

SANDWELL COLLEGE

Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on Thursday 28 November 2024 at 3.30pm (Teams)

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| Present: | J Tew L Capper MBE H Singh | (Independent) – Chair in absence of NM (Principal and CEO) (Independent) |
| Apologies: | N Makin | (Independent) (Committee Chair) |
| In attendance: | R Pal A Tombs N Bostan P Smith A Thompson | Director of Information Services, Funding and Exams Assistant Principal of Student Services Assistant Principal of Adult and EDI Safeguarding Lead Executive Assistant to Senior Leadership Team (in ES absence) |

| | | Action |
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| 1 | <u>Welcome and Apologies</u> | |
| | The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Neil Makin and were accepted by Governors. | |
| 2 | <u>Declarations of any new personal or business interest or conflict with any agenda item</u> | |
| | There were no new declarations. | |
| 3 | <u>Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on 18 June 2024</u> | |
| | Minutes from the Learner Quality and Curriculum Committee meeting on 18 June 2024 were reviewed. Amendment: The only amendment required was adding a title for Mark Salter (Head of Centre, Central Campus). | ES |
| | <i>Approval: Minutes approved subject to the mentioned alteration.</i> | |
| 4 | <u>Matters Arising</u> | |
| | Minute No. L24.19.2 – Next meeting to include a report from Ian Smith on how apprenticeships had improved since the last SAR – outstanding, deferred to next meeting. | |
| 5.7 | <u>Short film and Student services report 2023/24 (moved up agenda)</u> | |
| | <u>Short student voice film "Talking Heads":</u> Purpose: As a part of the college's external governance review, one recommendation was to incorporate more learner voice into our governance. Content: Unedited, raw videos capturing student views on their learning experience. Usage: Video was shared to LQCC for feedback before wider board implementation. | |
| | <u>Content of video:</u> Playback: A six-minute video was played, featuring various student comments on support systems, canteen prices, break spaces, mental health support, and work experience. | |

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| | <p>Discussion: Positive feedback was received from students. They appreciated the support, friendly staff, and helpful learning environment that the college provides.</p> <p>Areas for Improvement: More breakout spaces, affordable canteen options, gaps in timetables, clearer communication on changes, and better support for work experience relevance.</p> <p>Actionable Insights: Identifying campus-specific needs and ensuring support systems are uniformly available across all sites. ACTION: Management to look at responses and report back.</p> | |
| | <p><u>Student Services Annual Report</u></p> <p>Purpose: Overview of Student Services work for the academic year 2023-2024 and future plans.</p> <p>Achievements identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality in Careers Standard: Awarded after two years of work; consolidates the college's status as a careers-focused institution. • Retention and Support: Implemented programme achievement managers (PAMs) to support over 2,699 hard-to-reach students, resulting in approximately 50% re-engagement. • High Flyers Project: Targeted care-experienced learners to transition from Level 2 to Level 3 courses with activities, visits, and inspirational speakers. • Safe Haven Project: Collaboration with police to provide safe activities for younger and older students from feeder schools. • Mental Health Initiatives: 1,100 individual mentor appointments, 229 sign-ups for 24-hour counselling, mental health awareness days, and training for 40 staff as mental health first aiders. • Welfare and Support Programmes: Cooking clubs, recipe books, community fundraisers, and inspirational talks. • Parity Across Campuses: Ensuring consistent support across all sites with cross-site staff collaboration. • Upcoming Events: Freshers fairs, HE fairs, trips to Oxford Keble College, Elevate study skills workshop, student union elections, swap shop initiatives, and enhanced work experience tracking. • Survey Results: 98% of students feel safe and welcome at the college. <p>Discussion and Feedback:</p> <p>JT congratulated Angela on the Quality in Careers Standard achievement. Recognised the hard work of mentors and student services staff.</p> <p>Impact Measurement: Concerns about the ability to measure the impact of initiatives and quantify their effectiveness.</p> <p>Data Clarity: Need for clearer contextual data to understand metrics (e.g., what does 1,000 university placements represent relative to total students?).</p> <p>Quality vs. Quantity: Emphasis on ensuring quality in work experience programs rather than just the number of placements.</p> <p>Next Steps: Developing KPIs, improving data articulation, and enhancing impact measurement strategies.</p> | |
| | <i>AT left the meeting</i> | |
| 5.1 | <u>Data dashboard (GCSE/A Level results 2024)</u> | |
| | Content: Focused on quantitative data and performance metrics across qualifications. | |

