

OLDHAM COLLEGE

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Hybrid Meeting held 3 December 2024

Present:	Paul Axon	Governor (Chair)
	Shaid Mushtaq	Governor
	Simon Jordan	Principal
	Joshua Bellot	Student Governor
	Carol Whitworth	Governor
	Karen Wright	Governor
In Attendance:	Janet Frost	Clerk to the Corporation
	Heather Green	Interim Deputy Principal
	Rachel James	Deputy Principal
	Alan Benvie	Vice Principal Student Experience and Inclusion
	Sue Holden	Asst. Principal HE and Higher Skills

Apologies:

14/24 Appointment of Chair

The Clerk opened the meeting and reported following requests for nominations for the position of Chair following the retirement of Anne Gornall, there had been one nomination received from Paul Axon.

The Committee welcomed the nomination and approved the appointment of Paul Axon as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for 2024/25.

It was **RESOLVED** that Paul Axon was elected as Chair of the committee for 2024/2025.

Paul Axon took the Chair

15/24 Apologies for Absence

The Chair thanked all present for attending the meeting. It was reported Michelle Royle would be joining the meeting at 5pm.

16/24 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

Declarations of interest were made by Shaid Mushtaq should any discussion in the meeting relate to his area of work.

17/24 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024 had previously been circulated to all members.

It was **RESOLVED** that members approved the minutes and confirmed they reflected a true record of the meeting.

18/24 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None reported

19/24 Rolling Action List Update

15 October 2024 Min 6/24 - Safeguarding Annual report 2023-24

Recommended approval of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to the Corporation at its October 2024 meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** this action was complete

20/24 Safeguarding and Prevent Update Report (December 2024) (Item 7)

A copy of the Safeguarding and Prevent Report had previously been circulated to members for consideration. Alan Benvie, Vice Principal guided members through the report and drew members attention to the following:-

- Noted the new Safeguarding and Welfare Manager would be joining the college on 6th January 2025
- It was reported the overall number of referrals had increased compared to same time last year, with the split showing 425 safeguarding referrals compared to 283 welfare referrals. It was noted the number of serious incidents had declined compared to 2023 and this was in part due to the collaborative approach taken with our partners.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed analysis of the referrals be reported to a future meeting – breakdown of data to include; by ethnicity, age, faculty, course

- Friendship related issues and bullying concerns were most prevalent amongst referrals, noting these are addressed through a range of mediation sessions involving the Safeguarding Team, Youth Work Officers and Safety & Engagement.
- Care Experienced learner numbers have increased this year and the college is working with 26 different Local Authorities. The college has 117 Care Experienced Learners of which 78 are Children Looked After (CLA) and 39 are Care Leavers. In discussion AB was pleased to report our National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) Steering Group, composed of representatives from across OC and UCO, has worked on our re-submission to retain the NNECL Quality Mark. Additionally the college who is a member of the Greater Manchester Care Leavers Trust Board representing the Greater Manchester Colleges and GMCA has agreed to support post-16 providers (ten per year over the next three years) to work towards achieving the NNECL Quality Mark.
- Noted the outcome of the external review of safeguarding and the subsequent action plan produced. It was reported the findings from the feedback were positive indicating ‘a clear and transparent culture throughout the organisation that supports safeguarding and promotes the welfare of children and/or adults

at risk'. Operationally the report states the college is compliant with required Safeguarding practice

- Reported the updated Prevent Risk Assessment/Action Plan has been shared with the North West Regional DfE Prevent Coordinator, who has commented that it is very comprehensive
- For UCO, the Prevent Duty information and Action Plan have been sent through to UCLan, complying with our Partnership Regulations
- Governors noted the plethora of partnership meetings that have taken place to ensure our students remain safe

The Chair thanked the AB for the detailed report.

It was RESOLVED that members noted the report and the progress being achieved.

21/24 FE and Apprenticeship Quality Summary (Item 8)

The Deputy Principal had previously circulated the FE and Apprenticeship Summary Report to members prior to the meeting, giving members the opportunity to question and comment on its content. The DP drew out key points from the report, in summary: -

(i) Areas of Focus in Term One

It was reported areas currently in the accelerated support programme were Construction, Health and Social care.

Construction: Focus is on improving attendance, quality of teaching and learning, progress tracking and leadership and management. Noted progress has been made in clearly identifying roles and responsibilities, identifying quality of education and compliance issues. Resultant measures have included breaking down the challenges into programme specific action plans, providing leadership and management support and accountability.

