



**USP College Corporation  
Quality Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2023  
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams  
Meeting commenced: 16.00hrs  
Meeting ended: 17.45hrs**

**Present**

Ian Hockey	Independent Member	Chair
Nicola Curtis	Independent Member	
Clare Smith	Staff Member	
Harvey Wayland	Student Member	
Maisie Cosby	Student Member	
Trevor Hutchinson	Co-opted Member	

**Apologies for Absence**

Dan Pearson	Principal and Chief Executive
Vikki Liogier	Independent Member
Donna Williams	Staff Member

**In attendance**

Clare White	Deputy Principal Corporate & Student Services
Jon Briggs	Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum
James Parker	Assistant Principal Quality, Performance and Innovation
Luke Brewster	Head of HE & Access (item 5 only)
Andy Shepherd	Head of Student Services (item 9 only)

**Clerk**

Sue Glover	Clerk to the Corporation
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**QC.01.23 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.02.23 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from

- Dan Pearson
- Vikki Liogier
- Donna Williams

The Quality Committee agreed to accept the apologies for absence.

**QC.03.23 Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022**

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

**QC.04.23 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.

The Deputy Principal was invited to update the Committee on the status of the teach-out of ITEC apprentices. Members were advised there are a total of 6 apprentices in the final stages of the teach-out process. Interviews and project work are being carried out in March with results due in March and April. Bespoke support has been put in place for some learners who are re-sitting to ensure they have the support to re-sit and achieve.

It was agreed there were no other matters arising from the previous meeting.

### **Higher Education**

**QC.05.23 Partnership arrangements with Oxford Business College (OBC)**  
The Head of HE presented a report to update on the current performance of OBC.

Members were advised

- the College is currently in the middle of the teach-out process
- Student numbers total 401
- 83% of learners have passed and progressed from the February and May 2021 cohorts
- Submission and pass rates remain high at 85%

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

- the teach-out process will complete at the end of July 2023 with exam board completion in August when it is anticipated that up to 55 learners will be certificated
- the most recent cohort of 70 learners finished in February and the exam board will be completed in due course
- since the last meeting of the Committee the exam board has been completed for the cohort who finished in October. 98 learners started Level 5 and 72 completed, providing 73% achievement rate
- the exam board took place later than planned due to issues with OBC gathering student work and subsequent tracking of this, which has placed a delay in claiming certificates for learners
- identifying the destinations of learners exiting qualifications will be the next piece of work and upon completion of the contract with OBC an overall analysis piece should be completed

The Committee agreed that a robust process continues to monitor the performance of OBC and asked to be kept informed on destinations and the overall analysis when complete.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the update

**QC.06.23 Higher Education self-assessment report (SAR) and quality improvement plan (QIP) for 2021/22**

The Head of HE presented for consideration and approval the self-assessment report and quality improvement plan for the College's HE provision for 2021/22.

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 beneath the benchmark set by OfS in 2021/22
- the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) run by the OfS aims to encourage higher education providers to improve and deliver excellence in teaching, learning and student outcomes. Upon submission an institution is awarded a 'gold', 'silver' or 'requires improvement' grade. A provider must only submit a report if has over 500 students. Due to USP HE student body being less than 500, a report was not submitted, but plans to do so in 2023/24
- CMA compliance is fully up to date
- the lower achievement, retention and pass rates over previous years

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

- poor achievement is predominately due to the passing of qualifications at OBC and retention level due mainly to some HND cohorts losing one or two students from an already small cohort
- the centralised reporting of student outcome data is a key area for improvement. There are multiple streams of information that are not conducive to MIS reporting

The Committee reviewed the QIP for 2022/23, noting the areas identified for improvement and agreed these were appropriate following the various issues raised in the SAR.

### **Resolved**

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

## **QC.07.23**

### **Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA)**

The Assistant Principal Quality, Performance and Innovation presented a report to update on the current position of Teaching and Learning from September 2022 to February 2023.

Members were advised

- a number of Learning Walks have been conducted with Active Learning, Stretch and Challenge and Assessment for Learning as areas for development, all staff involved in classroom delivery have been seen at least once

- Internal Quality Reviews (deep dives) have been completed in a number of areas to build a picture of strength and areas for improvement against KPIs
- 4 staff identified as at risk for TLA
- a total of 41 staff have gone through Teaching Improvement Practitioners (TIP) mentoring support

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

- of the 4 staff identified as at risk, 2 have since resigned and one has not passed probation and left the college
- the key areas of focus for TLA through TIP support are
  - back to basics
  - active learning
  - stretch and challenge
  - assessment for learning
  - Digitech – upskilling staff digital pedagogy
  - supported experiments

The student members commented that they had taken part in Learning Walks and found this a useful opportunity to understand how other areas function.

