South Thames Colleges Group

Minutes Quality, Learning and Standards Committee

(All resolutions passed were the unanimous decision of the Quality, Learning and Standards Committee members present unless otherwise stated)

Meeting Title	Quality. Learning and Standards Committee
Date	14 June 2022
Members	Mr G. Willett(GW) Chair Mr D. Cheema Prof H. Laville (HL) Mr. P. Mayhew-Smith(PM-S) Group Principal / CEO Ms M. Pottinger (MP) Mr M. J. Stone (JS) Ms C. Streliaev-Pivett (CS-P)
In Attendance	Ms S. Marfe(SM) Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment Mr J O'Shea (JO) Principal, South Thames College Ms S. Muncie(SM) Vice Principal - Curriculum & Quality Ms J. Percival(JP) Vice Principal - Curriculum & High Needs Mr J. Pemberton-Billing(JP-B) Principal, Carshalton and Merton Colleges Mr M. Tweedale(MT) Principal, Kingston College Ms S. Raphael-Reeves(SR-R) Vice Principal - HE and Partnerships Ms H. Meredith (HM) Head of Governance

Key Meeting Outcomes

The meeting took place remotely by Teams.

1 WELCOME, APOLOGIES, DECLARATION OF INTEREST

1.1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr B. Fraser . JO was welcomed to his first meeting of the QL & S Committee.

1.1.2 Members confirmed that they did not have any pecuniary or other interest in any agenda item.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 10th and 16th MARCH 2022 AND MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Accuracy. Both sets of minutes were accepted as an accurate record to be signed by the Chair. Matters arising The Action Log was reviewed and updates below were discussed and noted:

Include more reference to LSIPs in reports / agenda for QLS	Report writers	Ongoing
Governors asked for more detail on how the 16-19 Tuition Fund is being used at the next meeting.	CPs	See Agenda Item 2.3
Employer survey- summary of responses and recommended actions to be brought to the next meeting.	SR-R /NN	See Agenda Item 5.1.1
Schools' partnership written update to be shared following the meeting.	SM/ HM	Actioned
Proposal needed to allow further time for the committee and officers to discuss A level plus offer further.	PMS/GW/ HM	See Item 2.2 – Minutes of Additional meeting held 16th March
PMS to check with DF any potential HR implications from having previously made A level teachers redundant.	PM-S	MT confirmed that here are no implications
(From previous meeting) Check whether the college has achieved awarding body status for A Levels	CV	MT confirmed that the College does have awarding body status

2.3 16 to 19 TUITION FUND UPDATE

2.3.1 The committee received an update report requested last meeting. The COVID response Small Group Tuition fund was utilised by the Group this year and last year to support lost learning. The aim of the fund is to support learners to pick up lost learning to enable them to meet historic outcome levels.

2.3.2 The Group has prioritised tutor access for study programme learners with additional support needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In some Colleges the fund has been utilised to enhance subject specific numeracy and/or literacy skills; including in Engineering, Sports, and Health and Social care at Kingston in direct response to the evolving pressures around the RQF exams element of the qualification. So far this year 1700 students have been targeted for the project.

2.3.3 MP asked if increased engagement this year will result in improved impact? JP-B confirmed that Ofsted visited Merton College as part of a sector wide review and the HMI was very

satisfied (although no formal feedback). Students spoke very positively about the impact on their skills acquisition and confidence development. In a mid-year survey 84% of students reported that Head Start has supported them to become more confident with English and maths, 88% felt that they were being supported to make better progress on their course, and 90% were glad they attended the voluntary sessions.

2.3.4 It was **resolved** to note this report.

2.3.5 **ACTION**: MT to review the forecasting relating to the impact of this funding and circulate a note about that following the meeting.

3. REVIEW OF BOARD ASSURANCE RISK AREAS (PART 1)

The Chair reminded the Committee that the two risks allocated to it for review are:

1. the risk of a poor Ofsted inspection or OFS result and
2. the risk of declining student numbers.

