

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2023

1. **PRESENT**

Daran Bland, David Fannin, Claire Foster, Kimberley Jones, Helen Rumbold, Paul Tomlinson and Nick Worth.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Heather Marks (Deputy Principal) and Tom Hughes (Assistant Principal: Quality, Performance & Standards).

Attendance 100%

2. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Having been duly nominated, Daran Bland was appointed as Chair of the committee for 2023-24.

Daran Bland in the chair.

3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

Having been duly nominated, David Fannin was appointed as Vice Chair of the committee for 2023-24.

4. **ACTION LOG**

Members reviewed the committee's action log.

It was noted that a review of ways in which data could be improved was being undertaken and that VITAL was out of date and would be replaced.

5. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 20 June 2023 were reviewed and approved.

6. **A-LEVEL AND GCSE RESULTS 2022-2023**

Members received a report from the Deputy Principal.

The committee was advised that results had dipped across the sector. Progress towards higher grades in English and maths is being tracked against a background of significant shifts in learner numbers in these areas over time. The impact of the pandemic is evident. The college is looking to embed English and maths within the main curriculum. David Fannin asked how the data compared with schools but it was noted that the college cohort was different since these learners had already failed to achieve the required grade in the subjects at school. Daran Bland commented on the benefits demonstrated of changing the English curriculum. A question was raised about the standard of teaching in English and maths and Claire Foster confirmed that results by staff member were reviewed. Section comparisons were affected by the selective schools system locally. Tom Hughes advised that progress was aligned with the sector nationally and those who had made negative progress were being reviewed. Those who progress within lower grades are significant for the FE sector.

In response to a query from Paul Tomlinson, it was confirmed that learners were required to take English and maths GCSE if they had not already achieved a pass grade and this was linked to funding eligibility. Kimberley Jones commented on her experience of learners who

needed English and maths but didn't attend the classes. Tom explained how initial assessments identified gaps in learning from school. Helen Rumbold asked how some learners appeared to have regressed in English and Nick Worth pointed out that results from the COVID years were not reliable. In response to a query from Paul, the correlation between numbers of non-native English speakers and outcomes in English and maths was confirmed. Helen asked about confidence issues for learners and Heather commented on work being done to understand learner motivation. Daran Bland noted that integration with main courses may be positive and Heather advised that a further paper would be brought to the board on what is happening. Paul Tomlinson asked how staff felt about learners' failure to progress and Heather advised that staff and learners were supported to be resilient.

Members noted that it is proposed that updates on progress and attendance for GCSE English and maths at future meetings will be split between programmes for young people and adult learning provision types. It was also noted that data on English and maths within vocational areas will be shared at each meeting to evidence progress of embedding everyday English and maths.

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

Members received a report from the Deputy Principal.

Heather Marks went through the information provided within the report and identified key points.

The committee noted that attendance had remained steady but remains a focus. English and maths attendance had improved towards the end of the year. In response to a query from Daran Bland about persistent absence, Heather advised that there was a relentless focus on attendance. Claire Foster told the committee that the Assistant Principal: Student Experience was focusing on attendance and the improvement in attendance compared with the national picture was noted. Paul Tomlinson commented on the importance of parents in supporting attendance. Kimberley Jones advised that she felt there was an increase in learners turning up late for lessons and Claire commented that a key part of the college's role is to get learners ready for work.

David Fannin asked about areas of low achievement and the committee was advised that achievement figures will be updated for the next meeting. Movement in work experience data was commended and Heather advised that curriculum areas were now taking charge of this. Paul Tomlinson told members that he had had a meeting with Wendy Poole and ways of engaging with more businesses were being considered. Paul noted that grammar schools were not engaging with apprenticeships and he hoped to help with this. Helen Rumbold noted references to getting back to pre-COVID conditions and commented that it was good to see normalisation.

Tom Hughes advised that data presentation was being reviewed to make it more accessible. Daran Bland suggested that identification of the most relevant performance indicators would be helpful.

8. **COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS SUMMARY 2022-23**

Members received a report from the Quality Improvement Manager which was presented by Tom Hughes.

Tom identified that numbers of complaints were fairly consistent over the years. An updated complaints procedure has been implemented which should impact on escalation of complaints. Nick Worth commented on the need to improve ways for compliments to be recorded. Claire Foster explained the way in which the new complaints procedure will operate and Heather Marks commented that it would be more timely. In response to a query from Daran Bland, it was confirmed that complaints in engineering reflected known issues. Claire told members that she welcomed complaints as they provide learning opportunities.

In response to a query, Kimberley Jones stated that last year learners may not have known where to go with complaints.

Nick Worth left the meeting at this point.

9. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Members received a report from the Assistant Principal: Performance, Quality & Standards.

Tom Hughes told the committee but he had met with Senior Learning Leads and was pleased with how confidently teams can talk about plans and contributions to local skills needs. Learners have settled in well and responded positively to induction activities. Helen Rumbold said that she had seen comments about inductions on social media. She asked about the change of timings for delivery of English and maths and it was reported that learners saw the change as a positive. Tom told members that he found behaviour and level of respect shown by learners to be good and Daran Bland commented on what he had seen through SEND visits. Claire Foster advised that the list of what the college has to do to be an outstanding college is reducing and Paul Tomlinson commented on its positive environment.

10. RISKS AND/OR REPORTABLE EVENTS

Heather Marks confirmed that there was nothing to report.

11. COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation.

Committee performance against its 2022-23 targets was noted. It was agreed that targets to be proposed to the Corporation for 2023-24 should be:

- At least 80% attendance
- Monitoring quality targets in the strategic plan
- Monitoring Ofsted follow up
- Development of accessible and focused information

12. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the committee would take place on 22 November 2023.