

**Minutes of the meeting of the South Bank Colleges Quality & Improvement Committee
held at 4pm on Wednesday 7 February 2024
LSBTC - Nine Elms Campus**

Present

Sue Dare (Chair)
Nigel Duckers
Mario Meizah

Apologies

Thesia Kouloungou
Deborah Johnston
Clare Dignum

In attendance

Fiona Morey	Executive Principal
Wayne Wright	Principal LSBTC
Monica Marongiu	Principal LGC
Elaine Smith	Director of Student Engagement and Well-being
Jacqueline Mutibwa	Clerk to SBC Board

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed the Committee Members to the meeting. The Chair also welcomed Elaine Smith, the new Director of Student Engagement and Well-being to her first Quality & Improvement Committee meeting. The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate. The above apologies were noted.

2. Declarations of Interest

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted the update on matters arising from the previous meeting and that most actions had been completed.

On the proposed changes in the safeguarding and prevent policy 2023/24, the outstanding action concerning the gender transition matter i.e. whether students can use their preferred name on the student register was still being progressed by the College Leadership team and the IT team.

Update on Level 4 Provision

Level 4 qualification (HE) quality report would be a standing item on the agenda of the Committee. An update was tabled at the meeting.

The Committee received an update on the new Level 4 provision which was being delivered in close partnership working with LSBU. There were currently 29 students and the courses being delivered included Engineering, Creative Media (Film and Game Development) and Software Development. The plan was to expand the provision to include Construction & Building, Sciences, Healthcare and Sports. LSBU would help with the validation process/ HE approval process for the Level 4 courses. The key challenges were students not being able to access student loans via Student Finance England and the recruitment of high quality and specialist teaching staff.

A paper on the LSBU and SBC joined-up approach to the Level 4 delivery would be presented to the Committee and the Board at their next meetings.

5. Student Survey Report 2023/24

The Committee discussed the outcome of the student perception of the College (SPOC) survey for Term 1 2023/2024 academic year on various aspects of the College life. The survey focussed on induction, additional support, digital learning platforms, bursary and learning centres. The report analysed the key strengths and actions to address the concerns identified.

The Committee discussed:

- the outcome of the survey which was benchmarked against 75 similar FE colleges surveyed by QDP. The overall response rate was 62%, a significant improvement from the same time last year (23%) and higher than previous years. The overall perception of learners who strongly agree/agree that the college provides a good service was 89%, compared to 84% in 2022/23 and 85% in 2021/22. All areas under the Education Inspection Framework had significantly improved compared to the previous academic year.
- the areas that learners felt most satisfied with which were 'feeling safe' and recommending the college. The other positive areas were 'I would recommend my course', 'I am treated fairly at school' and 'I am happy with what I learn'.
- the areas that learners felt least satisfied with and needed improvement which were work placement requirements and being given a course handbook. Work placements usually take place later in the year i.e. term 2 and 3 and may not have been mentioned in term 1. The college used online course handbooks and hard copies were being developed. Learners were also dissatisfaction with the teaching of English and maths on their course and the scores were lower than the previous year. The SU President gave his views about the findings of the survey and agreed with the overall students perception of the

college that it provides a good service. He also agreed with the learners dissatisfaction about work experience and that it could be improved by offering work placements at least three times a year. This would be pursued for Level 2 and 3 and work experience developed as part of the curriculum.

- the most improved areas which included receiving feedback within two weeks of submitting work and health and safety briefings which were areas of weakness in the previous surveys (2021/22).
- the Level 4 students who were the most dissatisfied group of students, concerns were mainly around induction and course delivery. It was the first year of the qualification and there were lessons learnt. The matters would be investigated to compare the course delivery and student satisfaction with that of LSBU. A response to the survey findings on the causes and actions to address the matters would be included in the next Level 4 report to the Committee.
- the relatively low response rate (62%) and how the survey was conducted. Though the survey was carried out in a variety of ways, student participation needed to increase. Students needed to be encouraged to participate and that the target should be an 80% response rate.

The Committee noted that although the survey results had improved, the College's performance was only average compared to other colleges and further work needed to be done to improve the overall service.

6. In-Year Achievement and Retention Report

The Committee received an update on the predicted achievement and retention rates for the 2023/24 academic year.

The Committee discussed:

- the progress reviews of learners via the curriculum performance reviews. The introduction of the Most Likely Grades system using the RAG rating to predict the achievement rate which predicted an overall achievement of 89%.
- the low achievement courses such as IT and Sciences which were under the Achieving Excellence Programme. Significant improvements had been made on attendance and achievement. The causes of the low achievement were mainly due to staffing issues and course completion which were being addressed.
- the retention rate as at 9 January 2024, which was positive at 97%, an improvement compared to the same time last year. The Committee acknowledged the significant work that had been undertaken to retain new starters post 42 days. Although attendance had improved since last year, there was need for further improvement which would have an impact on achievement.