Health and Social Care: Reported actions are focused around leadership and management, quality of education and assessment and progress. A member asked what impact has been achieved to date and it was reported progress has been made in relation to roles and responsibilities with leaders and managers creating staff accountability. Additionally impact measures show a positive picture in relation to an increase in attendance, assessment issues have been identified and quality assurance activity has been undertaken to ensure effective progress tracking.

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(ii) Teaching, Learning and Assessment -

Noted the areas of strength for each faculty and the areas for development.

Reported the Teaching for Excellence would continue throughout the year with eight mandatory sessions delivered to staff. The DP added that this term will see the launch of 'Elevate: spotlight on Teaching Excellence'. In answer to a question raised the DP reported the cross college incentivised CPD model (loyalty/ badge scheme) that staff can book onto led by other staff, based on the principle of Positive Deviance: shining a light on what is working well, sharing best practice and raising the profile of our excellent practitioners and centred

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around the themes of Teaching and Learning, Inclusion and Digital will be closely monitored to ensure improvements are achieved and the impact is demonstrated by improving student outcomes .

(iii) KPI Headlines

A copy of the KPI report was presented. Of note,

- The proportion of provision focussed on skills priority sectors has increased by 5% to 71%
- The number of employers engaged in at least one college programme has increased to 718, 111 of these are new to the college in this academic year.

(iv) Right Learner Right Start

The DP reported the RLRS model continues to have a positive impact on the most at-risk students with a relentless effort on improving attendance. Of note it was pleasing to report behaviour continues to improve.

(v) SPOC Report

It was reported the response rate for the full-time At-entry SPOC survey was 73%, an 11% decline from 2023/24, noting the main areas of decline were Caring Professions (58%) and ESOL (45%). The DP advised in response to the key question “I would recommend the college to a friend” the satisfaction was 90% which was a 1% improvement. Other key questions results “My tutor has high expectations of me” 93% (2% improvement)

A governor referred to the comment “I can learn equally well on my own” and asked for data on the students with low attendance rates compared to outcomes to establish trends and impact, if any, of learning for those not attending by subject / faculties

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(vi) Overall Achievement

The final achievement figures were reported. Members noted the position.

A member asked if the attendance monitoring briefings had continued this term and the DP replied they continue to take place three times per week and the data is used to track the progress of the students and impact on learning.

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The DP continued and reported the GCSE resits had been well attended, with more attendees than November 2023.

(vii) SAR

The draft SAR had previously been circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration and comment. A robust discussion ensued and the following comments were noted / discussed:-

- Members confirmed the curriculum design was highly effective and built robust analysis of competition and labour market information
- Robust school to college process identifies young people most at risk during the transition to college period and evidence shows the attendance and attainment gap of these students has narrowed

- Governors were assured through the robust reporting structures for safeguarding that students receive highly effective support and guidance that helps them to achieve
- In discussion members reviewed data and triangulated intent, implementation and impact with focus on adult, high needs and 16-18

Following deliberation of the quality of teaching data, L3 data and high needs data members confirmed their approval of the SAR grades as reported.

It was RESOLVED that:-

(i) members received the report as presented

(ii) recommended approval of the SAR to the Corporation at its December 2024 meeting.

22/24 HE and Higher Skills Summary Report (Item 9)

A report on matters relating to HE and higher skills had previously been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Assistant Principal spoke to each report and drew out the key points for members to consider further. In summary:-

(i) Quality KPI Report

It was reported early withdrawals at the November census were lower than 2023/24 with 25 students withdrawing compared to 40. Of these 3 had health reasons, one paternity and one planning to return next academic year.

The AP was pleased to report that in the **National Student Survey (NSS) 2024 survey**, the Office for Students (OfS) highlighted Oldham College was again significantly above benchmark.

(ii) Enrolment and Progression

The AP reported the final position on UCO enrolment was 527 against a target of 505. Members noted the steady increase compared to last year and debated the HE offer, the succession planning from FE to HE and the ongoing marketing offer to the Oldham communities.

(iii) Internal Progression

The AP reported that for the 2024-25 entry, 7% of all applications (51 out of 723) received by UCO were from learners who had studied a course at Oldham College in the previous academic year. This represented a decline from 12% in the 2023-24 cycle. However, there was an increase in the conversion rate of internally progressing applicants (OC to UCO), rising to 88% compared to 61% in the previous academic year.

Members discussed potential reasons for the observed trends, including the balance between local retention of OC students and their progression to higher education institutions such as Manchester and Sheffield. It was agreed that sustained and targeted marketing efforts aimed at Oldham families would be vital to further elevate the profile of UCO's offer.

