South Thames Colleges Group

Minutes Quality, Learning and Standards Committee

(All resolutions passed were the unanimous decision of the Quality, Learning and Standards Committee members present unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Title	Quality. Learning and Standards Committee
Date	9 March 2023
Members	Mr G. Willett(GW) Chair Cllr B. Fraser (BF) Ms H. Harper(HH) Mr. P. Mayhew-Smith(PM-S) Group Principal / CEO Ms M. Savage (Ms) Mr M. J. Stone (JS) Ms C. Streliaev-Pivett (CS-P)

In Attendance	For presentation at Item 3 :
	     J Giarraputo (JG) Interim Head of Quality (TLA,Digital TLA & CPD),
	     C. Lamb-Evans (CLE) Head of Digital Innovation, Services and Transformation
	     D. Smithson (DS) Head of Digital Engagement and Learning Resources
	
	Mr D. McClymont
	Ms J. Morrison(JM) Assistant Principal – Quality and Innovation
	Ms S. Muncie(SM) Vice Principal - Curriculum & Quality
	Ms J. Percival(JP) Acting Principal – Carshalton and Merton Colleges
	Mr J. O'Shea (JOS) Principal, Kingston and South Thames Colleges
	Ms H. Meredith (HM) Head of Governance

Key Meeting Outcomes	
	The meeting took place remotely by Teams.
1. 1.1.1	**WELCOME, APOLOGIES, DECLARATION OF INTEREST** Apologies were received from Mr Cheema and Prof Laville and from JP-B who normally attends meetings. JG, CLE and DS were welcomed to the meeting for Agenda Item 3.
1.1.2	Members confirmed that they did not have any pecuniary or other interest in any agenda item.

1.2	**MINUTES OF MEETING OF 31 JANUARY 2023 AND MATTERS ARISING**
	<u>Accuracy</u>. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record to be signed by the Chair.
	<u>Matters arising</u> The Action Log was reviewed and updates below were discussed:

Progression destinations for students – report to future QLS meeting to review impact on progression of lower achievement rates including HNS	JM	March 23	Agenda Item 4.3
Use the March 23 meeting to have a deep dive into the DTF	JM	March 2023	Agenda Item 3
Produce a list of the top 5 reasons why students are absent to see what is common and what can be done to address this.	JOS	March 2023	Agenda Item 411
QIAPs to be RAG rated for the next meeting	JOS	March 2023	
GW asked JP to reflect on the terminology 'high needs' and language used with students.	JP	March 2023	
Achievement Rate benchmarking data to be shared with this committee as soon as this is available.	JOS	March 2023	Not available
Update report on A level Pathways to go to March QLS meeting following mock exams	KShearing	March 2023	Agenda Item 4.1.7
A new Employer Engagement Strategy will be brought to the next meeting	SR-R	March 2023	Agenda Item 5.3.1

2	**REVIEW OF BOARD ASSURANCE RISK AREAS (PART 1)**
	The Committee note the two risks allocated to it for review are:
	     1. the risk of a poor Ofsted inspection or OFS result and
	     2. the risk of declining student numbers- on the agenda for review at Agenda Item 3.

3.	**Strategic Objective – SIGNATURE CHANGES TO DIGITAL PRACTICE**
3.1	JG led a presentation for the committee demonstrating some digital tools/ applications which teachers are being encouraged to use in their lessons including Flipgrid, Nearpod and Quizizz. The digital strategy recognises that the current cohort of learners are consuming information from the digital/ social media realm in a completely different way than previous generations. One advantage of teachers posting videos on Flipgrid is that learners can watch these over