7. 2023/24 English and Maths Update

The report gave an overview of the current English and Maths progress including attendance, retention and the strategies in place to improve the 2023/24 outcomes.

The Committee discussed:

- the 2023/24 mock GCSE exam results. Overall achievement for English was 66% (all grades) and 13% (high grades); 16-18 yrs was 62% (all grades) and 12% (high grades). Adult students was 88% (all grades) and 21% (high grades). Overall achievement for Maths was 66% (all grades) and 12% (high grades); 16-18 yrs was 65% (all grades) and 11% (high grades). Adult students was 89% (all grades) and 22% (high grades). Only 66% of all GCSE students had sat the mock exams and was one of the main reasons for the low achievement.
- the significant work being undertaken to improve the 2023/24 outcomes which included interventions, attendance strategies, teaching, learning and assessment strategies and the CPD programme. The tuition fund would be used to improve performance.
- the overall attendance performance which was at 79%, a slight improvement since the last meeting in November 2023. There was concern about the LSBTC 16-18yrs attendance despite the various interventions in place. The overall retention was positive at 98%.

8. 2023/24 Apprenticeship Update

The Committee received an update on the 2023/24 apprenticeship provision.

The Committee discussed:

- 2023/24 apprenticeships achievement. 39 apprentices were due to complete the apprenticeships, however, 22 had withdrawn these were the legacy learners (who lost their jobs during the pandemic and are no longer on the programme). This had an impact on the predicted achievement which was 44%. Though there was an improvement compared to the previous two years, performance was still below the 50% target and the provision would continue to be monitored by the ESFA until it improved. The focus for 2023/24 was to maximise achievement for the learners and the support and strategies in place to improve the outcome were noted.
- the apprenticeships attendance which continued to be high at 87.2%, an improvement since the last report in November 2023 and also compared to the performance reported at the same period last year. Attendance had improved mainly due to the relationship with the employer liaison.
- the growth in apprenticeships which was positive. There were currently 172 apprentices, a 50% increase compared to the previous year and an improvement (14 apprentices) since the last report in November 2023. The increase was mainly due to growth within

the construction trades and the building environment. Staff recruitment continued to be a challenge.

- the apprenticeship offer and the programmes in the pipeline i.e. dental nursing and level 4 orthodontics which would be pursued by the LSBTC Principal. The proposed new programme in level 3 plumbing was being progressed. The introduction of APTEM, the new management information system for apprentices in April 2024 was noted. The breakdown of the apprenticeships by age, gender and ethnicity was noted.

9. 2023/24 Attendance Update

The Committee received an update on the attendance performance as at 18 January 2024. The most recent attendance report as at 31 January 2024 was also tabled at the meeting.

The Committee discussed the attendance performance which was at 78.9%; LSBTC was at 77.3% and LGC at 82.4%. Attendance had slightly improved since the last meeting in November 2023. English and Maths attendance remained a challenge. On 16-19yrs, there was concern about the 454 students with less than 70% attendance and the targeted interventions would focus on this group of students.

The Committee also discussed the interventions that were in place to address the low attendance and their effectiveness. A better understanding of the causes of the low attendance i.e. health issues and cost of living was needed in order to address the matter. Significant work was being undertaken to improve attendance and the role of LDCs was noted. There was some positive impact due to the interventions but there was still more work that needed to be done.

The Committee thanked Elaine Smith, Director of Student Engagement and Well-being for the comprehensive report and the work being undertaken to address the low attendance.

10. Curricula Planning 2024/25

The Committee received a verbal report on the overview of the College's approach to the 2024/25 curriculum plan.

The Committee discussed the proposed 2024/25 curriculum offer which was based on the LSBU group and College strategic plans and developed to meet key stakeholders' needs and aligned to local, regional and national skills priority areas. The proposed curriculum plan was largely the same as the current offer and designed to support the growth trend in 16-18yr recruitment and also linked to the group educational pathways.

There was an update on the work being undertaken on Business Planning and Growth cycle; meetings with curriculum managers to ensure that contribution rates are met and external stakeholders on Local Labour Market Intelligence, market share trends and the Lambeth Council context.

The Committee discussed the courses that were being reviewed. The patisserie offer would relocate to the National Bakery School from September 2024. On the situation concerning the culinary offer and Performing Arts, the relocation options were still being explored.

The 2024/25 proposed curriculum offer together with the ESFA Accountability Agreement would be presented to the Board for approval at its meeting in May 2024.