4. STATEGIC AMBITION -GROWTH

4.1 **RECRUITMENT STRATEGY -PROGRESS UPDATE FOR 2022-23**

PM-S had presented student numbers 2021-22, planned numbers and curriculum planning for 2022-23 at the Corporation Strategic Review meeting on 26 May copied below:

The heart of our plan

Funding stream	2021/22 position	Plan for 2022/23	Notes
16-18	4541	4594	• Very small A Level offer, combined with BTECs plus mixed subject offer • New programmes in eg Esports • Increased funding rates and programme volumes (540 hours rising to 580)
Adult	£9.7M (February management accounts, forecast for delivery)	+c£8K (+ALS + ALL)	• Subcontracting to increase • Growth not coming through planning, less than planned position of c£300K in March
HNS	712	C800	• New leadership structure in place to manage capacity • Debate with key Local Authorities about cost/price • Low contribution rate • New income of c£1.1M
HE	569	543	• New degrees validated and launched (Counselling and Mental Health Support) • Replacement provision for areas in steady decline • Income reducing by c£320K
Apprenticeships	594 (income forecast £2.275M)	541 (income level -£32K))	• Capacity, compliance and quality issues hampering growth, some progress on all of these • Some new programmes at KC (eg Digital Marketer)

PM-S reported that current application data suggests that 16-19 recruitment for 2022-23 might be down by a further 130 students although 1000 applications were awaiting processing – typically conversion rate from application to enrolment is c40%. The new combined A level /BTEC pathways offers and new HE Courses are attracting higher numbers of applicants.

SM joined the meeting at 6.40pm

SR-R and SM reported on a recent conference for STCG staff on Growth and Innovation where colleagues shared case studies on the development of new courses and engaging employers in the development of these. DC suggested that an annual refresh of the curriculum should take place and PM-S confirmed that the College Principals team will be doing this.

4.2 **CURRICULUM STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

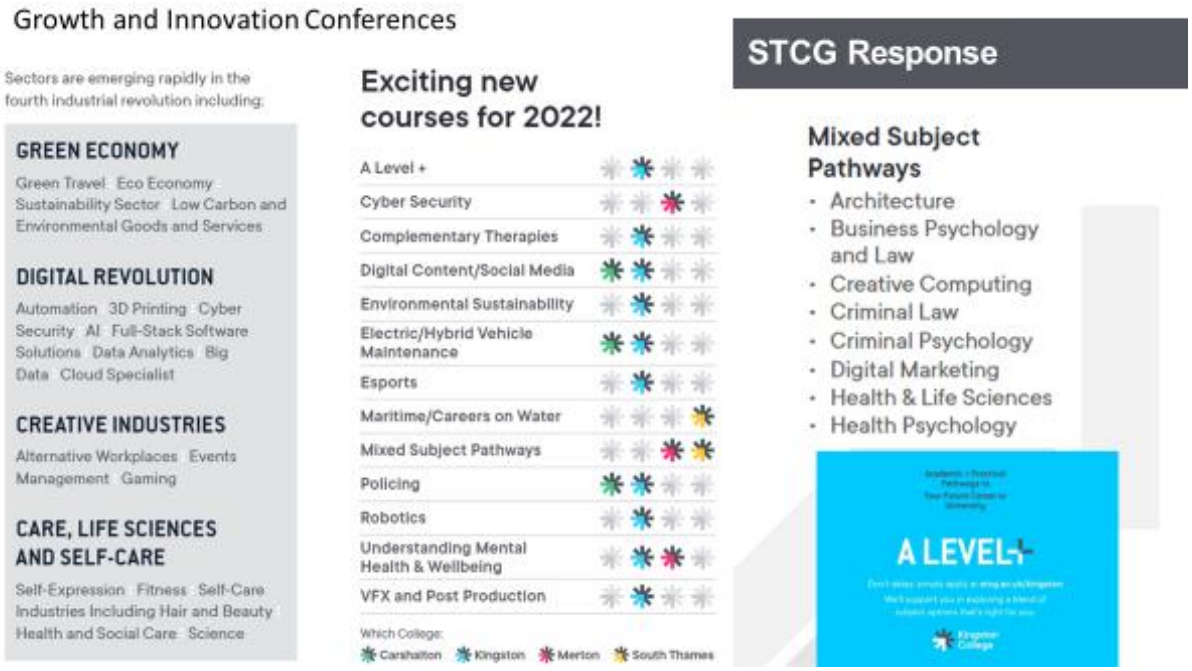
The Committee reviewed a RAG- rated progress update of the Curriculum strategy 2019-2024. JS challenged how why this did not have more Red issues- the progress update does not show that the Group is still not seeing curriculum driven growth. JS felt that this could lead to a sense of complacency about growth targets.