(iv) Retention and Achievement

Reported overall retention has declined by 4pp from 2022/23 to 81% and pass rate had achieved 92%. It was noted in 2023-24, 21 out of 31 courses achieved 100% for pass rates which is a significant increase of course performance. In answer to a question raised it was

reported three areas where there are multiple courses, 'Children and Young People' and 'Early Years' and 'Construction', achieved 100% pass rate for each of the courses.

A summary of the achievement rates by course types was provided and members were please with the number of students achieving a first or 2:1.

(v) UCO Annual Evaluation Report (AER) and External Examiner Report

Members noted the detailed report of the UCO Annual Evaluation Reports (AER's) which included quantitative and qualitative data on each course, against the previous year's Action Plan, UCO KPI's at campus and College level, and feeds into reporting to Principalship, Governors and wider to our HEI partners, OfS and QAA.

(vi) Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Report 2023/24

The AP reported that in 2023-24, 147 students declared a diagnosed disability (including mental health diagnoses), adding this equates to 31% of the student population and a 10% increase on the previous year. It was further reported that the Wellbeing Team were receiving higher number of referrals each year for students seeking support. In answer to a question raised the AP provided details on the types of support available both directly from UCO and from our partners.

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(vii) UCO 2023-24 First Sit Assessment Boards Summary

Data for the first sit assessment boards was reported. The first sit pass rate was 82% for all pieces of assessment which were presented at an Assessment Board, up 6pp on 2022-23. Whilst 15% of assessed work was ratified as a refer, with 7% of all assessed work being defers (students had ECs). It was reported the courses with low first sit pass rates were BA (Hons) Business Management & BA (Hons) Accounting & Financial Services which are now on teach out.

(viii) Alumni Update

The AP provide an update on the work of UCO to improve its alumni, noting 103 students joined alumni 2023-24, compared to 91 in 2022-23. She advised of the promotional work taking place to secure higher numbers and the events and activities available to improve networking.

A member inquired about the establishment of the alumni network. The AP reported that the alumni network has been active for several years, with UCO observing an increasing number of students returning annually. These alumni primarily seek advice from the careers service and contribute by delivering talks to current students.

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It was **RESOLVED** that members noted the report as presented.

23/24 Policies for Approval:

23/24.1 UCO Student Maternity Policy (Item 10.1)

A copy of the UCO Student Maternity Policy was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the policy and approved it with no further changes.

It was **RESOLVED** that members approved the Student Maternity Policy as presented.

23/24.2 Safeguarding Policy (Item 10.2)

A copy of the Safeguarding Policy was presented to members for consideration. Members noted the policy and approved it with no further changes.

It was **RESOLVED** that members approved the Safeguarding Policy as presented.

23/24.3 Low Level Concern Policy (Item 10.3)

A copy of the Low Level Concern Policy was presented to members for consideration.

Members noted the policy and approved it with no further changes.

It was **RESOLVED** that members approved the Low Level Policy as presented.

24/24 Any Other Business (Item 11)

None reported

25/24 Workplan 2024/25 (Item 12)

A copy of the Workplan for 2024/25 was presented to members for information. Members noted the changes to the reporting sequence as documented.

It was **RESOLVED** that members noted the Workplan.

26/24 Dates of the next meeting

18 March 2025 at 4pm

Meeting closed at 5.20pm

Minutes Approved: Signed _____
Chair

Date _____

Rolling Action List from the C&Q Committee held 3 December 2024

Meeting Date & Item No.	Rolling Action List <i>(Outstanding actions from previous meeting(s) to be carried forward, listed below, and not removed until completed/closed.)</i>	Actionee	Reported as Completed at meeting of
15 10 24 Min 6/24	Safeguarding Annual report 2023-24 Recommended approval of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to the Corporation at its October 2024 meeting	HG	03 12 24 Min 19/24
03 12 24 Min 20/24	Safeguarding Report It was agreed analysis of the referrals be reported to a future meeting – breakdown of data to include; by ethnicity, age, faculty, course	AB	
03 12 24 Min 21.5/24	FE & Apprenticeships Summary Report SPOC Report A governor referred to the comment “I can learn equally well on my own” and asked for data on the students with low attendance rates compared to outcomes to establish trends and impact, if any, of learning for those not attending by subject / faculties	RJ	
03 12 24 Min 21.7/24	FE & Apprenticeships Summary Report SAR Report Recommended approval of the SAR to the Corporation at its December 2024 meeting	RJ	