

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2025 at 2pm
Committee Room, Reaseheath College

Present: Mike Gorton (independent)
Jane Cowell (independent) (items 1-3)
Peter Green (independent)
Alastair Taylor (independent, associate)
Jared Erskine (independent)
Summer Lakin (student)
Marcus Clinton (principal)

In attendance: Eli Broadhurst (student)
Paul Spearritt (vice principal)
Wendy Watson (head of quality)
Wendy Brissett (head of teaching and learning and innovation)
Jackie Schillinger (head of governance)

PART A unless stated

item	Content
1.	Opening items
1.1	Apologies and Declarations: Apologies were received and accepted from student member Ben Galloway, staff member Phil Gibbon and attendee James Eagney. There were no declarations made to the meeting.
1.2	RESOLVED: The minutes of meetings held on 14 November 2024 and 24 January 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.
1.3	Matters arising: A committee member queried whether sufficient information was provided in the reporting to the current meeting on take up of the enrichment activities. It was agreed that this be considered as part of the student governor feedback item and any actions required agreed at that point.
Corporation Core Function Accountabilities	
2.	Holding executive leaders to account for educational performance and quality and the performance of staff
2.1	<p>Student governor feedback: The student union (SU) president Summer Lakin and apprenticeship SU rep and vice president Eli Broadhurst provided an update on progress against the SU strategic plan including enrichment activity engagement. Committee members received the update with thanks and raised several challenges and questions:</p> <p>Is there sufficient resource in the student life team to drive the extra enrichment activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been some staffing challenges, but the SU has still made progress. With the new student life officers now in post covering the day and the evening this should make a positive impact.

	<p>Are the extra enrichment activities currently too course based?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an aim to provide other types of enrichment activity, but the course-based activity is still enrichment. The SU is planning to lead sessions on 'skills classes' where SU members provide a short session on sharing skills that they have. Enrichment is essentially all the opportunities available to the students and this includes the career ready offer as a whole. <p>Are all the departments engaging sufficiently, considering some of the staffing pressures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SU president is planning to work more closely with the departments including face to face meetings with the managers to seek to increase engagement. <p>Is the promotion of these extra activities to students sufficient to motivate them to take part?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is promoted by progress coaches and within Career Ready, with the employability aspects highlighted. <p>Is there sufficient and up to date 'you said we did' information back to students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The screens around college are currently being updated with more recent information on this and the SU provide feedback on their own surveys. <p>Have you analysed which communication formats are most successful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SU analysis of communications shows that social media including TikTok and Instagram are the most successful.
2.2	<p>RESOLVED: Progress on the overall SU strategy was noted and the challenges of promoting the student life extra enrichment activities considered, with an action for the student life officer to provide an end of year review of engagement in these specific activities for the committee at its summer term meeting.</p>
2.3	<p>Ofsted Areas for Improvement - Progress and Impact: The committee asked the vice principal to explain how the college had responded to each Ofsted area for improvement in its Quality Improvement Plan. The challenge and responses are set out in summary below:</p> <p><u>Quality of Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA):</u></p> <p>What have you put in place to improve the quality of TLA, particularly in theory lessons?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new Reaseheath Way handbook sets out expected standards for TLA and was launched at the staff conference on 20 January. This includes clear guidance on theory lessons and on written feedback. A specific session on the provision of quality feedback was delivered at the staff conference. An apprenticeship standardisation group is in place to develop a consistent and high-quality approach to the provision of feedback for apprentices. SPaG/marking policy has been developed by the quality team to aid improvements in quality of marked work/feedback to students. New teacher induction is in place – new mandatory activity for all new starters regardless of experience. First cycle of new in-house Initial Teacher Training programme is now running, (replacing the Award in Education and Training (AET) programme) to be of more practical help to support new teachers in the classroom. Managers have a new course performance dashboard that allows them to review specific key performance indicators (KPI) including teaching performance, retention, attendance etc, becoming a bi-weekly agenda item of performance monitoring meetings and 1-2-1s. Managers now have a clearer structure and timeline for the management of performance concerns through a redeveloped Performance Management policy.

- Leadership team have accessed best practice support via the FE Commissioner active support focused on teaching, learning and assessment and are working with Nelson and Colne, New Suffolk and Myerscough to share best practice.

What impact have you seen so far?

- The target is 80% effective lessons/sessions, and the performance data dashboard shows improvements since the Reaseheath Way launch. It is early days currently, but this data picture will build up with the increased learning walks and lesson visits.

Is this quality assurance activity enough to give an accurate picture on quality of TLA?

- The data dashboard reports will show the numbers of walks/visits so you can see what volume this is based on. The expectation is at least 2 learning walks per week by the CAM and about 100 lesson visits by the central lesson visit team by May half term.
- We have seen good early momentum working at pace and will monitor the impact - we expect to see the performance dashboard dials for the 5 principles of effective delivery (PEDs) going into green. However, it will take time to embed. We expect to be able to show good progress on this performance dashboard by the time of the Ofsted monitoring visit in the autumn term.

How can governors see how close the college is to 80% effective teaching across its whole provision?