The Committee agreed that the practices in place by the College are very robust and appropriate to help support teachers, particularly the areas of good practices associated with the Internal Quality Reviews.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

## **QC.08.23**

### **Key Performance Indicators**

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

Members were advised

- Overall attendance is 82%
- Retention is 96%
- Predicted achievement (risk indicators) is 87.6%

Members reviewed the detail of the report, noting that

- Attendance has shown a decline since November when the additional 40 hours included into students' study programmes
- Retention since last reported has not had any significant changes, there have been a small number of withdrawals and support is being given to any students identified as at risk through low attendance
- Predicted RAG achievement is reviewed via completion of Promonitor Risk Ratings on a half termly basis. Projected achievement is created using an algorithm taking into account a student's attendance together with teacher provided risk, which indicates a potential worst case scenario

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

- the college's attendance strategy has undergone a comprehensive review, resulting in the implementation of a renewed attendance procedure
- through consultation with curriculum managers on strategies to improve attendance the following two key factors having the greatest impact have been highlighted
  - staffing
  - mental health
- a targeted approach to addressing these issues is being explored, which will focus on
  - adapting the delivery model
  - improving the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
  - addressing student wellbeing and staff absence

Members noted that a progress week will be held soon where students have an opportunity to review their current performance versus target grades. The student governors commented that perhaps this could be better communicated to students and some were unaware of how this worked.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

#### **QC.09.23 Careers and Skills Education update**

The Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum gave a presentation on how the College is meeting skills needs.

Members were reminded that Ofsted have updated the inspection framework to include an enhanced inspection which focuses on how well FE Colleges are contributing to the skills needs, with a sub-judgement of 'limited', 'reasonable' or 'strong' contribution.

Members were advised that the College's approach to meeting this requirement is through the creation and implementation of the Employer Involvement Strategy, which has involved the Board's Link Governor for Careers and Employer Engagement.

The Committee considered the proposed key performance indicators to measure the progress against each of the areas relating to the contribution of meeting skills needs and agreed that these were appropriate.

### **Agreed**

It was agreed that these KPIs should be updated and brought to the Committee at each meeting to give assurance that the College is meeting skills needs and would be able to gain an appropriate sub-judgement at a future Ofsted inspection

#### **QC.10.23 Curriculum Development**

The Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum presented a report, which provided an update on curriculum development including the introduction of any new planned provision together with employer involvement in development and delivery.

Members were advised that

- proposed new Sector Areas have been realigned so they are more closely informed by updated local skills needs and priorities, college strategic aims and areas of focus and student positive destination data

- the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of learners, communities and employers who access the college with every aspect focusing on learners reaching their aspirations and career goals, preparing learners for jobs and supporting them on the next steps of their journey
- T Levels are part of the curriculum offer from September 2023 in
  - Health
  - Childcare & Education
  - Science
  - Digital Production, Design & Development
 with further courses offered from September 2024
- there have been minimal changes to the core provision for 16-19 learners
- the college is aiming to increase the breadth of the adult education offer in preparation for the lifelong learning loan entitlement being available in 2025

In discussion, members commented on how sector areas are chosen and were advised that these are derived from research into which are thriving sectors in the local community, discussions with local employers and analysing destination data.

The student members suggested that it would be helpful if teachers could give feedback whenever they participate in an 'industry day' to give an insight into various careers.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report

### **Jon Briggs left the meeting**

## **QC.11.23**

### **USP College Quality Improvement Plan**

The Assistant Principal 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 2022. The top level SAR set the key areas for improvement in the QIP as:

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

It was agreed that good progress continues to be made against the key areas, but that attendance and recruitment, retention and onboarding of new staff remain a concern and are rated 'red' as unlikely to meet target. As discussed previously, a revised attendance process has been implemented.

### **Agreed**

The Quality Committee agreed to receive and note the report.

### **James Parker left the meeting**

## QC.12.23

### **Termly Safeguarding Report**

The Head of Student Services presented a report detailing Safeguarding and Prevent related activities during the autumn term 2022.

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 health reasons for interventions during autumn term and the highest priority reasons why support required
  - common reasons for wellbeing intervention during autumn term compared to previous year
  - interventions by campus
- Child Protection cases
- Children Looked After
- Counselling update
- Prevent update
- Training status update

Members were advised that new changes in legislation now requires the College to obtain all students previous school information. This has had an impact on the level of service and the College is looking into the use of the CPOMS system, the child protection online management system, which allows the secure sharing of safeguarding information as students transfer from school to college, in order to help ease the workload

The number of interventions remains high with mental health issues taking up time. The student members commented that perhaps it could be made known that some students have been trained on how to help each which may help to take pressure off staff.

There have been 28 learners under Child Protection during the term and it was noted that Castle Point and Thurrock continue to be among the lowest reports of prevent related issues.

Members were advised that an audit conducted by Essex County Council on safeguarding is planned at the end of March and feedback will be given to the Committee when available.

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.13.23 Any Other Business**

Members were advised that this was the last meeting being attended by the Co-opted member, Trevor Hutchinson, as he would be leaving the Board. The Chair of the Committee took the opportunity on behalf of the Committee and the Corporation Board to thank Trevor for all his hard work and contribution to the Board and to the College during his time as a co-opted member and wished him well for the future.

There were no other items of any other business.

**QC.14.23 Schedule of Quality Committee meetings 2022/23**

Tuesday 20 June 2023, commencing 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 'A. Smith', written over a light grey rectangular background.

**DATE: 20 June 2023**