



**REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD**  
**QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 November 2022 at 2pm**  
**Farm Information Centre Room 5**

- Present: Alastair Taylor (independent) Chair AT  
Peter Green (independent) PG  
Marcus Clinton (principal) MC  
David Pearson (independent) DP  
Andrew Woodhead (student) AW
- In attendance: Megan O'Hara (student association president)  
Roisin O'Halloran (student course representative)  
Trudie McGuinness (assistant principal) TM  
Paul Spearritt (vice principal, curriculum and quality) PS  
Sharon Yates (assistant principal) SY  
John Kendal (interim assistant principal) JK  
Wendy Watson (head of quality) WW  
Jackie Schillinger (company secretary) JS

Part A unless stated

Item	Content
<b>1.</b>	<b>Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair</b>
1.1	<b>RESOLVED: Alastair Taylor appointed as Chair of the committee and Jane Cowell appointed as Vice Chair of the committee for the 2022-23 academic year.</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b>
2.1	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting including a warm welcome to the Student Association (SA) President Megan O'Hara and FE course representative Roisin O'Halloran who had kindly joined the meeting to provide input in the student experience. Apologies were received and accepted from Jane Cowell, Mike Gorton, Phil Gibbon, and Alice Warmisham.
2.2	The meeting was declared quorate and remained quorate throughout.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Appointment of student governors to committee</b>
3.1	<b>RESOLVED: Students Alice Warmisham (FE rep) and Andrew Woodhead (apprenticeships rep) appointed as members of the committee for the 2022-23 academic year.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b>
4.1	The Chair had declared an interest in item 1.1 and took no part in the decision in relation to himself.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Minutes and matters arising</b>
5.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2022 were approved as a correct record and the rolling action log reviewed for assurance. AT noted that the consideration of self-assessment grades (SAR) sub-grades had been made by the college but that the college had decided not to include sub-grades formally across the SAR, and he acknowledged the rationale for this. He noted that a good discussion had been had around this at the recent external SAR validation. PG welcomed the attendance of students at this meeting, following the requested action on co-ordinating with the SA, at the end of last year. PG also requested an update on the third stage of the voluntary Cheshire East audit and TM explained that it will commence shortly as the college wanted to be sure that the new recording system CPOMs was

	operational, as this was to be the focus of this aspect of the audit. There were no other matters raised that were not covered on the meeting agenda.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Quality of Student Experience</b>
6.1	<p>Student update on start of term: Student President MoH, student course representative RoH and student governor AW provided their perspective on the start of the year. They provided the committee with feedback on the student experience and student voice engagement with management and leaders so far this year. In discussion, the key points noted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RoH gave her view that the student experience had improved this year on the previous year with all the staffing challenges and that student behaviour had improved, and overall, a positive picture. PS asked about whether she had met her progress coach (a new role for this year). She explained she had her first contact with her progress coach last week and she feels it is well organised and the role has been explained very clearly. She commented that her coach is brilliant and she has clear times when she knows she will see her.</li> <li>- AT asked if the students felt that they have a route to have their voices heard. The students responded that there were various and effective ways and that they felt they could raise issues and they would be listened to. Some examples were discussed, and DP noted that this strong practice should be picked up and fed back to the staff and shared across college to promote good practice. PS explained how student feedback is fed back via staff briefings and student representative meetings. PG explained that he had attended the SA lunch meeting last week and he noted it has a good strong culture of representation with senior management attending. He noted the other aspect of the student representative meetings that meet with the Head of Quality and that these were well attended but he wondered if the students had thoughts on how these can be enhanced. AW clarified that the SA is intending to take a more representative role for providing feedback on the student experience overall and he gave some examples from recent student feedback meetings, as well as the social side. DP welcomed this assurance on feedback mechanisms and as it is very important for the governors to know where there are issues and that students can access these mechanisms to raise issues to a senior level in the organisation.</li> <li>- AT asked how effectively the students felt the SA engages with students and RoH said that she considered the SA does a very good job for those students that are willing to interact and she acknowledged that some students are hard to reach but the SA has a varied range of activities to try and engage with the student body.</li> <li>- AT asked about awareness and culture of health and safety at the college. RoH noted that last year when the covid restrictions were in place it was very evident and even now there are very clear guidelines on people's safety. She explained what happened on practical sessions for her course.</li> <li>- AT asked how the students found the BeReady programme so far this year. Feedback was given that it is enjoyable and the recent session on 'Prevent' had engaged the students well.</li> <li>- Members thanked the students for their feedback and providing a helpful insight to add to the reporting coming to the committee from managers and data such as student surveys.</li> </ul>
6.2	<p>FE Agriculture Engineering improvement plan: JK presented an executive summary of this report, provided to the committee in advance of the meeting and asked for any questions and feedback. AT summarised his view that the reporting shows a significant amount of effort it going into making improvements with signs of a positive outlook but with the recruitment of staffing challenges it is not an easy or quick fix and will require continued sharp focus from the executive team. PG noted the good review of all the detail that the external validation went through with the curriculum area manager which gives assurance, despite the grade 3 self-assessment, that the issues and actions needed are understood with a strengthening position and positive direction of travel. PG asked about the reason for the drop in academic outcomes in this area. <i>ACTION: QIP report on progress made, including data on mock examination OneGrade progress at next committee meeting.</i></p>
6.3	<p>Academy of Land and Environment (ALE) improvement plan: PS presented the executive summary of the report requested by the committee into the mitigations in place to protect the student experience in agriculture in the face of higher student numbers and staffing recruitment challenges. He summarised that the curriculum challenges remain but that now that the new progress coaches have started this is</p>

