



TRURO AND PENWITH COLLEGE CORPORATION



Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee

Minutes of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee held on Wednesday 24 May 2023 at Truro College.

Members: Mrs L Batchelor, Mr G Doody, Mrs S Sanderson (Chair) and Mr M Tucker (Principal)

Also Present: Ms L Briscoe (Director of Student Experience), Ms A Bull (Director of Curriculum Development), Ms H McKinstry (Director of Apprenticeships and Partnerships), Ms L Maggs (Director of Operations, Penwith College), Ms V Pearson (Director of Teaching and Learning), Mr R Townsend (Chair of the Corporation) and Mrs A Winter (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies: Mr R Bray, Mr D Collins, Mr D Tse and Prof F Wall

Item	Decision	Action
23/17	<p>Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023 were APPROVED as a correct record.</p>	
23/18	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>18.01 Student Achievements (Minute 23/02.02)</p> <p>Apprenticeship achievement data for 2021/22 had been circulated (via Convene) and indicated an overall success rate of 64% (national average of 53%).</p> <p>18.02 DfE Performance and Attainment Data (Minute 23/14)</p> <p>Governors noted that national data had not been circulated to the Committee as the DfE had not published full data in the usual way and information was heavily caveated. Modifications to assessments during the pandemic meant data comparisons were unreliable.</p>	
23/19	<p>Provision for Learners with High Needs – Deep Dive Feedback and Action Plan</p> <p>The Principal explained the context for initiating a thorough review of provision for learners with high needs. The revised Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) included far higher expectations and colleges would be judged on a par with specialist providers. Many other colleges were also in the process of reviewing and revising provision.</p> <p>The Director of Teaching and Learning summarised the outcomes of the deep dive which reviewed provision within the Foundations Studies department as well as learners with high needs enrolled in other programme areas.</p>	

	<p>The feedback from specialist, external scrutiny had resulted in a complete overhaul of provision and huge focus of activity to improve the curriculum offer and learner experience. An extensive range of developments and actions were being taken forward with Curriculum Task Groups and Process Task Groups leading on the changes. Task Groups were providing weekly progress updates to SMT.</p> <p>Governors discussed the recommendations and asked about the impact on staff and whether they were on board with the developments.</p> <p>The SMT explained that although staff had initially been apprehensive, they were willing to engage with the process, understood the rationale for developments and there had been good buy-in. Some additional staffing resource had been brought in to assist with the work and HR staff were also supporting the team to help maintain their exceptional dedication and commitment. In addition, staff training was being revised to up-skill staff and ensure they were well-equipped for the shift in approach and had the necessary expertise.</p> <p>The Committee was aware that the College’s provision for learners with high needs was held in high regard by parents and the local community and asked how potential risks to reputation arising from the changes were being addressed.</p> <p>The Principal indicated that the increased emphasis on the educational experience would be explained to stakeholders and handled carefully to avoid any loss of standing. Discussion would be taking place with the Council about shifting Foundation Studies programmes from 5 days/week to 3 days/week for new enrolments from 2023/2024. This was to ensure appropriate, specialist staffing for delivery and enable a high-quality educational experience to be provided. The College’s current commitments to existing learners and obligation to deliver Council-funded 5 days/week provision (as a result of the Judicial Review in 2019) would be honoured.</p> <p>Following debate, the Committee SUPPORTED the developments and AGREED that the full Corporation should be briefed on the outcome of the review and significant changes being implemented.</p>	<p>SMT for June Corporation agenda</p>
<p>23/20</p>	<p>Lesson Observations</p> <p>The Committee considered a report on the internal deep dives and formal lesson observations completed in 2022/23 and noted the changes to the methodology introduced this year. Observation techniques had been modified and lessons were no longer graded, in line with Ofsted’s methodology. Observers provided feedback identifying areas for improvement and possible development activities with an individual action plan for lecturers. The deep dive approach included 2 or 3 days within a department, gathering a range of evidence, talking with students and gaining a deeper understanding.</p> <p>Governors also noted that observations of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) would be introduced this term to help improve the consistency of classroom support for learners with high needs and ensure LSAs were being appropriately utilised.</p>	

	<p>Governors asked how staff had responded to the revised approach and were told that lecturers welcomed the more supportive, developmental approach to lesson observations. The introduction of deep dives had also been extremely informative and successful.</p>	
23/21	<p>Governor Learning Walk Feedback</p> <p>Feedback from governor learning walks this term were overwhelmingly positive, particularly witnessing well-structured lessons, positive encouragement by lecturers as well as good facilities and equipment. Students were generally engaged and happy with provision. Learning walks had taken place in a variety of different programme areas as well as Student Services and Learning Services.</p> <p>Governors appreciated the opportunity to visit departments and talk informally with staff and students to increase their understanding of day-to-day teaching and learning.</p> <p>Feedback and specific comments were being reviewed and addressed by SMT. Also, the feedback pro-forma was being redesigned to capture more meaningful responses from governor learning walks and contribute to quality processes.</p>	LM to take forward
23/22	<p>Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Update</p> <p>The Committee reviewed progress with the QIP which was being continually updated and shared monthly with governors (via Convene). A great deal of activity had been underway and many actions had been achieved. The three curriculum areas identified for rapid improvement were a particular focus of attention.</p> <p>During discussion, the Committee asked about improvements to ensure consistency of the tutorial programme and were informed that central resources supported the tutorial programme. Also, some topics were delivered by specialists across tutorial groups and provision types.</p> <p>Governors questioned the relevance of the tutorial programme for adult learners and management explained that the same tutorial topics were covered but content was adjusted to ensure it was age appropriate and relevant (examples were provided).</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to hear that time for one-to-one discussions with tutors had been retained and was valued by students. Students invariably named their tutor as the 'trusted adult' they would turn to if in difficulty.</p> <p>The Committee also asked about retention rates and recognised that comparisons with recent years were problematic due to the impact of the pandemic. Governors REQUESTED that the QIP was revised to clarify data trends and to quantify the size of the cohort/provision.</p> <p>The Committee was satisfied that actions and improvements were being proactively addressed.</p>	LM to add clarification
23/23	<p>Matrix Accreditation Report</p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Matrix accreditation processes in April 2023 to review the quality of the College's information, advice and guidance services. The inspectors had conducted a very thorough, in depth review including evidence from staff, students and employers.</p>	