- Out of the quality activity so far there are 29 urgent action interventions, which have been referrals from learning walks. The quality activity going forwards including lesson visits will moderate these urgent action referrals to give a consistent approach and a better picture of the amount of teaching which is not yet effective. These moderated urgent action numbers (not identified) can be reported each time to the committee alongside the volume of quality assurance activity so that the committee can better track what is happening and the pace of improvement.

Have the students noticed an improvement and provided any sense of this in feedback?

- The recent governor forums with students had provided some valuable feedback, which was positive. The student forum will be revisited by governors in the summer term to specifically look at the impact of the Reaseheath Way on teaching and learning quality. The recent student survey data is currently being analysed, with initial results looking positive.

Suitably Ambitious Curriculum:

What are you doing to make sure that students benefit from a suitably ambitious curriculum?

- There are key actions on entry criteria and interview process to ensure learners are on suitably ambitious courses
- The high needs working group led by the assistant principal for student experience and support will make recommendations for the high needs offer from September 2025 (initial proposals to the Curriculum and Skills Committee in March).
- Early indications from the working group point towards a pathway approach in Foundation, with the addition of a transition/flexible roll-on/off programme targeting NEETs (young people aged 16-14 not in education, employment or training).
- Business Hub is in the process of arranging a high needs employer event with disability confident employers, to provide insights into local skills needs.

Quality of Support for Learners with SEND and high needs:

What actions are in place to improve the quality and consistency of learning support for students with SEND and high needs?

- Cohort/group profiles will be introduced at the end of February. Teachers will produce a profile for the groups they manage producing a pen portrait of need, areas for development for their group.
- Learning Walk activity for individual learning practitioners (ILPs) has been introduced, and clear guidance on the role of the ILP has been included in the Reaseheath Way handbook for clarification with teachers.
- Specific ILP continuing professional development (CPD) pathways from end of February, linked to feedback from lesson visits and learning walks.
- Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) deep dive due to take place in the second half of the term.
- Initial engagement with leading expert in SEND, expectation to initiate some consultancy around key areas.
- The Learning Support Centre working group was established in November to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the ILP role, as well as clarity on the role of leadership managing quality.

Student Retention and Achievement

What have you put in place to increase the number of students who stay to the end of the course and achieve their qualifications?

- There are clear non-negotiables for curriculum area managers (CAMs) on monitoring teaching, learning and assessment including sampling activity to support retention in their departments.
- Ownership and management of retention is clearly identified as part of Teacher roles and responsibilities in the Reaseheath Way handbook.
- New course and group level performance data allows CAMs to see retention at group level to identify how the quality and teaching and learning links to retention.
- Withdrawal and information advice and guidance (IAG) task and finish group created to lead key actions around student enrolment and withdrawal analysis.

What impact has this had so far and how does Reaseheath compare to other colleges?

- Overall retention currently stands at 93% at the time of writing compared to end position of 89% in 23/24. At this point in 23/24, retention was 90.29%.
- Retention benchmark suggests anything over 90% would compare well to other colleges.
- Retention on Core Qualifications is currently 6.5% ahead of the final position in 2023/24.
- Level 3 retention is currently 5.5% ahead of last year's final position

Quality Assurance Processes:

How have you improved quality assurance processes so that you can accurately evaluate the quality of education and intervene swiftly to bring about improvements?

- Quality activities have been reviewed and refined to provide a greater focus on TLA, course level performance and impact.
- A post of 'Director of Quality' has been approved and is being recruited to.
- New lesson visit process with a pilot with Programme Leaders completed, feedback used to refine roll-out to wider staff.
- Revised CPD approach is being created, following feedback from the Staff Conference. This will focus on the 5 strands of the Reaseheath Way and will also provide a 'menu'

	<p>option to ensure staff are able to access specific CPD they (plus at times their manager) see as a priority to support their development as a practitioner.</p> <p>Have leaders considered whether giving staff notice of lesson visits is the best approach?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This has been carefully considered and the pilot with programme leaders involved a professional discussion and developmental approach, which worked very well. The in-depth lesson visit with a developmental approach is similar to the approach used in good practice models the colleges have shared with us. <p><u>Apprenticeship Final Assessment Awareness:</u></p> <p>What action have you taken to make sure all apprentices are aware of the requirements of their final assessment, how to prepare for it and when it will take place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The apprenticeship team are reviewing how this is communicated to ensure there are no communication gaps, even at an early stage in the apprenticeship. <p><u>College Policy and Procedure:</u></p> <p>What action are you taking to make sure that students adhere to the college policies and procedures, including health and safety, and the expectations around their conduct in lessons?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The equipment policy is being reviewed, and the main approach will be that full time students will use college equipment and will not bring their own equipment onto campus for lessons. Student member Eli Broadhurst raised a query on how this would apply to residential students who may need to carry certain equipment for jobs they have off campus, and it was acknowledged that the policy would need to cover these types of anomalies with clarity, so students understand what to do.
2.4	<p>College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Key Performance Indicators: An updated QIP and performance dashboard report was considered by the committee, presented by the vice principal curriculum and quality. The committee raised several challenges, summarised as: Whilst not an Ofsted area for improvement, how will you increase the number of adults studying courses which meet the local and regional skills needs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Development Lead roles (FE and Adult Skills) have been approved for recruitment to drive adult numbers Adult offer is a major focus of business planning meetings which commence 10 March with potential offering added to rolling curriculum plan. Skills Bootcamps applications (Farm Diversification and Forestry Skills) submitted end of January to Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington. <p>Whilst authorised attendance looks solid currently, there is a slight drop on last year for the time of year, how will you keep this on track?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have seen a small drop on last year at this time currently and are keeping a close grip on this with the attendance impact officers and use of automated messages going out. We recognise it is an ongoing challenge, so we need to keep working on it. <p>It is very useful to see actual attendance as well as authorised attendance and there is a 6% difference, is there a consistent and clear approach to authorised absence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a standard attendance approach to authorised absence, which is supported with the visibility of data now across the courses.
2.5	<p>Residential students' educational performance and quality of experience: The committee requested data on the educational performance of residential students to monitor whether there were any gaps or areas of concern. The vice principal curriculum and quality provided data on residential student performance overall and by gender and EHCP looking at</p>