ACTION: In response PM-S agreed to produce an impact assessment of the new curriculum innovations based on enrolments to new provision for the Autumn term.

4.3

CURRICULUM PLANNING UPDATE

New courses being offered for September 2022 were discussed at the last meeting and at the Strategic Planning Meeting on 26 May- slide from that meeting below



4.4

UPDATE ON DEFUNDING OF BTECS

4.4.1

Governors received the provisional list of qualifications which will be defunded from 2024 – those of most significance to STCG students include engineering, health and social care and childcare qualifications. PM-S had argued with the Minister for more flexibility and inclusivity for students at STCG for whom T levels and long industry placements are not suitable.

4.4.2

MP asked whether the Group has carried out an analysis for its students of the impact of the defunding of these courses and the alternative qualification options for them

ACTION: PM-S agreed to model the impact of the defunding of these courses and the alternative qualification options for college students

4.4.3

SM reported that the Group is developing a T Level Implementation Plan into curriculum planning for 2023-24 and it was agreed to bring this to the next meeting.

5.

STRATEGIC AMBITION- PARTNERSHIPS

5.1

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS – UPDATE

5.1.1

SRR had provided a detailed update on Employer Partnership work at the Corporation Strategic Review meeting on 26 May. Recent engagement with Chambers of Commerce and key employers is pushing forward more apprenticeship provision.

5.1.2

EMPLOYERS' SURVEY

Overall some excellent positive and supportive feedback with the overall conclusion that employers are generally pleased with the interactions they have with STCG and view STCG in a positive light. The more critical comments related to apprenticeships with a request for a dedicated account manager for all apprentices in one company worth considering. The team were disappointed with the response rate and are looking at ways to increase responses next year. JS suggested instead of carrying out an annual survey asking employers to complete a survey after completion of each contact with the Group and SR-R agreed to explore that idea.

5.1.3

ESTABLISHMENT OF EMPLOYER FORUM- PROGRESS UPDATE

The Group is planning to establish an Employer Advisory Board from September 2022 to help shape, inform and enrich the Group's curriculum offer. It will also enable employers to support learners through guest speaking opportunities, providing employer-led masterclasses and assisting with providing assignment/project briefs for students. In addition, employers may provide work experience opportunities or apprenticeships.

5.1.4	**CRM UPDATE** A new CRM system is being researched as Pro-Engage not able to support the needs of the college. Microsoft Dynamix and Salesforce appear to be the most suitable. Demonstrations have been held with BP/Marketing/IT. Quote received from Tribal. MP offered to assist from recent market research on these systems.
5.2 5.2.1 5.2.2	**SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS - UPDATE** SM presented an update on schools partnership work including an impact assessment of school liaison activity on the number of applications and enrolments from each school. In the 4 months since the Team was formed, the number of applications resulting from school partnership work already increased by 8%. The report detailed activities being taken by the team and an impact analysis by college and by school. Governors and the Chair thanked SM for the impressive and comprehensive nature of the report and the partnership work being undertaken. It was **resolved** to note these two updates.
6.	**STRATEGIC AMBITION- QUALITY MONITORING & IMPROVEMENT**
6.1 6.1.1 6.1.2 6.1.3	**GOVERNANCE KPI DASHBOARD -** March 2022 update PM-S presented the March 2022 Quality KPIs from the Governance KPI dashboard which will be updated termly for Corporation meetings. JS asked the reason for the low level of completion of staff appraisals (21.6%). MT explained that the administration relating to the appraisal process and recording this on the college HR system is cumbersome and time consuming; in practice conversations are taking place but not being recorded on the HR system. Governors commended the dashboard as a very helpful development and thanked all colleagues involved in producing this.
6.2.1 6.2.2 6.2.3 6.2.4	**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLANS (QIAPs)** JO presented the QIAP for STC. Overall attendance at STC at 83% was being boosted by attendance on short courses by adults as 16-18 attendance is at 79%. The College needs to focus on achieving higher added value (ALPs data) . Apprenticeships at STC have received support this year resulting in current achievement forecast rate 50% (last year 39%) . There had been good attendance at English and Maths exams- after sharing good practice ideas from MC and CC. The main work next year is on the '3 I s'-particularly implementation including planning the sequencing of action to move teaching and learning forwards. MT flagged up the changes taking place in the senior team at KC this year and next when a number of Heads of School will retire. MT flagged the importance of KC in leading quality for the Group and the need to sustain that despite the changes in management. GW took this opportunity to thank MT for his contribution over many years to Kingston College and STCG. JP-B paid tribute to MT for leading the Group through the last Ofsted inspection. In response MT thanked governors for their valuable support given as volunteers over the past 25 years. JP-B apologised that there was no QIAP from Carshalton and Merton Colleges. Work has focussed on monitoring attendance and getting students through their exams and assessments. It was **resolved** to note these updates.
6.2.5	**QUALITY MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE (QMAP)** JM presented Group Forecast tracking data tables by areas of provision and by College. GW asked in future for this data to be RAG rated. JM highlighted key forecasts with the caveat that forecasting is very difficult following two years of Teacher Assessed Grades and highlighting that Apprenticeship and HNS forecasts are continuing to end of Term 3: **Term 2 in-year forecasts** All Qualifications (Excl Appr & HE) 86.9% Group HNS All Quals 79.9% Group Apprenticeships 63.1% It was **resolved** to note these forecasts and the caveats attached to these.

