

**Minutes of the meeting of the South Bank Colleges Quality & Improvement Committee
held at 2pm-3pm on Monday 28 October 2024
in Principal's Office, Clapham campus, Gateway College**

Present

Sue Dare (Chair)
Thesia Kouloungou
Ruth Farwell (Chair of the Board)

Apologies

Nigel Duckers
Issa Issa
Nyla-Rae Graham
Deborah Johnston

In attendance

Fiona Morey	Executive Principal
Wayne Wright	Principal LSBTC
Monica Marongiu	Principal LGC
Clare Dignum	Director of Teaching & Learning
Elaine Smith	Director of Student Engagement and Wellbeing
Jacqueline Mutibwa	Clerk to SBC Board

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed the Committee Members to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was quorate. The Chair noted that the meeting was for only an hour to discuss and recommend to the Board for approval the key documents that review the quality of the education provision. The Committee standing items would be either considered at the Board meeting as part of the Executive Principal's report or outside the formal meeting. The above apologies were noted.

2. Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2023/24

The Committee discussed the draft 2023/24 SAR which reviewed and self-assessed the College's performance during the preceding academic year for recommendation to the Board. It also identified the College's strengths and areas for improvement.

The draft SAR had just been reviewed and validated before the meeting by the Chair of the Board, Chair of the Quality & Improvement Committee, the College Leadership Team and an Ofsted inspector.

The Committee discussed:

- the draft SAR for 2023/24. The overall effectiveness continued to be assessed as good, with most areas assessed as good and personal development assessed as outstanding.

Apprentices continued to be assessed as requires improvement. The SAR also summarised the grades for each curriculum area.

- the key areas of strength, improvement and development. The key areas of strength included the improvement in achievement rates for all categories of learners compared to the previous year and also above both the national and provider group average. In particular 16-19yrs where there was a 4.2% improvement compared to the previous year. The significant reduction in the achievement gaps by ethnicity and gender in 2023/24 and the work that had been undertaken was noted. The overall retention rate was 94.6% an improvement compared to the previous years and above both the national and provider group. The section on curriculum intent would include the progression data i.e. to HE or employment.
- the key area of concern was the low achievement in Level 3 outcomes this was mainly due to Creative and Digital programmes which had performed significantly below national average. The reasons for the low achievement and the work being undertaken to improve the performance which included external review work by the Quality Improvement Consultant, the ALARM meetings (Area Learner at Risk Meeting) focusing on the Level 3 career pathway provision and Achieving Excellence Programme were noted. Attendance remained a risk area though there was some improvement, but more work needed to be done to improve the performance.
- the key areas for improvement identified in the SAR 2023/24 would be addressed in the updated QIP 2024/25. More work needed to be done on the draft SAR and provide more data and information in order to have a clearer picture of the quality and standard of the education provision. An updated version of the SAR would be considered by the Committee members prior to recommending it to the Board for approval at its meeting in November 2024.

3. Final Achievement Data 2023/24 (including Retention)

The Committee received the final set of achievement data for 2023/24 and discussed:

- the overall achievement which was positive at 87.1% an improvement (2.2%) compared to the previous year and above both the national and provider group average. 16-19yrs was 84.3% (4.2% improvement) and above both the national and provider group (2.6%). Adults was 88.1% (2.1% improvement) and above both the national and provider group (1.1%).
- 2023/24 overall retention rate which was 94.6% an improvement compared to the previous years and above both the national and provider group.
- 2023/24 apprenticeships achievement. There was some little improvement, which was still low at 31% below the desired rate of 50% and required improvement. The provision would be reviewed by the Further Education Commission (20 & 21

November 2024) and a verbal report would be provided at the meeting under agenda item 5.

- the achievement for the following groups of learners which was positive: Looked After Children (LAC), Free School Meals (FSM) and Learners with Learning Difficulties/Disabilities (LLDD) and was above the national average. Achievement for most of the college's ethnic groups continued to improve for the third consecutive year. There was a drop in achievement for Arab learners and performance was below the national average, the matter would be investigated.
- the areas for improvement. Study programmes where performance was low and below national average such as Creative and Digital programmes and Level 3 cohorts especially Access to HE (adults). The improvement initiatives that would address the low achievement were noted. There was also concern about the achievement in some qualifications such as diplomas and certificates where performance was below national average. The Committee noted the report and asked for more information on the reasons for the poor performance and on any other courses where performance had dropped by 7% or more.

4. Update on Attendance 2023/24 and 2024/25

The Committee discussed the attendance performance at year end 2023/24 and 2024/25 year to date as at 18 October 2024. The Committee discussed:

- 2023/24 year end overall attendance which was 80% against a target of 90%. LGC was 82.2% and LSBTC was 78.9%.
- 2024/25 year to date performance as at 18 October 2024 which was 83.3%. The new initiatives that were in place for 2024/25 academic year to improve performance were noted. The focus was on behaviour and attitude this would be addressed in the new enhanced behaviour and attendance policy which included an expectation of a 90% attendance in the 6 weeks probation period for the learners. Attendance targets should be more realistic and tailored to learner age groups.
- the analysis work being undertaken to ascertain the reasons for low attendance. A break down by age group, directorate and department was noted.

5. Further Education Commissioner (FEC) Visit (Confidential)

The Committee received a verbal report on the Further Education Commissioner's visit to the College in November 2024, which was confidential at this stage. A position paper would be presented to the Board at its meeting in November 2024.

6. 2024/25 Recruitment Update

The Committee received an update on 2024/25 applications and enrolments as at 23 October 2024.

The Committee discussed:

- 2024/25 recruitment update which was positive compared to this period last year and in particular 16-19 year olds.
- the admissions and enrolment process which continued to improve with initiatives that had significantly streamlined the student journey. The conversion rates from application to enrolment was positive compared to this time last year.
- the risk areas where growth was lower than planned included adults, apprenticeships, Level 4 and T level provision. On adult recruitment, there was a risk that the budget target may not be achieved, and work was underway to increase the offer of the courses though there were challenges on the retention and recruitment of teaching staff. The 2024/25 programme offer for Level 4 provision was noted and the College was working with LSBU on improving the enrolment process.

7. Compliments and Complaints

The Committee was presented with the annual report on complaints received by the College on the various aspects of the delivery and service and the actions taken to resolve them.

The Committee noted:

- the number of complaints received during 2023/24 had gone down to 12 compared to 17 in 2022/23, 22 in 2021/22 and 37 in 2020/21. The Committee noted the downwards shift in complaints at the college over the past few years.
- the nature of complaints, the most common type of complaint related to staff conduct and not being able to progress. These matters would be analysed and addressed. The compliment for one of the counselling teachers was noted.
- that no concerns had been received against the complaints procedure and that it continued to operate effectively.

**Date of next meeting
Wednesday, 12 February 2025**

Confirmed as a true record

(Chair)