

Meeting/Committee	Quality & Standards Committee Meeting
Date of meeting	27 April 2020

Membership

1	Catherine Witherington Catherine Burn Mirella Barnes Veronica Bruce-McCoy Lindsey Littlewood Jason Austin	Chair Staff Governor CEO/Principal
	In attendance: Tracey Mace-Akroyd Claire Godfrey Cheryl Martin Angele Bates Rebecca Blackburn Lisa Wilson Andy Birch Cath Mollart	Deputy CEO/Principal Assistant Principal Assistant Principal Assistant Principal Head of Quality/Learner Experience Director of Apprenticeships Head of HE Head of Admin & Operations (notes)

2. Welcome, introduction and apologies for absence

Apologies received from Andrea Chattaway.

3. Minutes of the Q&S Meeting 16 March 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16th March 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

4. Actions outstanding/progress

Item 12 – Safeguarding – CB asked if there had been any progress regarding external use of Big White Wall. ABa confirmed that she had been in discussion with the providers to see if data could be extracted to show when external sources had engaged with the system, hopefully would be able to confirm imminently.

Action – ABa to advise CB when complete.

Item 14 – The Chair confirmed the action to report on Complaints had been actioned and would be presented at this meeting.

5. QIP Update

CM advised that in terms of the position papers for each campus including apprenticeship delivery, the group are making reasonable progress against actions outlined in the QIP at the beginning of the year. Current progress is being measured against the EIF.

CB asked how GCSE/Awards would be graded this year. CM advised that a process had been put in place and explained this is a combination of gathering evidence, professional judgement, prior attainment and potential progress which could have been made. Leaders and managers are working on this information which will be ready for submitting early June for grading.

VM asked if the effects of COVID-19 was affecting progress, CM explained how progress was continuing both online for vocational and Apprenticeships and Functional Skills maths and English assessments. CM advised that online learning had been extremely successful.

CM advised that Online Deep Dives will start next Monday and this is when evidence will be provided to assure Governors of progress.

CM explained the change to RAG rating. For March, RAG ratings had been split into 'in-year progress' (towards the monitoring visit) and 'progress to good'. This progress will also be shown in the Campus and Provision QIPs.

TM-A advised that this data had been shared with the ESFA and had received positive comments in terms of progress and reliability of evidence capture to make judgements.

6. 2018/19 QAR Update

TM-A highlighted the main points of the report for information :

- In 2018/19, RNN improved overall performance outcomes by 3.2%, from a declining low starting point, but the performance and achievements of learners was not consistently good across the Group.
- The 16-18 overall QAR NR increased by 0.5ppts to 82.6%.
- The 19+ overall QAR NR increased by 0.8ppts to 89.1%.
- This means that, despite our improved learner achievement outcomes in 2018/19 of 1.9ppts for 16-18 learners and 4ppts for adult learners, our final position is that the performance of adult learners is good and is in line with NRs, but the performance of 16-18 on study programmes is 2.1ppts below NRs and needs to improve.
- Issues at certain levels has been identified, this is being addressed in both SAR and the QIP.
- Apprenticeship provision – there was discrepancy between our internal data and the published QAR data. This was attributed to the recording of some learners who are on breaks in learning, which was included in our internal data but not in the published data. Our internal data of 53.5% overall achievement rates is correct but the published QAR data will be 56.3%. This is what Ofsted will use during an Inspection visit and had previously been alerted to the Board. The Government data service agency plan to rectify their calculation methodology for the 20/21 QAR data to address this error but the Group's published data will not change.
- TM-A advised this published data holds no surprises for the Group.

2018/19: MiDES performance and progress data produced by the Association of Colleges (AOC)

TM-A advised that only a very small proportion, approximately a quarter, of RNN's level 3 learners are included in the level 3 performance and progress data. Therefore, the data is not statistically reliable as an accurate reflection of RNN's overall level 3 performance. Never the

less, published level 3 progress data is considered by Ofsted during inspections to draw conclusions.