	again and the number of viewings show that this is happening. A Merge Cube is being used to introduce the use of Augmented Reality into lessons . This lets learners hold digital 3D objects, enabling a new way to learn and interact with the digital world. Virtual Reality (VR) has been in use at Merton College since 2019 . A grant has been obtained to fund the introduction of Bodyswaps – a soft skills VR programme which helps students to learn interview skills through an interview simulator.
3.2	GW asked how teachers are supported with the introduction of new technology. JG confirmed that he researches and recommends new digital tools and he and the teaching and learning coaches and digital champions support staff with developing their use. After Easter there will be some drop-in sessions for staff to try out some new immersive digital environments.
3.3	New developments include the use of Chat GPT an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) system which has been in the press – and google is producing BARD – a tool which teachers can use to help to write lesson plans.
3.4	Governors commended the developments in digital at the Group and asked how the college assesses the impact of this work- both the impact in the classroom and the impact on the curriculum. JS suggested carrying out digital drop ins to classes. JS asked how digital skills are being embedded in the curriculum and how effective is the development of blended learning – to date the only blended learning provision offered by the Group is an AAT qualification. JG confirmed that learners are telling the college that they are enjoying lessons and they are engaging with learning but that more work will be needed to assess the impact of digital. MS asked whether staff engage with digital and use the digital resources consistently . CS-P also suggested assessing the impact of use of digital resources by teachers on attendance by students.
3.5	It was **agreed** that : • the Digital team would report on the impact of digital at the June meeting. • A showcase on the use of digital technology, including some students, should be included at the Governors' awayday in November *JG,CLS and DS left the meeting at 6.12pm*
4.	**Strategic Objective – ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**
4.1.1.1	**GROUP CURRICULUM REPORTS** **ATTENDANCE** JOS shared live attendance data and presented a report on attendance reporting that: • Attendance has been declining since Christmas with a further decline after the February half term although attendance improved in week commencing 27 February;

4.1.1.2	• The main reasons given by students for non-attendance are:
	
	     ○ mental health, stress and anxiety,
	     ○ poor transport (including bus and train strikes),
	     ○ poor teaching and agency staff
	     ○ poor timetabling (having to come in for one session or big gaps in the timetabled day),
	     ○ no follow up for not attending, parents not knowing their child is not attending,
	     ○ having to work due to financial pressures, and family issues.
	     ○ For Maths and English reasons include not wanting to study Maths and English, not seeing the point, timetabled sessions on separate days to main study programmes or at inconvenient times, and poor teaching.

4.1.1.3	• Specific initiatives to address attendance were set out in the paper including
	
	     ○ The course tutor playing a fundamental role having a clear directive and ownership of their groups and the individuals learners
	     ○ Heightened monitoring of this at all levels through the organisation - all tutors and teachers to undertake timely interventions and support action plans to improve any low attendance.
	     ○ CPD on the impact of increased mental health issues and how to support students (Informed Trauma Training) and CPD to improve quality of teaching and learning
	     ○ Introduction of automated text messaging to students and parents if a session is missed
	     ○ Adjusting timetables to make them student friendly
	     ○ Providing resources like posters, to raise awareness of the need to attend English and Maths

	o Supporting students whose financial situation means they are missing lessons due to economic pressures
4.1.1.4	MS asked about action being taken to improve poor teaching. JOS reported on a whole day CPD session for teachers to improve the pace and challenge of their teaching in February.
4.1.1.5	MS asked about the Attendance Strategy Working Group. JOS confirmed that the group reports to the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) and so this focus is at a very senior level.
4.1.1.6	JS commended the college for this plethora of initiatives and for these highlighting the importance of the tutor in looking at individual students.
4.1.1.7	JS challenged whether tutors hold sufficiently frequent 1-2-1 meetings with students as the student survey found that this as an area for improvement with only a 68% satisfaction level for Q8 "I have an individual (1-2-1) meeting on my progress at least once per term". JS asked how often tutors have 1-2-1s with their learners. CV confirmed that these should be held once every half term but students might not be recognising when these take place. A tracker is reviewed to make sure that these take place.
4.1.1.8	It was **resolved** to note the report.
4.1.2	**RETENTION** JOS confirmed that in year Retention remains very high- data was included in reports for Items 4.1.5 and 4.3 as below:

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JOS confirmed that in year Retention remains very high- data was included in reports for Items 4.1.5 and 4.3 as below:

Retention 2021-22 – comparison with MIDES benchmarking data
The MIDES 2021/22 Retention & Pass Rates report summary data was included. (NB This data is not directly comparable with DfE data due to the different methodologies).
- 16-18 retention rates at STCG for 2021-22 at 91.3% were in line with national averages for all GFE colleges

16-18 Retention Rate

91.3%

- Similar to GFE national retention rate (90.9%)
- Small decline (-2.5) from Group 2020/21 retention rate (93.8%). 2019/20 GFE national retention rate also declined (-2.3)

- Adult retention rates at STCG for 2021-22 at 92.6% were in line with national averages for all GFE colleges

Adult Retention Rate

92.6%

- Similar to as GFE national retention rate (93.7%)
- Similar to Group 2020/21 retention rate (93.1%). 2019/20 GFE national retention rate remained stable

2022-23 Retention QMAP/QIAP Summary shows very high Retention at the end of Term 1

College	Retention (ProAchieve) (05/01/23)
CC	**98.0**
MC	**98.0**
KC	**99.0**
STC	**96.0**
Group	**98.0**

MIDES In-Year Retention Report
The MIDES benchmarking on **post 42-day** retention for 16-18 all learners/qualifications:

STCG	All GFE	London
99.6%	99.7%	99.6%

MIDES Report – All Retention (from 01/09/22)
The MIDES benchmarking on 16-18 all learners/qualifications retention from the start of the academic year **including learners who were enrolled and withdrawn prior** to the 42-day census date:

STCG	All GFE	London
95.4%	96.2%	96.1%

4.1.3	**VALUE-ADDED**

VALUE-ADDED

CV presented a report on Value -Added scores and forecasts. Value added scores are a measure to show how well students perform in their qualifications, compared to students nationally with similar prior attainment at the end of key stage 4. This allows the college to measure the value it adds to a learner's Level 3 performance compared to what might be expected following their previous academic performance, by predicting the grades that each student should be expected to achieve at level 3. Alps (Advanced Level Performance Systems) scores range from 1 to 9 where 1 is the best and 9 is the worst. Scores 7-9 indicate value-added performance within or worse than the bottom 25% of the National benchmark.   The 2021/22 STCG ALPS Score declined to a 7 (6 in 2020/21)

The forecast value-added grades for each of the colleges for 2022-23 are shown below:

College	Forecast Value added scores
CC	5
MC	6
KC	6
STC	9
Group	**7**

The overall Alps value-added forecast for the Group this year is 7 - a low score. CV reported that teachers have been quite cautious in forecasting but that this needs to improve.

HH commented that poor value-added scores usually correlate to poor teaching and asked whether the group has done any analysis of this? CV confirmed that this analysis has not been done and agree that this would be a good idea. GW asked that the committee review this regularly as poor value-added is hard to reconcile with a Good college.

It was **resolved** to note the report.

4.1.4	**WORK EXPERIENCE (WEX) UPDATE**

WORK EXPERIENCE (WEX) UPDATE

CV presented a report detailing percentages of students who have participated in Employability Activities and Work Experience with examples of the activities and employers involved and details of the employability weeks which are taking place at each college.

College	Percentage of students who have started work experience and employability activities this year
CC / MC	66%
KC	55%
STC	53.5%

It was **resolved** to note the report.

4.1.5	**QUALITY ASSURANCE SUMMARY REPORTING (QSAR)**

QUALITY ASSURANCE SUMMARY REPORTING (QSAR)

JAM reported that the Quality Team have introduced Quality Assurance Summary Reporting (QSAR) every 6 weeks reporting on planned internal and external quality activities (such as MIDES reports). The outcome from the data was RAG ratings without individual numerical value/percentages as shown in the table below

	RAG
Term 1 QMAP	Good
2021/22 MIDES R14 Progression Report	Good
2022/23 MIDES R04 In-Year Retention Report - Post 42 Day Retention	Good
2022/23 MIDES R04 In-Year Retention Report - Retention from 01/09/22	Good
Learner Satisfaction - FE Mid-Year Survey	Good
Term 2 IQAR - Group	Requires Improvement
Probation Observations	Good
Development Observations	Good
EQA Report Summary (Sept – Feb)	Good
NTI Reviews	Requires Improvement
GROUP QUALITY ASSURANCE	Good