	<p>The findings of the accreditation visit were very positive, recognising improvements implemented since the review in 2020. The areas for development suggested in the report were not unexpected and were already being actioned.</p> <p>The Committee congratulated all those involved in ensuring the quality of the information, advice and guidance services and the successful accreditation process.</p>	
23/24	<p>Safeguarding and Welfare Update</p> <p>The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) provided an update on activities and governors noted that the biannual Section 175/157 Safeguarding Self-Assessment Audit was being prepared for submission.</p> <p>The DSL explained the actions arising from a recent deep dive into safeguarding operations. She also summarised the incidents and issues recorded on the CPOMs tracking database. Safeguarding and welfare continued to be a very busy area of activity with more than 3000 incidents reported between September 2022 and May 2023.</p> <p>Governors asked for clarification of the data categories and noted that mental health issues remained the biggest cause of reporting. Some additional funding had been secured for mental health training to help upskill staff. The CPOMS system was continuing to be adapted to simplify reporting and improve monitoring.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Lead Governor particularly highlighted the useful inclusion of specialist external training and briefings at each termly meeting of the safeguarding team on topics such as suicide prevention.</p>	
23/25	<p>Investor in Careers</p> <p>The Committee discussed the Investor in Careers reassessment process and aim to maintain the 'Quality in Careers' award for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG).</p> <p>The Lead Governor for CEIAG and Committee had been involved with the development of the College's Careers Strategy setting out the College's careers education programme. Governors had also visited the new Careers Zone.</p> <p>The Committee asked about careers support for learners with high needs and noted that the same approach was adopted across all areas, but the careers education programme was adapted to ensure it was relevant for learners.</p> <p>Following discussion, Governors CONFIRMED an ongoing commitment to high quality CEIAG and achievement of the 'Quality in Careers' standard.</p>	
23/26	<p>Recruitment and Enrolment Projections</p> <p>The Principal reported that the new online admissions system had streamlined administrative processes and enabled applications to be tracked more accurately.</p> <p>Projections for 2023/24 were provided which indicated the numbers of course offers made and accepted.</p>	

	<p>Although FE applications were slightly down compared to last year, the offers accepted had increased by around 500, with 2980 acceptances so far. The applications pattern suggested applicants were better informed and clearer about choices. The College was liaising with schools to help improve the knowledge and understanding of post-16 options within schools.</p> <p>Governors noted trends in course type and subject popularity as well as the numbers making joint applications to Truro and Callywith or Truro and Penwith. The Principal confirmed that applications for the IB were consistent with previous years. Numbers for Level 2 courses including Maths and English were being carefully monitored and could present challenges.</p> <p>Higher Education applications remained flat, bucking the declining trend experienced by other FE institutions. Although Level 6 applications had reduced (due to Covid legacy), applications for Level 4 had risen. The new Head of the University Centre was working hard to increase recruitment.</p> <p>Adjustments to Apprenticeship provision in response to changing demands and interest were explained. Provision was being focused in key areas and in higher level apprenticeships which were an increasingly popular alternative to university.</p> <p>In response to questions, the Principal listed the courses that would not be running in 2023/24 due to low application numbers and outlined alternative pathways which were available. He reassured governors that these programmes had not been removed from the curriculum and could be reinstated if applications increased and courses became viable in the future.</p> <p>Governors noted that trainees were taking up apprenticeships rather than occupational qualifications (eg. Painting & Decorating, Professional Cookery). The Committee asked whether sufficient work experience could be secured and the Principal responded that the College had partnered with a range of good employers who could provide high quality placements and it was continuing to expand business links.</p>	
23/27	<p>Curriculum Developments, T Levels and IoT Update</p> <p>The Director of Curriculum Development summarised changes for 2023/24 which were generally small adjustments to provision and included a revamp of the Progression 1 course; closure of Personal, Professional Development (PPD) Level 3; new Subsidiary Certificates (equivalent to one A level) in Criminology and Sports Science.</p> <p>As the DfE would not accept remote placements for T Levels this was causing some difficulty for the Software Design course, as hybrid working was the norm for many businesses.</p> <p>The Committee asked whether the Subsidiary Certificate was recognised for university progression and learned that these qualifications gained UCAS points in the usual way. Governors also asked why the Level 3 PPD had been closed and the Director explained the rationale and that Extended Diplomas or Apprenticeships were a better route for learners.</p>	

23/28	<p>Higher Education Update</p> <p>28.01 College Board of Studies for HE (CBSHE) The CBSHE was due to meet on 26 May 2023.</p> <p>28.02 OfS Conditions of Registration – Risk Register The Committee noted there had been no changes to the risk register and risk issues since the last meeting.</p> <p>28.03 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Update The TEF ratings for HE providers were due to be published in the summer.</p> <p>Governors asked about the impact of Falmouth University’s plans to develop accommodation and facilities for more than 700 students in Truro. The Principal indicated that there was potential overlap with College HE provision and there could be implications for the College. The proposals were being followed closely.</p>	
23/29	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The Committee would meet at 5.00 pm on Wed 27 September 2023.</p>	ALL to note