

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2021

1. PRESENT

Daran Bland, Ruth Catlett, David Fannin, Helen Rumbold and Nick Worth.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Vicki Locke (Deputy Principal) and Kelly Harris (Assistant Principal: Performance & Quality).

Apologies for absence were received from Claire Foster.

Attendance 83%

2. PRESENTATION

Members received a presentation from Vicki Locke on 'Use of data in inspection – data versus curriculum richness'.

Daran Bland asked where there were areas needing development to move to the Education inspection framework (EIF). Vicki explained the different approach being taken. Kelly Harris advised how the move from overreliance on data was being addressed. Vicki told members that there was a planned leadership and management deep dive in January to build confidence. Kelly explained that articulation of the curriculum formed part of quality monitoring.

Daran asked how much choice there is in inspections on the deep dives. Vicki advised that it is usually discussed in the planning call. Daran asked whether it was possible for the committee to be given a deep dive experience at a meeting. Vicki suggested that it could either be offered at a meeting or form part of the CPD day in March. The committee noted that all institutions will have a full inspection by summer 2025. ●

Ruth Catlett told members how WOW was being contextualised in her area by getting former learners in to talk to students. Six guest speakers have been in and learners have been inspired by these sessions.

3. ACTION LOG

Members reviewed the committee's action log and noted that all actions were complete.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 29 September 2021 were reviewed and approved.

5. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2021-22

Members received a report from the Deputy Principal.

Vicki Locke explained that it was proposed to remove attendance targets as all learners are expected to attend. It is proposed that attendance should be used as an indicator instead. It was noted that English and maths attendance had improved from last year and members were advised that changes which had been made in this area were receiving positive feedback.

Helen Rumbold asked whether there was any benchmarking regarding adult learners and what the cause of lower achievements for this group was. Vicki Locke explained that adults

had been particularly affected by the pandemic and that a reduction in subcontracting had also impacted on the results. It was noted that Kelly Harris is chairing an Adult Good Practice Group which is monitoring performance separately and carrying out more surveys. Remote access is proving useful and discussions are taking place with adults about barriers to their learning.

Nick Worth asked about the number of KPIs and how many the college had to have. Vicky explained that the college chooses them but the content has been refined and focuses on pivotal measures. Underneath the college KPIs there is a set at curriculum level which are used in performance monitoring.

David Fannin commented that it was useful to see how the elements of provision broke down. He asked how it was possible to identify the best and worst provision. Vicki suggested that this could be identified through the narrative. David commented that as a new governor he found the range of indicators reasonable but would like to understand how different courses are performing comparatively. It was felt that this would help the committee to understand what the indicators are flagging up and to identify provision for deep dives. Daran asked if the outcomes of deep dives could be shared with the committee.

The committee approved the proposed targets for 2021-22.

6. **LEARNER VIEWS**

Members received a report from the Assistant Principal: Performance and Quality.

Kelly Harris advised the committee that the Full Time Start Of Year Survey had largely positive outcomes and had also identified areas of focus. Curriculum leaders have been provided with the detailed information.

Daran Bland asked whether it was possible to get more information on why students don't attend English and maths sessions. Kelly advised that curriculum areas are working on this and that there was an improvement. A discussion took place about learner responses to questions about their Individual Learning Journey, the Making a Difference curriculum and Starting Point Assessments. Kelly identified the colleges focus on the wider curriculum experience. Helen Rumbold asked about the possibility of the questions being made more user friendly since learners may not fully understand them. An assumption is made but learners know how to complete forms on their devices and there needs to be confidence in this.

Kelly explained programme area gaps and how these were being addressed. It was agreed that high performing areas should also be identified in reporting.

Helen highlighted improvements in scores for Learner Services and careers advice. David Fannin commented that careers advice and work experience are key to learners' choices. Work experience has been affected by the pandemic and the steps being taken to address this were outlined by Kelly. David identified work being done with his organisation by photography students as an example of successful work experience. Ruth Catlett advised of the particular impact of work experience in Care.

7. **HIGHER EDUCATION PERFORMANCE – ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2020-21**

Members received a report from the Deputy Principal.

Vicki Locke explains the background to the report and the more formal nature of higher education review. She noted that this element of the college's work has been particularly hit by the pandemic and identified key strengths and weaknesses in performance.

Daran Bland asked about support for disadvantaged learners. Vicki explained how learners were supported and the approach being taken through focus groups to identify support

needs. In response to a query about where HE learners come from, it was explained that it is generally within one hour travel time. The ethnic mix of these learners was noted to be similar to further education and Vicki outlined the access and participation plan.

In response to a query from Nick Worth about learners' responses regarding learning resources, it was noted that this was affected by restrictions on site access during the pandemic. To support IT resources a technician has now been based in Spalding where most of the higher education provision is located.

8. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Members received a report from the Assistant Principal: Performance and Quality.

Kelly Harris advised the committee in response to a query from Nick Worth that there had been a larger than normal intake of new teachers this year. Daran Bland asked about the identification of development needs and Kelly explained the process for this. Vicki Locke told the committee that the process had been introduced when grading was phased out and Ruth Catlett explained how she welcomes the feedback it provides. Members were advised that it is embraced by college staff and they are able to have more sessions for support if needed

Helen Rumbold asked how staff felt about being back to face to face teaching. Kelly advised that staff appeared to be enjoying the return to a more normal situation.

9. BEACON AWARD

Claire Foster advised that the College is a finalist in the Beacon Awards for Excellence in Real World Learning.

10. EXAMINATIONS

The committee noted that guidance had been issued about contingency measures in case examinations next year were affected by the pandemic. The college welcomes these as providing examination experience for learners.

11. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the committee would be held on 9 February 2022.