Key:

Good	(green)
Requires Improvement	(yellow)
Inadequate	(pink)

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		GW asked about the criteria for probationary observation grades. JAM confirmed that every new teacher has one observation in the first 3 months and a second one by the end of their first year and the two grades are combined . JS commended the college for the marked increase in the completion of probationary reviews since last term. It was **resolved** to note the report
4.1.6		**REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENT RATES 2022-23 AGAINST NARTS** The NARTs had not been published by the date of the meeting.
4.1.7		**A LEVEL PATHWAYS INC FORECAST ACHIEVEMENT RATES** CV presented the report and encouraged governors to watch the video embedded in the report in which students on the A level pathways gave their feedback on why they chose their course and what they enjoyed with the key point being the flexibility of this. Forecast achievement for the Maths and English A level students is high (around 90%) but there are more concerns around Sociology and so additional mock exams are being held. There has been a large increase in applications for A level pathways for next year including for new pathways in Journalism and Creative Business Studies. GW asked for assurance about the accuracy and robustness of forecasting. CV confirmed that the teachers have taught A level and used ProAchieve before and use it properly. Students are sitting AS exams this summer and if they do not improve their attendance will not be able to progress to the A level. CV confirmed some concerns about sociology and that some students may not have understood properly what the course involves when choosing this which will be addressed at interview for next year. JS asked whether any of the A levels being offered conflict with T levels and CV confirmed not; STCG will be offering T levels in childcare and finance and accounting next year. It was **resolved** to note the report
4.1.8		**LEARNER VOICE STUDENT SURVEYS** **Learner Voice Admissions Enrolment & Induction Survey Group Summary** 3490 (53%)students completed the survey. Overall results were very positive across the Group and especially high satisfaction ratings regarding feeling safe whilst at college. **Overall Rated Highly** *Q17 Overall, I am happy with my experience on the course so far.* *95%* *Q14 I feel that I am on the right course at the right level.* *95%* *Q19 I feel safe when I am at College.* *96%* *Q3 When I first arrived at College, the staff were approachable & made me feel welcome. 95%* **Aspects to Improve** Responses to the survey have been largely positive. However, satisfaction ratings were lower in the following areas: *Q2 Before I started my course, the online Welcome Portal site was easy to use and helpful.* *84%* Further investigation revealed that most students at 3 colleges were not effectively told about the Welcome Portal before they started their courses *Q5 the activities I took part in at the start of term helped me to settle quickly into College life* *88%* *Q10 I know the range of services that Student Support offers and how to access them* *89%* **Learner Voice Mid-Year Student Survey** 3656 learners (57%) completed this . Response numbers have risen slightly this year (3%). **Overall Rated Highly** Q 1 I am enjoying my course 94% Q23 Overall, I feel I made the right choice in attending this College 94% Q18 I understand the importance of democracy, freedom of speech, tolerance, the rule of law and individual liberty 96% Q19 I know where to go and who to see if I am concerned about myself or others feeling safe at College and /or outside College 93% Q22 Overall, I am happy with the way I am being taught 92%