TM-A highlighted the main points of the report :

- In 2018/19, learners studying on level 3 programmes did not make the progress expected of them when compared to similar learners in England. The quality and performance of level 3 provision is not consistently good and needs to improve.
- Despite improvements in progress outcomes, learners studying on GCSE English (-0.18) and GCSE mathematics (-0.15) programmes on average achieved lower grades than predicted based on their key stage 4 results. This means that GCSE English performance is in the bottom 25% quartile when compared to other GFE providers, and GCSE mathematics in quartile 3.

The Chair asked how confident the team were that progress in improving English and mathematics will be maintained. TM-A advised that at least 'reasonable' progress is being made. The COVID-19 situation has slightly lessened the impact but all the evidence coming through steers towards the fact that progress is still on track and that consistency is the key area of focus to achieve across the campuses.

7. Curriculum Performance Update

CG presented the Curriculum Performance Report explaining this report was published prior to Easter and demonstrated progress made against each funding stream in terms of attendance and retention.

CG highlighted the main aspects of the report :

- There is little movement in retention for young people and adults. This remains strong and 2% above the same period in 18/19. Confident that progress required is being made.
- Attendance has declined further in the month and is now 85.89%, 2.5% behind this time last year. Some of this is due to effects of COVID-19, attendance is now being recorded where learners are engaging with online learning.
- Adults - no change in headline retention in the month, position is still strong. There has been an increase in enrolments of 300 in the month within the curriculum areas of ESOL and Employability. Retention is comparable to the same time in 18/19 however achievement is 20% higher, which demonstrates positive improvements being made in our recording of timely achievements. Attendance is 1.5% below the comparable time last year but this is being monitored through progression boards.
- There is little movement in retention on traditional HE programmes. This remains strong and above the same period in 18/19. Attendance is being monitored.
- Apprenticeships - Retention overall is 4.56% higher than for the same period during 18/19. RNN training is performing 1.5% better than the same period last year, whilst partners and subsidiaries is considerably less by 11%. Aston has dropped by 2.37%, the biggest impact from Create and Charnwood with a very small volume of three learners that were continuing.
- Retention and attendance remain strong for learners who have high needs. There is little movement in the month, both remain above the Group and national average. Concerns regarding some of these learners working independently but they are being supported by the ALS team to engage.

TM-A advised that following feedback from the ESFA a new report was developed which tracks those learners who have not engaged with online learning and who have not been contactable. Curriculum Managers receive the report on a weekly basis and those learners are being chased to ensure engagement throughout this period.

8. Apprenticeship Update

LW presented the Apprenticeship Business Update and highlighted the main points :

- A review of Financial Income System (FIS) at period 8, by the DoA, up to and including period 12, shows £1.8m commitment of our ESFA allocation. This would leave £648,439 for all new starts and carry in, up to 31st October 2020. A joint review by Director of Apprenticeships (DoA) and MIS of the current carry in, as £487,071.

VM asked about the financial surplus, LW advised how the surplus had occurred in terms of caseloads and limitations in travel and also the review of delivery models.

- Starts up to the point of period 7 (end of March) were behind profile at 529 starts against a profile of 540. COVID-19 has already started to impact on the Group's ability to recruit additional apprentices in line with enrolment forecasts. The employer engagement team, continue to contact employers about opportunities for vacancies and new starts and a digital on-line version of the induction has been produced enabling learners to complete the full process, should employers still wish to proceed.
- Current Retention at the end of period 7 (end of March) for all RNN Group has improved to 74.28 for 19/20 learners and 81.93 for all learners in learning. This is 5.55% higher than for the same period during 18/19.
- The current overall success rate is 41.63%. Claims are already being impacted by COVID 19, through capacity and restrictions on external awarding organisations and therefore could impact upon our ability to reach the overall predicted 65% success rate and 30% MLP outturn for 19/20.
- The volume of OOF Learners at period 7 (end of March) had also greatly reduced from 724 March 2019 to 309.