	<p>attendance, retention, any safeguarding concerns by type and student pulse survey data. The link governor for residential students had also recently visited halls of residence and met with students and the residential service staff team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no educational performance gaps evident from the data. • Attendance and retention for residential groups of students is strong and compares positively with non-residential. • Residential students scored higher on survey questions about the quality of teaching, the impact of their course on improving their confidence, the impact of their goals on their overall development, the feeling of safety whilst at college, accessing wellbeing support and slightly more likely to recommend the college to a friend. • Residential students scored slightly lower on the impact of the course in helping them gain new skills/knowledge, the receipt of written feedback on their work, the quality of feedback received for assignments or assessments, their advice about what to do after their course, the benefit of their 1-2-1s and their perception of how staff respond to the views of learners. The student union representative for apprenticeships added that she had similar feedback from a small group of block release apprentices who had raised an issue of how the college responds to their views. • There were no themes arising in relation to safeguarding that were particular to residential students. However, a higher % of residential learners reported in the recent pulse two survey that they've been a victim of bullying (+3%) and were slightly less likely to agree that all students are treated fairly and with respect. <p>The committee questioned what follow up actions were being taken to address the results of this learner feedback. The vice principal confirmed the actions underway were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of specific learners who have raised a concern over bullying or not feeling safe with appropriate follow-up • Response to specific areas of survey via Halls meetings, including looking at course specific links to some of the survey feedback • Increase visibility of 'you said, we did' and other communication methods • Focus on career options/progression in individual residential development plans (IRDPs).
2.6	<p>RESOLVED: The committee gained a good understand of early impact on the student experience from the quality improvement actions and data reporting on performance at this stage of the year together with the triangulation evidence from the governor teaching and learning deep dive day on 31 January and student survey data. Follow up reporting to the committee at its next meeting should include how the college has addressed the student survey feedback, in particular about the residential student feedback, including apprentices.</p>
3.	Setting, Communicating and Monitoring Strategy – Strategic Risk
3.1	<p>RESOLVED: The committee considered the strategic risk that the quality of provision and student outcomes in further education decline. Based on the reporting to the meeting, the committee acknowledged a swift response has been made and quality assurance and improvement systems have been adapted with significant actions. However, the committee still needs to see the impacts and so took partial assurance that the controls are effective and reported that action is ongoing this year in the form of the college's Quality Improvement Plan 2024-25 to strengthen the control framework to manage the risk.</p>
4.	Items for Decision

4.1	RESOLVED: College Quality Improvement Plan, with the latest updates, and Quality Improvement Key Performance Indicators were recommended for approval by the Board.
5.	Items for Information
5.1	A summary of governor engagement/link visit feedback on teaching and learning activities including the deep dive teaching and learning day on 31 January 2025 was provided for information.
6.	Closing items
6.1	<p>Any other business: The principal reported on the outcome of the Ofsted care standards inspection that took place from 4-7 February 2025. He noted that governors had been notified by email by the chair at the conclusion of the inspection. He reported that whilst there was very positive feedback throughout the inspection, there was a technical breach of the national minimum standards that resulted in the requires improvement judgement, which the college had taken very seriously and has actions to ensure compliance.</p> <p>The committee reflected that the college needs to be careful not to overreact however, the governors need to be sure on the compliance aspects and asked how the college will provide assurance on compliance with minimum standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The action plan to respond to the area for improvement will be reported to the board at its next meeting, which will include a residential strategy group within the college based on the Myerscough model going forwards, which will provide greater visibility of compliance going forwards. • The quality and standards governor committee will monitor the action plan with clear residential minimum standards reporting. Reporting of performance data to the committee will continue to split out residential students • The intention is to request inspectors to return before the summer to resolve the action points as quickly as possible.
6.2	RESOLVED: The residential care standards action plan to ensure ongoing compliance with minimum standards to be reported to the Board at its March meeting and monitored by the quality and standards committee.
6.3	The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 5 June 2025 at 2pm.
The meeting closed at 4.30pm	

Approved as a correct record 5 June 2025

Mike Gorton (Chair)