviews to partnership reviews, which in the case of Petroc would start with Plymouth University.

They went on to comments that where Ofsted approaches had been applied there were usually well-structured organisations and that the data and how it is used is important. They thought the paper set things out well and suggested that having the action plans look at the data regularly and see how that changes it and make the appropriate amendments.

CC shared that the national data picture was challenging for colleges to use, however internal data and comparisons there could be used.

DS suggested looking at primary schools who have traditionally low cohorts and see if any practice there with data analysis could be used.

The Principal and CEO and CC also shared that the relationship with Plymouth University was strong, and that the college uses the National Student Survey Outcomes as a useful tool.

PD asked what plans the college had on improving assessment and feedback. CC shared that it was a large challenge and with the advancement in Artificial Intelligence. The HE Faculty stated that the programmes tended to not be exam heavy, but rather used presentations, project work and real-world examples. There are increasing demands for delivery and alternative assessments for be meaningful and moving from assessment to 'growing in learning'.

The confirmed consideration and discussion of the report was noted for the minutes as well as recognising the challenges for the future. The committee requested updates to each meeting appended to the Deputy Principals Report with an associated action plan for weaker areas.

7. Apprenticeship Update

23CQ08

The Faculty Manager for Higher Apprenticeships shared a presentation on the screen on the range of programmes on offer and the levels of expected recruitment.

The committee asked about the low recruitment figures and what the team were doing to lift them.

It was shared that it takes time to build trusted relationships with employers, but that work was underway to continue to grow with the NHS where improvements have already been seen. The other employment areas were described as more challenging due to low sizes in organisations, but that they were working closely with the Business Engagement team to grow numbers.

The Faculty Manager for Apprenticeships then shared their report which focused on FE Apprenticeships and the growth plan in quality, achievements, and outcomes that the college had put in place.

It was shared that it was difficult to get in year statistics however it was felt that the college was around the national achievement rate of 57% and improvements could clearly be seen in learning and research and application of learning.

The committee asked that national data could be aligned to the data tables in the appendices.

The Deputy Principal also mentioned that the college had now developed an offer with Cognisant that supports ALS needs in apprenticeships and creates support packages as well as accessing additional funding draw downs.

CC/JB/HR left the meeting at 17:41

8. Deputy Principals Education and Learners Report 23CQ09

The Deputy Principal took the report as read and spoke to some key elements within it.

Quality of Education/Teaching/Learning and Assessment

The Deputy Principal provided an update on the College's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

- While there had been significant improvement in some areas, the overall QIP rating remained red or amber.
- Attendance remains a key challenge, despite the resolution of Wi-Fi and CELCAT issues earlier in the year.
- Staff capacity limitations were shared as hindering efforts to effectively address attendance and related issues. The college is exploring options to address this through staff utilisation and financial recovery plans.
- Maths and English attendance have shown pleasing improvement, due to a more rigorous application of Learner Success Standards.

- Retention rates have dipped below the 90% target, currently still at 89.04%. Efforts are ongoing to improve retention.

A Governor inquired about the root cause of attendance issues (systemic or capacity-related) and it answered that while initial system issues have been resolved, staff capacity is currently the main challenge.

A governor noted the national trend of lower attendance post-pandemic. The Deputy Principal clarified that the decreased attendance is concentrated in specific student groups, making targeted interventions more complex.

Another Governor suggested exploring data on student demographics like commuting students, mature students, and students with families, as these factors might be contributing to lower attendance.

The composition of the benchmarking group that the college is a member of was discussed. The group comprises colleges with similar characteristics, including Portsmouth, Shrewsbury, and Cirencester.

Actions from the committee for the DP to own:

- Investigate the feasibility of providing targeted support to address specific student groups with lower attendance rates.
- Explore the possibility of obtaining benchmarking data from recently inspected colleges.

Employer Engagement

Employer co-construction of curriculum has been a focus this year, with notable improvements in engagement quality, although consistency remains a work in progress.

Curriculum QIPs

Underpinning curriculum QIPs are progressing well, with positive changes observed and a promising direction of travel.

Learner Engagement and Learner Voice Survey Results:

- Response rate increased, but overall satisfaction decreased by 3% on average.
- Reasons for the decrease are being investigated.
- Feeling safe was a major concern for students, and the college is looking at ways to improve safety.

Lesson Observation Update

- More observations conducted this year than last, but still not enough.
- Capacity limitations in FMs and the need to observe each person more than once are challenges.

- Looking for external support for SEND student Teaching & Learning observation.

Learner Numbers:

- The number of learners with lower than GCSE grade 4 has significantly increased.
- This is due to a combination of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in admissions criteria.

Learner Exclusions:

- There has been an increase in temporary exclusions year-over-year.
- This is linked to the increased behavioural issues discussed earlier.
- It is a national problem that needs to be addressed.
- Progression and Destinations:
- Recording of intended progression has improved significantly.
- More needs to be done to improve actual progression rates.
- The college is tracking progress within level 0 for SEND learners.

Safeguarding and SEND

- There is a continuing national increase in demand for safeguarding and SEND support.
- The college is seeing an increase in mental health concerns and disclosures of child-on-child abuse.
- The Home to Onsite (H20) program is providing valuable support to learners with mental health issues and those who have been out of school for a long time.
- The college is working with the DCC to develop a commissioning approach to pay for SEN support so that they can staff appropriately before committing to taking on new learners.

Ofsted Readiness:

- The college remains in a heightened state of readiness for an Ofsted inspection.
- An inspection is likely to occur within the next 3-4 months.

Action No	Action	Owner	Date Due	Status
COMPLETED ACTIONS				
	Report on register completion to be circulated after the half term break by correspondence. The Deputy Principal will share that report with the Director of Governance who will send it out to the committee for review and comment.	JJ/JB	23/3/24	Completed
	The committee asked for a specific update at the next meeting on tuition fund impact.	JJ	8/5/24	Completed
	Add commitment to diversity and neuro diversity to the Study Programme and approve by Chairs Action.	JJ/JB	8/5/24	Completed
	A deep Dive into Animal Care, Plumbing and Electrical to be presented to the next committee meeting.	JJ	8/5/24	Completed
	The Director of Governance to review the asks for further information and work with the Chair to ensure the right reviews are fed into the right forums.	MS/JB	23/3/24	Completed
	Deputy Principal to present an updated report to the next Board meeting	JJ	19 April 2023	Completed
	Deputy Principals report to cross reference the QIP in future presentations	JJ	19 April 2023	Completed
	Governance Ofsted development plan to be developed and shared	JJ/JB	9 May 2023	Completed
	Update on the actions from the apprenticeship improvement work to the next committee meeting	JJ	23 May 2023	Completed
	Report from SEND link governor to committee/board	DS/MW/PG	23 May 2023	Completed
	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
Paper sections on future have numbers throughout	Jason Jones	6 Feb 2024	Completed
Deputy Principals report to cross reference the QIP in future presentations	Jason Jones	6 Feb 2024	Completed

The meeting concluded at 17:54