CB recognised the unprecedented position in terms of Apprenticeships and said it would be interesting to see what guidance regulators will provide. CB asked if LW had been in contact with other Colleges who presumably were experiencing the same issues. LW advised that the team are constantly speaking to Awarding Bodies and End Point Assessment organisations – this information is developing on a daily basis and assured that she is tracking the latest guidance given. JA advised that this is also a hot topic nationally in the CEO forums and everyone is in the same position including some of the outstanding colleges.

TM-A assured that the QIP will reflect COVID-19 impact and that Governors will be fully informed on a monthly basis.

MB asked about Apprentices who had been made redundant or furloughed and how this was being communicated to the College and how they were being supported. LW advised she is monitoring engagement activity online and the learners who are not engaging are being contacted. If they have been furloughed or not working they have been submitted for a break in learning, however the college are still contacting and supporting the learners.

9. Equality & Inclusion

CG presented the Equality and Diversity QAR Performance Report 2018/19 and advised that the Internal Equality & Diversity data was shared with the Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding Management Group in November and that this report shares the formal QAR data released on March 26th.

CG highlighted the main points of the report :

- No significant achievement gaps between males and females and learners who have a difficulty or disability within the 16-18 age group. There is an achievement gap within the adult learning group type for both these learner types.
- Adult males outperform females by 4.4%. This has been contributed to by 4 areas identified as requiring improvement in 19/20.
- Adults that declare a difficulty, disability or health problem do not achieve as well as those that do not. This achievement gap is not significant at 2.3%, however a couple of curriculum areas have been identified as having a larger gap.
- High needs learners aged 16- 18 achieve much better than those without (+10.3%), however adults who have high needs perform worse than those without (-4%). Both age groups achieve above the national average.
- Learners aged 16-18 that receive free school meals do not achieve as well as those that do not. The achievement gap is not significant at 2.2%.
- There is a 9% (aged 16-18) and 7% (aged 19+) gender achievement gaps between the male and female within apprenticeships.
- Learners aged 16-18 that receive free school meals do not achieve as well as those that do not. The achievement gap is not significant at 2.2%.
- Apprenticeships – The 16-18 gender achievement gaps between the male and female, had been identified in 18/19 as relating to legacy learners within Construction. This subject area, predominantly male, underperformed in 18/19 due to significant staffing problems following merger, either through sickness or through capacity, which impacted upon the quality of education and learner progress and achievement. This has since been addressed through the recruitment of new staff following the restructure of the team. 19+ gender gap of 7% associated to subsidiary companies and we no longer work with these partners.

CG advised that achievement gaps have all been formulated into Action Plans and that the E&D /Safeguarding Group will be presented with the latest data on Friday to enable progress to be monitored.

CG advised that progress will also be monitored through Deep Dives and Curriculum Reviews and actions will feed into campus based QIPs.

CB asked about +19 gap in females and the need to think about the reason for this on an individual basis and on the same basis the gap in those who access Free School Meals. CB asked if this could be a focus for the E&D Group meeting. CG said that some of the gaps were due to courses which were not designed for these groups of people, they have been redesigned. This will be discussed further at the meeting on Friday.

10. Subcontracted Performance

TM-A provided an update on Subcontracted provision and advised that the management of subcontracted delivery has significantly improved. The focus has moved from checking subcontractors' compliance with quality systems, to scrutinising the quality of provision at these providers through deep dive activities. Subcontractors are fully integrated into the Group's quality improvement processes. Subcontracting activities are focussed on providers who meet the college's strategic curriculum intent and high expectations.

TM-A explained that she has reviewed processes and the team have taken recommendations and are implementing as detailed in the report. It is important that quality processes are used to develop staff, learners and sub-contractor's knowledge beyond the requirements of the qualifications. In addition, to evaluate the quality of education particularly for the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners acquire during their studies.

Actions are being reviewed by the TM-A and Executive Director of Finance.