6.3	NOTICE TO IMPROVE (NTI) UPDATES – CROSS GROUP

6.3.1

APPRENTICESHIPS

SM presented the Apprenticeship mid-year position statement, Apprentice Mid-Year Survey results and IQAR summary. Points highlighted:

- **Forecast achievement rates**-

KC has seen a reduction linked to 10 Engineering apprentices who have had their gateway moved back to June/July. CC forecast is slightly lower than March (55.3) STC forecast for May is 50%, Subcontractors 65% with an overall achievement of 55%.

College	2020/21 Achievement Rates	May 2022 Forecast
KC	60.3%	63.4%
CC	39.7%	53.2%
STC All	39.0%	55.0%
Group	**45.5%**	**58.7%**

- **Track and Monitor Processes for collection of start-up documentation**

There are 178 new starts apprentices in funding. Good progress made with MIS and ID in converting paper-based sign up documentation to be included as Pics

- **Accurate and timely logging of Off the Job (OTJ) training**

There is an improving picture on OTJ, admin support in place to move all OTJ onto the new documentation and updated by administrators on a monthly basis

- **Roles, responsibilities and processes**

Roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined and an updated Apprenticeship handbook has been developed to cover all roles across all parts of the apprenticeship programme. Input has been provided via the Matrix group and MIS.

It was **resolved** to note this report.

6.3.2

HIGH NEEDS

JP presented the High Needs mid-year position statement . Two IQARs (mock inspection) of HNS provision had taken place in February and May 2022. The May IQAR found that following intensive activity since February, improvements in the quality of education for HN learners have been achieved.

The quality of feedback and targets remains inconsistent and further work is needed to ensure this is good for all.

Some very good examples of good practice were seen in many maths and English sessions, although some sessions still required improvement. Little embedding of maths and English was seen in vocational classes and CPD will be developed to strengthen this area.

The term 2 Forecasting indicates HNS achieving vocational and English qualifications in line with their peers. Maths remains a concern and interventions such as small group tuition and additional sessions are being used to maximise achievement.

It was **resolved** to note this report.

6.3.3

LEARNER DESTINATIONS REPORT 2020/21

JM presented this report from data from 9917 learners

- 87.1% of all learners reported positive destinations
- 96.1% of HNS learners reported positive destinations
- 85.6% of BAME learners reported positive destinations

It was **resolved** to note the update report.

6.3.4

UPDATE ON RELEASE OF NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT RATE (NART) STATISTICS

JM reported that the DfE has published a very limited 2020/21 National Achievement Rate Table which provides a basic set of headline national average achievement rates data .

Apprenticeships: The headline national average achievement rate for 2019/20 was significantly revised down from 64.2% to 57.5%. The Group's 2019/20 achievement rate of

52.7% is still below this revised national average. The 2020/21 national average achievement rate improved slightly to 57.7%.