	<p>having a positive impact and he outlined the action taken to transfer resources across to agriculture to support with the high student numbers. Members considered the academic results from the previous year across the academy which had dropped with academic performance being a concern which needs clear focus this year, with staffing being the key to unlock improvement. PS provided an update on current staffing and vacancies and actions taken to try and recruit to vacancies and to improve the student experience in the meantime. Assurance was received that the situation is more stable in the other provision areas of ALE and that the executive team is keeping a close grip on the situation to safeguard the student experience. DP noted that the college was managing any student behaviour issues (that can be added to if teaching is taking place in larger than ideal groups) via the refreshed Student Conduct Policy provided on the agenda. AT noted the discussion had been helpful in relation to the review of student complaints reporting that the committee undertakes at each meeting and to the experience of students within the agriculture provision and learning from student and parent feedback including complaints. PS and TM gave assurance that there was a real emphasis in student induction sessions on expectations on conduct and behaviour and that the policy is reiterated regularly in the context of the student charter <i>ACTION: An update report with progress on the ALE QIP and student experience in agriculture at the next committee meeting.</i></p> <p>6.4 Apprenticeships - employer survey data update: SY provided an overview of the positive survey data. She highlighted the context that the response rate is not yet where it needs to be but that there are several other ways that employer feedback is obtained, including phone calls to employers, employer forums and learning walks. She explained the actions to increase employer feedback via pro-active engagement this year and noted that next term an update can be provided with an expectation that a stronger response rate will provide stronger assurance on the positive employer satisfaction evident in the initial data. The apprenticeship learner survey data was also shared, and members welcomed the good assurance on positive apprentice satisfaction rates evidenced. All agreed that the biggest challenge will be increasing the employer response rate. Members also noted the government accountability framework dashboard will be available in the new year, but that there are still some issues that the government is aiming to address so that it can provide a balanced view. PG stressed that it is vital for the college to capture satisfaction information from employers and for the governing body to have oversight of this under its duty to review how well the college meets skills needs. PS noted that employer feedback reports also come from the work experience elements of the BeReady programme, and this will link in with the overview of how well the college meets skills needs. <i>ACTION: update on employer feedback at next meeting.</i></p> <p>6.5 Draft Quality Assurance Operational Plan: Members had received the overview of quality assurance activities in advance of the meeting and welcomed the comprehensive overview that provided good understanding. The meeting discussed the benefits of focusing on the strategic improvement side and perhaps looking at any assessment activity that can be reduced to enable more scope for improvement strategy. PG wondered if progress measures could be simplified for example, to aid understanding and focus more on improvement. PS acknowledged that these measures can be complex and various and that whilst needed, it is also important to provide a clear message to staff especially now in the period of post covid recovery when measures are not being published externally. MC confirmed that the college will develop a more holistic quality improvement strategy and AT welcomed this to come back for consideration at the committee in due course.</p>
<p><b>7.</b> 7.1</p>	<p><b>Committee</b></p> <p>To consider suggestions for effective committee business and operation: AT confirmed that as the governing body was undertaking an external review of governance in the academic year, he would like to leave this item to be considered as part of that review. Members agreed.</p>
<p><b>8.</b> 8.1</p>	<p><b>Items for Decision</b></p> <p>College Draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2021-22: AT introduced the College SAR report, summarising the robust process involved in the external validation panel that had taken place earlier in the week with involvement of independent committee members. He noted that members had a good understanding</p>