VM asked if the subcontractors were working as part of the college team to ensure the improvements are made, how much so they know about the Group and what they are trying to achieve. TM-A collaboration and scrutiny between contracts team and subcontractors has improved. Strengthened the arrangements to ensure the quality of education processes. Working with those providers who have challenges.

CB – how are the subcontractors engaging with the training – TM-A advised they are happy to undertake the training and were happy to engage with the Deep Dives.

11. 2019/20 HE Performance update (including outcome from OfS audits/issues, numbers, non-continuation, progression)

AB presented the HE Performance Update and highlighted the key points :

- In year retention remains strong at 96% but with a drop in retention across all years to 84.95%, however these are in line with previous years. An area of concern was specifically attributed to the Business & Management programme, there were plans to change this for next year.
- Attendance has remained consistent hovering around 87%, however this is below the 90% target, and this is being monitored through student progress reviews.
- Coronavirus affect is being monitored. There have been some good news stories in terms of online learning and the HE learners have embraced this.
- Changes to teaching and assessment have been successfully implemented to all HE programmes, in line with validating university and awarding body guidance, as a result of the Coronavirus restrictions.
- Three new traditional HE programmes have gone through the curriculum planning process, while validation is being awaited for a new Degree Apprenticeship programme.
- Alternatives to traditional open day and taster sessions are being investigated to enable recruitment to continue, despite a number of open events being cancelled.
- Office for Students (OfS) have suspended normal regulatory activity and therefore, there has been a delay in the outcome of the ILR audit visit.
- Enrolments were down against planned HE numbers at the start of 2019/20. Increased marketing activity has been implemented to increase the number of learners progressing both internally and externally.

CB asked if the Group had any overseas learners, AB advised not outside the EU. This led to a discussion on marketing opportunities. AB said that a recruitment drive is currently taking place around internal progression.

MB said that there were opportunities around short courses specifically linked to healthcare. CB agreed with this and said that relationships with these establishments were crucial.

TM-A advised still pushing ahead with the Foundation degrees with a view to be ready for September.

12. Digital learning Update

RB gave an update on the Digital strategy and highlighted the main points of the report :

- The Group has made significant progress with regards to the development of digital teaching and learning. Academic and learning support staff benefit from high quality

training to develop online teaching models through Google Classroom and GSuite. As a result, a majority of learners are engaging positively with their work, are making progress and are receiving feedback rapidly to support achievement.

- The RNN Group Digital Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for staff and learners. To achieve the outcomes set out in the digital strategy, a working group has been established. This Group currently plan and review the immediate operational implementation and impact of key tasks such as; staff training, the trials and purchase of software / hardware requests, communication plans and plans to establish flexible learning spaces on each campus.
- The focus for Year 1 in the digital strategy is firmly on developing teaching and learning. Therefore, a robust training programme, led by C-learning has been launched. The programme will result in all academic and learning support staff developing Level 1 Google Educator knowledge and skills. Training began in January 2020 and to date 60% (150) of the target group have completed this.

Response to COVID-19

- Leaders and staff provided an excellent response to the COVID-19 crisis, resulting in the entire academic curriculum moving to an online learning model within four days and therefore minimal disruption to learning.
- Staff and learners have adapted well to online delivery, for example Google classroom is enabling academic and pastoral support, sharing not only curriculum content, but health, well-being and social action activities for learners and their families during these unprecedented times.
- For those learners who are not fully engaged there is work to do and the group are working on this in terms of support with resource.
- Early, anecdotal feedback from staff and learners regarding digital teaching, learning and support has been overwhelmingly positive.

MB asked about the recommendations, RB said that these were more of a point of reference at the moment and this was being monitored in line with how development progresses over the next few months when potentially some financial commitment will be required.

CB said that she was excited about the developments and said that the current situation will change the landscape moving forward so investment in this area was crucial. CW agreed with this and said that eradicating some of the barriers to people engaging would be really important especially given the demographic of some of the local communities.