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| | <p>Annexes: Detailed tables and rankings relative to other regional colleges and national standards.</p> <p>Key Metrics:</p> <p>16-18 Age Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall achievement rate: 86.3% (national average: 81.7%). A Levels: 89.7% achievement rate (national average: 78.8%). AS Levels: 76.1% achievement rate (national average: 72.1%). <p>19+ Age Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level three pass rates: 90.2% (national average: 92.2%). Noted differences due to vocational vs. A-Level focus. <p>T Levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass rate: 93% across six pathways. Noted as a new qualification with no existing national benchmarks. <p>GCSE English and Maths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English pass rate: 34.8%. Maths pass rate: 22%. Context provided on the challenges of resit programmes and support systems in place. <p>Apprenticeships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Apprentices: 47 Engineering Apprentices: 47% of apprenticeships, representing 11% of the entire cohort. Challenges in Engineering: Absorption of learners from a failing training provider a year and a half ago. Complicated Gateway process requiring coordination with external providers, taking up to six months. National assessor shortages affecting endpoint assessments. Performance Review: Last Ofsted Inspection (2022) Apprenticeships rated as Requires Improvement (RI). Current Status: Above ESFA threshold with ongoing improvements. Performance Review Process: Starting February, departments will have individual data as part of their performance reviews. Quality Improvement Plans: Alignment with KPIs to reduce gaps in ethnicity and attendance. | |
| | <p><u>Discussion and feedback</u></p> <p>Governor's Overview: Achievement trends needed for 16-18 and 19+ age groups, split by campus, gender, and ethnicity.</p> <p>Attendance Improvement: Continue building interventions to achieve 90% attendance. Measure learners based on entry points.</p> <p>Apprenticeships: Implement the performance review process starting February. Align Quality Improvement Plans with KPIs.</p> <p>Specific Metrics: Questions about the low pass rate in T Levels Maintenance, Installation, and Repair (74%).</p> <p>Data Relevance: Importance of understanding how current performance aligns with college ambitions and previous years' data.</p> <p>Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged the need for better impact measurement. Highlighted ongoing efforts to improve data articulation and KPI development. Emphasised the quality of support systems and positive trends despite | |

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| | challenges. | |
| | <i>RPa left the meeting</i> | |
| 5.2 | <u>Self-assessment process and timetable and QIP</u> | |
| | <p>It was noted that the College's SAR and QIP was not in place and there had been no handover on any of the college's work from the outgoing management including the 2 VPs. This was challenging as they know the college's performance in 2023/24. This has been picked up upon Lisa and Asa's arrival, making deadlines tight to complete. Work has now started.</p> <p>A special LQCC meeting would now be needed to scrutinise the SAR and for it to be progressed to Board for approval before submission to Ofsted at end of January 2025.</p> <p>JT explained to the LQCC members that we are behind schedule and not where we should be as a college and he had discussed with CEO on her arrival when this had become known.</p> <p>ACTION: A date for the special LQCC meeting needs to be finalised as soon as possible.</p> <p>AG commented that SAR validation panels have been scheduled in the diary and a new QIP is due to be completed.</p> | |
| 5.3 | <u>Curriculum planning process</u> | |
| | <p>Launch and Collaboration: Initiated curriculum planning with Assistant Principals, Heads of Campuses, and Heads of Centre.</p> <p>Timeline and Meetings: Meetings will take place in the New Year.</p> <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with employer needs, learner needs, and budget expectations. • Ensuring curriculum meets future job market and sector priorities. <p>Upcoming Influences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills England: Not impacting immediately; linked to local growth plans and industrial strategy. <p>ACTION: Report back to governors on progress of curriculum planning in due course</p> | |
| 5.4 | <u>Quality Strategy 2024/25 - draft</u> | |
| | <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft quality strategy focuses on quality measurement and improvement. • Emphasises continuous professional development (CPD) for teaching staff, particularly for T level delivery. <p>Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Frameworks: Steps for performance management, quality reviews, and deep dives. • Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Introduction of more KPIs and data formats to track improvements. <p>Future Enhancements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of Emma Brannen as Senior Vice Principal, Quality. • Formal quality strategy document to be presented after further development. | |

