

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2023

1. **PRESENT**

Helen Rumbold (Chair - at request of Daran Bland), Daran Bland, David Fannin, Claire Foster, Kimberley Jones and Nick Worth.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Heather Marks (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality), Kelly Harris (Assistant Principal: Performance & Quality) and Adrian Humphreys (Executive Director: Business, Innovation & Partnerships).

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Tomlinson.

Attendance 86%

2. **PRESENTATION**

Adrian Humphreys gave a presentation on 'The Golden Thread through our Civic Community, Education and Employers'.

The committee discussed the evidence of the college addressing skills needs. It was noted that this was an area of focus for Ofsted. It was felt that the college was in a strong position. Nick Worth commented on the quality of the work the college is doing. There has been a lot of investment in this area and a key part of performance is understanding how external needs translate into the classroom. David Fannin commented on the opportunities available to learners. The focus of Ofsted has to be on what is being or has been done and the evidence of this. Claire Foster advised that questions on this topic will be explored during inspection preparations.

3. **ACTION LOG**

Members reviewed the committee's action log. The committee noted that VITAL remains under review but that an alternative is not affordable at present.

4. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 22 November 2022 were reviewed and approved.

5. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-23**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality.

Heather Marks advised the committee that attendance was being prioritised with the new Directors focusing on this. The attendance gap for English and maths is also receiving attention. College attendance is in line with the sector and better in English and maths. Retention is another key area of focus and the college is working with learners to keep them engaged and on track. Work is being carried out with the Deputy Commissioner on the Access and A level curriculum. Work Experience is progressing and learner views are positive overall. There are some pockets of decline but these are understood and being addressed.

Nick Worth asked whether weak retention in Construction was due to learners going into work and it was confirmed that this was the case. Helen Rumbold asked about areas in Performance Improvement Review and whether this applied to the Care area. Members were advised that Care had lost some learners into work. It was noted that 53% retention in

Care apprenticeships had been impacted by the withdrawal of apprenticeships by one significant provider in 2021-22. Kelly Harris advised on the more stringent measures the college was taking to deal with such issues. Kimberley Jones commented that placements were now resolved with most learners being placed in Haven. It was agreed that a paper on Adult Learning Programmes should be provided to the next meeting.

Heather told the committee that, where there were problems, focus groups were looking at the issues. Helen asked whether all of the learning leads were now in place and was advised that there were four vacancies still to cover. The college is working at pace to fill these posts.

Helen commented on the 2% of staff being supported to improve their practice. Kelly reported that a member of the Construction staff had expressed appreciation of the help which had been given.

6. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2022-23

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality.

Heather Marks identified the priorities within the plan. Directors are already working with staff to ensure that CPD impacts on learning and work has been carried out on curriculum planning. Key areas of focus were identified and it was noted that the Association of Colleges has asked for best practice on English and maths to be shared. Daran Bland commented on the good news regarding English and maths resits which was positive evidence of the direction of travel. Helen Rumbold commented that it was good to hear of the impact of the Directors of Learning.

The 2022-23 Quality Improvement Plan was approved by the committee.

7. LEARNER VIEWS

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

Kelly Harris advised the committee that the survey showed really strong outcomes for HE learners. Learners feel that their views are listened to. Some work is being done on access to IT and resources.

Adult survey response rates were affected by learners leaving at different points so collection arrangements have been changed. Welcome to Boston College sessions have been introduced as part of steps being taken to ensure that learners enjoy a consistent experience. Nick Worth asked about starting point assessments for adult learners and Kelly advise the committee of the work being undertaken with staff to support adult learners.

Helen Rumbold asked about timetabling suiting learner needs and the effect of going back to face to face teaching. Kelly identified a need to look at the sequencing of delivery to ensure that the arrangements benefited learners.

Claire Foster asked how the surveys will be used in curriculum areas and Kelly advised that the completed surveys are shared with areas to follow up as well as being reviewed at quarterly PMRs. Work is carried out with areas where concerns are identified. Helen Rumbold asked how well the focus groups worked and Kelly commented on this and advised that learners are used to seeing staff calling in to follow up survey outcomes.

8. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

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

Kelly Harris identified the key issues in her report and advised that staff are keen to develop their practice. A more rigorous approach has resulted in a slight decline in 'curriculum

articulation'. Feedback from classroom visits has been very positive and the quality team are looking at ways of developing the wider teaching team. External support has helped to develop deep dive activity and staff development is planned to enhance Ofsted readiness.

Nick Worth commented on the positive processes. Helen Rumbold supported the recording of training sessions which allowed staff to revisit them. Claire Foster identified that there was a thread of developing staff confidence to recognise the strengths of the work already being carried out.

Daran Bland left the meeting at this point.

9. NEXT MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meetings of the committee would be held on 26 April and 20 June 2023.