13. TLTA Report 19/20

CM presented the TLTA report and highlighted the main points :

- The Group has made very good progress in embedding the requirements of the EIF into all its quality arrangements, including the introduction of the deep dive process. This is starting to have a positive impact for learners, however, it is too soon to see the full impact.
- The internal audit carried out to test the robustness of the new processes was conducted as planned w/c 16 March and focussed on assessing the controls outlined in the points below. The outcome of the audit was the auditors have confidence in the quality arrangements of the RNN Group and as such pose low risk. The audit report is not yet finalised but can be presented at a future meeting.
- Progress in closing down areas for development arising from deep dives & sharing best practice has improved. Deep Dives have been carried out remotely and the teams have responded well.

- The quality of education and teaching, learning & assessment (TLA) across the RNN Group is improving as reported in the RNN Group end of April QIP update and the March 2020 Quality & Standards Deep Dive report. The trajectory has been moving upwards significantly in terms of technology to improve teaching and learning.
- Very good progress has been made in developing tutors' knowledge, skills and expertise in Google Classroom and online learning. The Group now has ten members of staff who have successfully passed the L1 Google Educator programme and one who has passed the L2 programme. Further staff are awaiting to sit the exams across both levels.
- Progress monitoring for L3 provision has continued and there are a further 5 scheduled Deep Dives planned.

14. Complaints

CM presented the complaints summary and advised that this process is managed by the Quality & Learner Experience team, key points were highlighted :

- 77 complaints received via the formal Feedback and Complaints process so far this academic year, of which four have been withdrawn and one is pending.
- 42 (55%) complaints have either been fully or partially upheld. 2 appeals have been received, one where issues had already been addressed prior to the appeal hearing and another which is still ongoing.
- 21 (29%) complaints relate to teaching, learning and assessment.
- 14 (19%) complaints relate to enrolment, certification and exams.
- 16 (23%) complaints were received in September. This continues to be the month where the highest amount of complaints is received.
- Complaints have reduced by 21 (16%) in comparison to the same period in the previous year.
- There have been no complaints received via the formal procedure about the potential closure of the Dinnington site.

CB said that it would be interesting to know how other Colleges compare and that to ensure the actions are monitored and come back to this committee regularly.

CM advised that the survey for learners regarding online delivery goes live tomorrow so can provide a summary at the next meeting.

15. Safeguarding

AB presented the Safeguarding report and advised that arrangements are continuing during this time.

- AB updated on EdProtect and advised of the number of captures on a monthly basis. At the highest point there were 3990 moderate captures in February and 1927 minor captures in March and 405 severe captures in January. 43 captures have led to intervention from the Safeguarding team, liaising with Progress Tutors and curriculum.
- Since the College sites closed on 19th March, captures have reduced significantly – 1 moderate capture during the first week of home working.
- Big White Wall was purchased and rolled out on Monday 30th March. The package allows both staff and learners to access the online support. Reports are available the 2nd week of each month.
- The ProMonitor safeguarding report has been updated to include the new code W35 to identify EdProtect (online monitoring) concerns. Mental health remains the highest recorded referral for safeguarding and welfare concerns followed by: family

issues/relationships/housing, general health and personal safety. There have been 4 recorded referrals for potential radicalisation/extremism.

- To supplement the service provided by the Health & Wellbeing team Big White Wall platform has been launched. From 30th March to 9th April 88 people registered. A full report is being developed and expected by 24/04/20.

MB has anything been captured on BWW as a concern, how are staff and learners doing. ABa said that the number of people engaging with BWW is high and supporting students during this period, nothing has been highlighted as a severe concern.

16. Any items of urgent business

MB made an observation regarding reporting and said that there were a number of reports in which terminology was used relating to 'the majority of learners' and asked if this could be quantified? CM advised that reporting would be improved to ensure this was quantified.

17. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 9th June at 6pm.

Signed _____ Chairman

Date _____