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| 5.5 | <u>Safeguarding annual report 2023/24</u> | |
| | <p>Statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Incidents (Last Academic Year): assuming 2,632. • Increase: 27.1% compared to the previous year. • Mental Health Incidents: 27% of total. • Breakdown: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children: 52% ○ Adults: 48% (previous year: 74% children, 26% adults) <p>Key Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher reporting of sexual assaults and violence among females. • Rising incidences of forced marriage (from 9 in 2022 to 17 in 2023). <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget cuts affecting external agencies' ability to provide support. • Increased burden on college staff to fill gaps left by reduced external support. <p>Strategies and Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with partners like Women's Aid for targeted support. • Implementation of suicide first aiders and mental health first aiders. • Securing additional funding for wraparound care (Thrive project). • Early intervention programs and mentor training. • Holistic approach addressing various aspects of mental health and safeguarding. | |
| 5.6 | <u>Disciplinary hearings report 2023/24</u> | |
| 5.8 | <u>Complaints annual report 2023/24</u> | |
| | <p>Both reports received. Complaints Report:</p> <p>Total Complaints: 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Complaints: 2 (related to student support and curriculum), both closed without findings. <p>Future ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced analysis of complaints data. • Development of a more detailed complaints process report for governors. | |
| 5.9 | <u>Equality and Diversity annual report 2023/24</u> | |
| | <p>Performance Metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest Achievers (16-19): Indian students (89.7%) and other Asians. • Lowest Achievers: Black Caribbean students and others. <p>Actions Undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Interventions: Early identification and support for underachieving groups. • Mentoring Schemes: Introduction of mentoring and ambassador programs. • Inclusivity Training: Training for managers on inclusive teaching and learning practices. • Extracurricular Activities: Basketball programmes for Caribbean students to enhance engagement. • Community Engagement: Working with families and community to support student achievement. | |

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| | <p>Future Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of mentorship and ambassador roles. • Continued collaboration with mental health and EDI teams. • Exploration of additional funding for comprehensive student support. | |
| | <i>NB and PS left the meeting</i> | |
| 6 | <u>Risk Register – committee responsibilities</u> | |
| | <p>Current Status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Register 2324: Needs updating to reflect new leadership, mayoral contacts, policy changes, capital projects, and the upcoming Ofsted year. • Format Changes: Incorporation of Board assurance framework and a heat map. <p>Future Actions for wider board to be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a risk capital workshop with governors. • Refresh the Risk Register to align with current organisational changes and priorities. | |
| 7 | <u>Policies</u> | |
| | None this time. | |
| 8 | <u>Planner for the year</u> | |
| | <p>Planner Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Issue: Existing planner outdated and limited. • Solution: CEO will work with governance professional on her return to developing a comprehensive planner outlining yearly agenda, including standing items and thematic discussions. | |
| 9 | <u>Any Other Business</u> | |
| | Signing off of SAR January week 2/3 by LQCC. | |
| 10 | <u>Determination of Confidential Items</u> | |
| | N/A | |
| 11 | <u>Review of meeting</u> | |
| | <p>Governors provided constructive feedback emphasizing the need for data clarity and strategic action based on reports.</p> <p>Recognition of the hard work by staff in preparing and presenting reports despite capacity challenges.</p> | |
| 12 | <u>Date and time of next meeting</u> | |
| | Wednesday 12 March 2025, 3.30pm | |

The meeting ended at 5.45pm