11. Safeguarding and Prevent Matters:

Updated Safeguarding & Prevent Policy 2023/24 (January 2024)

The Committee was presented with the updated 2023/24 (January 2024) policy for recommendation to the Board.

The 2023/24 January policy had been updated to include the working together to safeguard children statutory guidance, published in December 2023. The Committee noted the key changes and updates highlighted in the policy.

The updated policy would be amended to replace the term 'governors' with 'trustees'. Staff would be informed about the new legal obligation for all staff and trustees to complete an annual review of safeguarding status and how it would be done (page 93, section 3).

The Committee endorsed the updated Safeguarding & Prevent Policy 2023/24 (January 2024 update) and that it was recommended to the Board for approval.

Term 1 2023/24 Safeguarding and Prevent Monitoring Report

The Committee received an update on SBC's safeguarding provision since its last meeting in November 2023. There had been 94 Safeguarding Disclosures, mental health was the highest disclosure type followed by Gangs and Youth Violence. The Committee noted the internal and external support, activities and training provided by the College.

The Committee discussed the mandatory safeguarding staff training and that the take up figures would be included in future reports.

The Committee noted the safeguarding monitoring report for term 1 2023/24 and the initiatives and activities that promote and support safeguarding and wider welfare at SBC.

12. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report

The Committee received an update on work undertaken on Teaching, Learning & Assessment since the last meeting in November 2023.

The Committee noted the report which included an update on observations of Teaching & Learning activity and the outcomes of the quality reviews in ESOL Adults, Engineering & Science and Early Years, Education and Counselling, the survey findings on the achievement gaps (adult female students, whose achievement was 4.3% lower than adult

male students last academic year), an update on the CPD programme and the work being undertaken on the development of digital skills and knowledge.

13. SBC Anti Racism Manifesto

The Board was presented with the Anti Racism Manifesto which sets out the College's commitment to creating and fostering an inclusive and equitable environment where anti-racism is embedded within college life.

The manifesto needed to be linked with the EDI policy. The manifesto would also be integrated into the curricula and embedded in all areas of the College's work. On teaching and learning pedagogy, LSBU would share some supportive resources and capacity on decolonising the curriculum this would be pursued by LGC Principal and the Director of Teaching and Learning. Though staff had been consulted, student engagement was important too and they should be seen as partners in creating and fostering an anti-racism environment. The document would be shared with the Student Union.

14. Sub-Contracting Monitoring Report

The Committee received an update on the 2023/24 Sub-contracting monitoring report which outlined the 2022/23 performance, the validated self-assessment grading of the subcontracted provision and the contract and quality monitoring arrangements in place.

The Committee discussed the matter concerning Astro Martin Ltd one of the College's approved subcontractors who Ofsted had judged as 'inadequate' (December 2023), and the actions taken. SBC learners were not part of the provision inspected as Astro Martin is approved to deliver AEB provision in the non-devolved areas and not apprenticeship delivery the provision that had been inspected. There was a risk concerning the quality of the subcontracted provision.

The Committee discussed the actions that had been taken to mitigate the risk which included the immediate suspension of SBC's new enrolments for Astro Martin's 2023/24 AEB non devolved contract until further notice. The College had also implemented a programme of additional contract monitoring and scrutiny of subcontractor provision.

15. 2023/24 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The Committee discussed the updated QIP 2023/24 which sets out the College's operational objectives that must be achieved within the academic year along with the progress made. The working document provided an update on the key areas for improvement identified in the College's SAR for 2022/23, the recommendations from the March 2022 Ofsted inspection and the actions that had been brought forward from QIP 2022/23. The document detailed the key actions put in place by the College for 2023/24 and was approved by the Board at its meeting in November 2023.

The Committee discussed the progress made by the College for 2023/24 term 1. On attendance, the in-year progress and impact to date RAG rating should be red and not amber. The areas of weakness and development identified from the student autumn survey i.e. work experience and student enrichment would be included in plan. The Director of

Student Engagement and Well-being would progress the matter concerning enrichment activities identified from the student survey i.e. offer a range of enrichment activities to learners and follow up on the sports matter with the Student Union.

There was discussion about the impact of the consultant for level 2 and 3 and whether the consultant could attend the Committee meeting and discuss the work being done.

Improvement objectives for leadership and management (item 4) would include ensuring regular staff communication and feedback (employee voice) and a staff survey (face to face) on health and well-being would be considered.

16. Any other business

Committee agenda and reports – review

Reports on in year achievement, English & Maths and attendance would be presented as one report from November 2024.

**Date of next meeting
Tuesday, 18 June 2024**

Confirmed as a true record

(Chair)