



**USP College Corporation  
Quality Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 6 December 2023  
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams  
Meeting commenced: 16.00hrs  
Meeting ended: 17.50hrs**

**Present**

Vikki Liogier	Independent Member	Chair
Phillip Lennon	Independent Member	
Clare Smith	Staff Member	
Nick Patterson	Staff Member	
Toni Lewis	Student Member	
Evie Naylor	Student Member	
Dan Pearson	Chief Executive	

**Apologies for Absence**

Nicola Curtis	Independent Member
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**In attendance**

Clare White	Principal
Mark Silverman	Interim consultant
Luke Brewster	Head of Higher Education
Craig Davidson	Assistant Principal Student Experience
James Parker	Assistant Principal Quality, Performance & Innovation
Andy Shepherd	Head of Student Services

**Clerk**

Sue Glover	Clerk to the Corporation
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The Clerk advised that as the previous Chair of the Committee had resigned suddenly from the Board, 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. In addition, Phillip Lennon had been invited to attend to ensure that the meeting was quorate.

It was agreed that the College self-assessment item would be taken as a first item after the standing items to enable to the Chief Executive to be present for this item.

**QC.44.23 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.45.23**     **Apologies for absence**  
Apologies for absence were received from

- Nicola Curtis

The Quality Committee agreed to accept the apologies for absence.

**QC.46.23**     **Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2023**  
The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed as a correct record, subject to minor typographical amendment as discussed.

**QC.47.23**     **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.48.23**     **College Self-assessment report (SAR) for 2022/23 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2023/24**

The Assistant Principal Quality, Performance & Innovation presented, for consideration and approval, the College SAR for 2022/23 and QIP for 2023/24.

Members were advised that

- the SAR sets out a review of College performance in 2022/23
- the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) sets out the key improvement priorities, planned actions and targets for the year

Members reviewed the detail of the document, noting

- performance against previous year's targets
- proposed targets for 2023/24
- overall effectiveness, key strengths and improvement priorities for the following areas:
  - Quality of Education
  - Behaviour and Attitudes
  - Personal Development
  - Leadership and Management
  - Provision for learners with high needs
  - Innovation and local skills needs

Members were advised that at this time, provisional grading is 'Good' for all areas with the exception for the Provision for learners with high needs and Personal Development, which are judged to be 'Outstanding'.

The Committee agreed that the provisional grading for each of the areas was appropriate. Members considered the key areas for improvement, noting that attendance to main study programmes and English and maths needs to improve. Attendance is tracked and monitored weekly and the new attendance strategy is being followed. Reporting absences through a new app has been used and the student governors commented that this had sometimes been difficult to navigate and the Assistant Principal advised he would follow up on this outside of the meeting.

The Committee reviewed the QIP for 2023/24, acknowledging that the areas identified for improvement are those highlighted in the SAR and that some of the areas identified are the same issues raised in the previous year. The Committee recognised that one of its key responsibilities was to ensure that the QIP is monitored at each meeting throughout the year and to focus on the progress being made against the areas for improvement, thus enabling the committee to be assured that the strategies for improving are effective.

It was suggested that as some of the areas for improvement have continued from the previous year, a larger QIP over 3 years could be considered with some realistically posted milestones. In discussion, it was agreed that this could potentially be a better route to establish progress being made. However, it was acknowledged that this could detract from the short-term progress being made. It was agreed that proposals would be brought to the next meeting for consideration.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee recommends to the Corporation Board for approval the

- College self-assessment report for 2022/23
- Quality Improvement Plan for 2023/24

### **QC.49.23**

#### **Learner Satisfaction Induction Survey 2023**

The Assistant Principal Quality, Performance & Innovation presented the outcome of the Learner Satisfaction Induction Survey 2023.

Members were advised that

- feedback was reviewed by the following areas
  - Overall
  - Head of Learning area
  - Course type
  - Ethnicity
  - Gender
- overall responses were very positive with the majority being over 90%
- where differences have been identified an action plan has been devised and implemented to further investigate the reasons why
- the number of students who had responded to the survey has increased compared to the previous year; the percentage of respondents versus the full student cohort is 58%

Members reviewed the responses to each of the questions, noting that students continue to rate areas such as content comprehension, building on prior knowledge and clear instructions very positively with scores consistently above 90%. However, there had been some declines relating to a sense of belonging, opportunities for students to ask questions and contributions with the largest decrease around lesson interactivity ratings with analysis identifying that hybrid delivery is likely contributing to the reduced sense of interactivity and engagement. The Committee was advised that there is a plan in place to support teachers delivering in hybrid to deliver more interactive learning experiences and promote a greater sense of belonging.

It was pleasing to note that scores relating to safeguarding and support services have remained strong.

The Committee agreed that the survey presented a good review and it was pleasing to note the positive student voice, particularly around the statutory requirement of safeguarding, wellbeing and British values.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

### **Dan Pearson and Mark Silverman left the meeting**

#### **QC.50.23**

#### **Teacher Improvement Practitioners Support (TIPS)**

The Head of Quality gave a presentation of some examples of how TIPS supports teachers who are new to teaching.

Members were reminded that at the last meeting the committee had asked if some examples of the CPD opportunities given to teachers could be brought to the next meeting to help give a better understanding to members.