	Aspects to Improve Q8 I have an individual (1-2-1) meeting on my progress at least once per term Group 68% This low score was discussed in more detail under Item 4.1.1.7 Q7 The quality of teaching on my Maths FS/GCSE course is of a good standard and I am confident in the progress I am making Group 81% Q20 My employability skill development and work experience /Industry Placement opportunities have been good 82% Q10 The online tutorial work (Learning Curve) helps me to develop a greater understanding of issues like safeguarding 84% It was **<u>resolved</u>** to note the report of both learner surveys.
4.1.9	**LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS** The Committee received : - a Link Governor report on **Leadership and management** at Carshalton College during the College Principal's extended absence and - A report from a Governor who attended a recent **Student Council Meeting** It was **<u>resolved</u>** to note both reports.
4.2. 4.2.1	**MID-YEAR (NTI) UPDATES – CROSS GROUP** **APPRENTICESHIPS** SM presented the Apprenticeship QIAP . Group Forecast achievement rates are 59.6% (2% less than at this time last year) Rag-rated apprenticeship forecasting is below: TABLE_PLACEHOLDER_1 SM reported that 2 key standard areas are of concern: plumbing at Carshalton and Engineering at Kingston. The report detailed interventions put into place to support both areas. HH challenged whether the college is satisfied that this is good provision (self-assessed as Good in the SAR) . SM responded that forecast achievement rates are higher than National Average but HH replied that this does not make it good provision. SM felt that the interventions in place should help the two areas of concern to improve.
4.2.2	**HIGH NEEDS** There was no written report as a detailed report had been presented to the January meeting. Forecast achievement rates (below)for All qualifications HNS were in the paper for item 4.1.5 TABLE_PLACEHOLDER_2
4.2.3	**CONSTRUCTION AT CARSHALTON COLLEGE** SM presented an update report. The team is focussed on the following key areas to improve achievement rates: - Attendance - TLA - Staffing **Attendance** is improving from an overall attendance of 65% at the start of Term 2and for construction for year to date is now 80% **Teaching Learning and Assessment** Is improving following learning walks

Table 1 (item 4.2.1):

College	AR% Forecast	
Carshalton	47.6	
Kingston	61.3	
South Thames (college only)	73.0	
South Thames (subcontracting only)	85.7	
South Thames (all)	76.5	
Group	59.6	

Table 2 (item 4.2.2):

College	Term 1 QMAP Forecast (ProAchieve)
CC	81.7
MC	84.9
KC	87.0
STC	80.2
Group	83.9

	Staffing Is now more stable
4.2.4	**CONSTRUCTION AT SOUTH THAMES COLLEGE** DM presented the update report reporting on the issues: • poor achievement and • Lack of compliance with key Quality processes **Steps taken to address these issues include** - Brought in Construction specialist for three days a week to secure improved quality assurance and support development of team leader. - Introduced an Employers' Advisory Panel; key feedback being integrated to drive the curriculum - Intensive teaching and learning coach support throughout Term 1 **Impact** - Term 1 achievement forecast for Construction 82.9% (10% above actuals for 21/22 at 71.6%.) Signs are promising but work required to maintain validity of forecast. - Teaching and learning in practical sessions is reported on positively via the IQAR and learning walks. **Improvement still required including** - More in-class assessment needed in theory sessions. - Attendance still a challenge at 79% year to date - English and maths attendance currently 66% for this area. - Teaching and learning theory sessions still overly teacher led and not enough new initiatives - More consistent communication needed between Construction and occupational sectors; employer panels will help to drive this.
4.2.5	It was **resolved** to note both NTI reports
4.3	**PROGRESSION AND DESTINATIONS 2021-22** JAM presented an update report . This included date from the annual Destination Survey Report for learners. For those who did not return to study at the Group data is collected annually by MIS who contact leavers twice by email and once by phone to collect the data. Over 11.000 leavers were contacted with a response rate of 86.9% . The data is shown below showing that overall 87.1% progressed to a positive destination- 57.6% into education and 29.5% into work. <table><tr><td>All learners/all qualifications</td><td>2018/19</td><td>2019/20</td><td>2020/21</td><td>2021/22</td></tr><tr><td>Total response</td><td>5,830</td><td>5,193</td><td>7.417</td><td>7,779</td></tr><tr><td>% Progressed to a positive destination</td><td>91.0</td><td>77.4</td><td>91.2</td><td>87.1</td></tr><tr><td>% Progressed to Education</td><td>69.1</td><td>19.0</td><td>61.9</td><td>57.6</td></tr><tr><td>% Progressed to Paid Employment</td><td>22.0</td><td>58.4</td><td>29.4</td><td>29.5</td></tr><tr><td>% Did not progress to a positive destination</td><td>9.0</td><td>22.5</td><td>8.8</td><td>12.9</td></tr><tr><td>% Not in Paid Employment</td><td>9.0</td><td>22.5</td><td>8.8</td><td>12.6</td></tr><tr><td>% Voluntary Work</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.2</td></tr></table> **HNS destinations –** most HNS learners progress to a positive destination although more could be done to support them into paid employment. **BAME destinations –** BAME learners are more likely to progress to a positive destination then their peers- 90.8% progressed to a positive destination. They are more likely to remain in education rather than progress to paid employment than their peers **UCAS destinations** UCAS data shows that 82% of learners who applied through UCAS received an HE place including at Russell Group universities. It was **resolved** to note the report
4.4	**CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES REPORT** The committee reviewed a report on enrichment activities across the Group It was **resolved** to note the report