	of the rationale for the self-assessment grading and that he was pleased to see that the feedback from the validation process had been considered. He checked that committee members present were content to recommend that the report go forward for approval to the board meeting in December, subject to finalisation with the accompanying Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and academic key performance indicators (KPI) for 2022-23. Members confirmed they were happy with the SAR grading.
<b>8.2</b>	<b>RESOLVED: The College Self-Assessment Report 2021-22 is recommended for approval.</b>
8.3	Draft QIP and academic KPI for 2022-23: Discussion followed on the further work needed by TM and the executive team to finalise the draft QIP and KPI, particularly in relation to progress measures. All agreed that following input from committee members, with email feedback from PG to TM very welcome, the draft will be recirculated and an offer to meet for a short MS Teams meeting can be made. It was confirmed that it is intended that these items be presented for approval at the 9 December board meeting if at all possible.
<b>8.4</b>	<b>RESOLVED: The reviewed and updated Student Conduct Policy is recommended for approval.</b>
<b>8.5</b>	<b>RESOLVED: The reviewed and updated Compliments and Complaints Policy is recommended for approval.</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Monitoring reports for information</b>
9.1	The Quality Update and dashboard report was received for information and assurance, including consideration of student complaints monitoring. A question was raised on the health check report in the Sport department and assurance was provided that the assistant principal is ensuring implementation of the process actions recommended but that the student feedback is very positive. On student survey feedback in general it was emphasised that students overwhelmingly say that they feel safe in college and any mention in survey responses of bullying is picked up and investigated.
9.2	The FE and Apprenticeships strategic risk review report was received for information and assurance. MC confirmed that the inherent risk level to quality of provision had been raised by the executive team due to the very challenging external labour environment exacerbated by cost-of-living pressures that can impact the student experience, as already discussed in relation to some areas. He added that the residual risk has also been raised slightly but remains RAG rated as Amber. Controls in place to mitigate and manage the quality risk were shared.
9.3	The Student Services Quality Improvement Plan (as requested at previous meeting) was provided for information and PG questioned the visibility of assurance on response to the Ofsted care standards recommendations as he noted these will be key for the next inspection. TM and MC gave their view that they considered these are captured and evidenced as completed in the QIP for 2021-22 with the remaining recommendations in the QIP for 2022-23. MC gave assurance that this will be clearly highlighted and communicated at the inspection.
9.4	The Teaching and Learning Update Report was received for information.
9.5	The Landex Peer Review Report was received for information.
9.6	The Link Governor Visit Summary report was received for information.
9.7	The minutes of the recent internal college FE Academic Board meeting were not yet finalised and would be provided once available following the meeting.
<b>10.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>
10.1	There was no other business reported to the meeting.
<b>11.</b>	<b>Any items to escalate to the risk register/report to Board</b>
11.1	AT noted that his report would be made to the board for information at its December meeting and draft minutes provided for information, and that key points he would highlight include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive student feedback and a very useful discussion with strong student engagement with the committee</li> <li>• Good work ongoing in Agricultural Engineering showing a good foundation for improvement and direction of travel, albeit in the context of a continuing difficult and challenging environment.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good evidence of work going on by management on recruitment and retention of hard to recruit staffing areas in agriculture provision in ALE, but currently remaining the more challenging of the two areas.</li> <li>• Apprenticeship employer survey data shows very positive content but needs work to increase response levels.</li> <li>• Good information received on quality assurance planning with the committee keen to focus on strategic improvement approaches in the coming year.</li> <li>• Assurance can be given to the board on the involvement of committee members in a robust Self-Assessment external validation process and test and challenge of the Quality Improvement Plan and quality KPIs.</li> </ul>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>
12.1	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 2 March 2023 at 2pm.

**The meeting closed at 4.30pm**

Approved as a correct record 2 March 2023

Chair: Alastair Taylor