The presentation highlighted that all new teachers are automatically assigned a TIP who remain a support for them for at least 6 weeks if they are new to teaching.

Members were pleased to see the extent to which they are supported and asked if the presentation could be circulated after the meeting.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the presentation.

#### **QC.51.23**

#### **Internal Progression**

The Assistant Principal Quality, Performance & Innovation presented a report and gave a presentation, which provided an update on the level of internal progression.

Members were advised that although year 1 level 3 progression is steadily improving, there are declines in level 1 and level 2 continuation rates that require attention.

In discussion, the committee was advised that a deeper understanding of barriers and increased student support needs will be required.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the update on internal progression.

#### **QC.52.23**

#### **Higher Education self-assessment report (SAR) and quality improvement plan (QIP) for 2022/23**

The Director of HE presented for consideration and approval the self-assessment report and quality improvement plan for the College's HE provision for 2022/23.

Members were reminded that there is no requirement by the Office for Students (OfS) for providers to submit an Annual Quality Assessment Assurance Statement as had been required in previous years. However, the Corporation Board should continue to receive appropriate assurance and the SAR and QIP are presented to provide a clear statement on the quality of the College's higher education provision and to set appropriate actions for improvement.

Members reviewed the detail of the SAR and QIP, noting that:

- USP has met the OfS conditions of registration and continues to meet the QAA expectations for Quality and Standards through consistent engagement with the External Examiner processes and the application of awarding organisation academic regulations
- all five key judgement areas under the OfS Quality Standards were met

- results from the National Student Survey (NSS) are above the benchmark set by OfS in 2022/23
- student outcomes, namely continuation, completion and progression were not available at the time of writing and are due to be published in the new year

Members discussed the issues raised and were pleased to note the level of students who agree that the teaching on their course is good or better is above the benchmark set by the National Student Survey. Members asked that the student outcomes are presented to the committee when available.

The Committee reviewed the QIP for 2023/24, noting the areas identified for improvement and agreed these were appropriate following the various issues raised in the SAR.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the SAR and QIP and to recommend to the Corporation Board for acceptance to give assurance on the quality of the College's HE provision

### **Andy Shepherd joined the meeting**

#### **QC.53.23**

#### **College Policies**

The Head of Student Services presented the following policies for approval:

- Safeguarding and Prevent policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy

Members were advised that

- the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy has been further updated following the previous meeting to include latest changes in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document
- there are no significant changes to the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Members reviewed the detail of each of the policies, commenting that, in due course, the safeguarding policy should include reference to the online safety act recent published. The Committee was reminded that governor's responsibilities in terms of safeguarding are fulfilled through participating in the safeguarding updates provided and through the Link Governor Safeguarding reporting to the Board, who meets with the Head of Student Services.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board for approval

- the Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

### **Andy Shepherd left the meeting**

#### **QC.54.23**

#### **Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 2021-2024**

The Principal presented a report and presentation giving an annual update on the USP Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024.

Members were reminded that

- when the strategy was introduced it was agreed that an annual update on progress made against the Principles would be brought to this Committee

- the strategy has been developed to promote and support staff and student wellbeing

Members considered the progress made in line with the principles identified in the strategy:

- 'that our strategy will provide our students and staff with the tools to enable them to thrive'
- 'we will ensure that we have support mechanisms in place to help students when they start to struggle with their mental health'
- 'we will link with specialist support services to ensure that when people are ill we can support rapid and effective recovery'

Members reviewed the key actions taken and commended the good progress made against each of the principles identified. It was noted that as the final year approaches, the strategy is currently under review to create an updated three-year strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the progress made against the Principles in the USP Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which will be reviewed again by the Committee in December 2024

## **QC.55.23**

### **Equality & Diversity**

The Assistant Principal Quality, Performance & Innovation presented, for consideration and approval the:

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2022/23
- Equality Objectives

Members were advised that the

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy sets out the College's duties and commitments to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion through all its activities, including:
  - Public Sector Equality Duty and key aims
  - Protected characteristics and Equality Objectives
  - Implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report for 2022/23 provides an annual, evaluative summary of the College's approach, progress, and performance with regard to its Equality, Diversity & Inclusion duties.
- Equality Action Plan and Objectives details the 6 key Equality, Diversity & Inclusion objectives that the College will commit to over the next 5 years, actions on how these will be achieved and targets against which these will be measured.

Members reviewed each of the documents, noting that

- the gender pay gap has decreased but remains over 20%
- staff demographic data shows a predominantly female workforce, particularly in curriculum and business support functions
- key strategic priorities aim to increase diversity in A level and STEM programmes and build ethnicity representation in college leadership to 15%

Members were reminded that each of the documents are displayed in the appropriate section of the College website.

**Agreed**

The Quality Committee recommends to the Corporation Board for approval the

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report 2022/23
- Equality Objectives 2021-2025

**QC.56.23 Any Other Business**

There were no items of any other business

**QC.57.23 Schedule of Quality Committee meetings 2023/24**

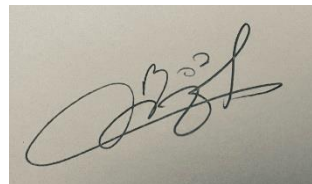
Tuesday 5 March 2024

Tuesday 18 June 2024

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 be 'J. J. L.', written over a light-colored rectangular background.

**DATE: 5 March 2024**