4.5	**TEACHING LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT : CPD & LESSON OBSERVATION/ LEARNING WALKS UPDATES** JAM presented a report on key TLA updates across the group. Management Teams receive weekly updates with live reports providing summary information regarding: - Probationary Observation - Developmental Observations - Learning Walks - Teaching & Learning Coach Drop-ins including CPD related activities The Group is grading TLA as Good, based on current Probationary and Developmental Observations which are both graded as Good overall. GW challenged whether grading of teaching as good stacks up with the Value-Added score. PM-S confirmed that the Alps scores at college are similar to the Alps scores in previous years when the College was graded Good by Ofsted. PM-S did not think there is a direct read across to judge teaching to be poor although he acknowledging the weaknesses with Value Added. HH agreed with PM-S ; it does not automatically follow but would lead to a trail by Ofsted to triangulate the robustness of the College's observation system. Areas for Improvement form the basis for CPD, work with teams and individual teachers. The report also detailed the work and progress of the college TLA Team, including the Teaching and Learning Coaches work across the group and key Strengths and Areas for Improvement. It was **resolved** to note the report
5.	**Strategic Objective – CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO DELIVER GROWTH & CONTRIBUTE TO LSIPs**
5.1	**LSIP UPDATE AND WORK ON STCG ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT** PM-S gave an update . - The DfE has confirmed that devolved AEB funded provision is out of scope for the LSIP and so a large part of the provision at STCG is therefore out of scope for this. - It is proving difficult to write a Pan London LSIP so there will also be sub regional annexes. The draft LSIP will be written by the end of March. - Every sector in London, except for agriculture, has skills shortages; It was **resolved** to note this update.
5.2	**CURRICULUM INTENT** JOS reported that 890 applications had been received to date with approximately 400 of those for A level pathway courses and 90 for T levels (60 Childcare, 30 Accounting) . This shows that the college curriculum offer is meeting students' needs. JOS reported that a number of T levels which were going to start in September at other colleges had just been delayed by the DfE due to concerns about quality. It was **resolved** to note this update.
5.3	**EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY / MEETING SKILLS NEEDS UPDATE**
5.3.1	Governors received an update from the Business Partnership Unit and the STCG Employer Engagement and Business Partnership Strategy. JS suggested that the Strategy include reference to T Levels.
5.3.2	The College work with a range of local employers and stakeholders in meeting local skills needs will form the focus of the May Corporation Strategic planning session.
5.3.3	It was **resolved** to note this update.
	DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Tuesday 9 May 2023 at 5.30pm The meeting closed at 7.30 pm **Signed:** …………………………..............Date:…………………………………

Action points		Responsible	Deadline	Signed off
1.	QIAPs to be RAG rated for the next meeting	JOS	March 2023	
2.	GW asked JP to reflect on the terminology 'high needs' and language used with students.	JP	March 2023	
3.	Achievement Rate benchmarking data to be shared with this committee as soon as this is available.	JOS	March 2023	
4.	the Digital team to give QLS more detail on the impact of digital at the June meeting.	JAM	June 2023	
5.	A showcase on the use of digital technology, including some students, should be included at the Governors' awayday in November	JAM	Nov 2023	
6.	Carry out analysis of correlation between poor value added and teaching and regular reports on value added to go to QLS	CV	June 2023	