	2020/21 National Average Achievement Rate %	STCG 2020/21 Achievement Rate %	+/- 2020/21 national average
Group	57.7	46.8	-10.9
CC	57.7	40.8	-16.9
KC	57.7	63.2	+5.5
STC	57.7	40.3	-17.4

Headline national achievement rates

Age	2020/21 National Average Achievement Rate %	Annual Change	STCG 2020/21 Achievement Rate %	+/- 2020/21 national average
16-18	84.1	+0.1	85.7	+1.6
Adult	85.5	+0.2	82.3	-3.2
All	84.8	+0.1	83.6	-1.2

6.4

6.4.1

SEND REVIEW GREEN PAPER: RIGHT SUPPORT, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME AND AoC RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

The Green Paper and the AoC Response to this was included in the meeting papers.
JP had prepared some slides on the impact of this which were shared with the committee following the meeting (due to pressure of time) and are copied below.

6.4.2

Negatives

- **Little emphasis on colleges –** this is a shame as the aim of the reforms is to create a system that serves young people all the way through to age 25, from childhood to adulthood.
- **Not much about any additional support for SEND rather than EHCP -** Schools have a 'notional SEND budget' for 'SEN Support' as well as other mechanisms such as pupil premium, whereas colleges receive 'disadvantage funding' which has numerous functions other than supporting students with SEND.

6.4.3

Positives

- **Proposal to introduce local inclusion plans quality assured by DfE regionally.** – We currently work with twenty one different local authorities so there is a need to reduce divergence between the practices of different local authorities.
- **Banding of High Needs costs** - Banding of High Needs costs should reduce, though not eliminate, the need for difficult conversations with lots of different LAs and individual funding forms. However, we need to ensure there is flexibility to allow for different regional costs, needs of students being different in FE from school and different sized programmes.
- **Standardised digitised EHCPs** – This would be very welcome but is also true of other documentation forming part of the EHCP process, including Annual Review forms and consultations

6.5
6.5.1

OFSTED INSPECTION

Governors received the OFSTED strategy 2022-27 and an article from FE Week on Emerging themes from inspections and updates to the Ofsted inspection framework from September 2022 (https://feweek.co.uk/ofsted-5-year-strategy-qa-with-paul-joyce/) and the DfE Draft Statutory Guidance on " Review of how well the education or training provided meets local needs" from July 2021.

6.5.2

A key change from September is that Ofsted will assess **how well colleges meet skills needs** . Inspectors will examine a range of evidence to see how well leaders engage with key stakeholders and establish skills needs and how well the college's curriculum meets those needs.

6.5.3	JM confirmed that self-assessment work is a focussing on the emerging themes from inspectior
6.6	**QUALITY ASSURANCE SELF ASSESSMENT CYCLE & PROCESS 2021/22 & 2022/23** JM presented the proposed 2022/23 Quality Self-Assessment and Forecasting Cycle. GW asked for the date shown for the CSAR validation (to be clarified subsequently (either 21 or 22 November) It was **resolved** to note this report.
6.7 6.7.1 6.7.2 6.7.3 6.7.4 6.7.5	**LEARNER VOICE- 2021/22 FE Mid-Year Student Survey** Overall response rate of 54% . Once again, this year, comparison data against National benchmarks via the Learner Satisfaction Survey is not available. Questions which were highly rated with results in the 90s% included • Q 1 - I am enjoying my course • Q6 - The quality of teaching on my English FS/GCSE course is of a good standard and I am confident in the progress I am making • Q9- My Tutor is supportive and my tutorial sessions are interesting and helpful • Q20- I know where to go and who to see if I am concerned about myself or others feeling safe at College and /or outside College • Q24 - Overall, I feel I made the right choice in attending this College Questions with lower scores requiring improvement included: • Q7 - The quality of teaching on my Maths FS/GCSE course is of a good standard and I am confident in the progress I am making • Q8 - I have an individual (1-2-1) meeting on my progress at least once per term (12% drop from 20/21 at Group level). • Q21 - My employability skill development and work experience /Industry Placement opportunities have been good (5% rise from 20/21 at Group level). • Q22 - The College gives me helpful information, advice and guidance on what I can do next after my course In relation to Q8 CS-P reported from a Student Council meeting on student feedback about tutorials – students want these to be more informative than just catch up classes. Students also asked for the Principal Q and A sessions to be re-instated. It was **resolved** to note this report.
6.8 6.8.1 6.8.2 6.8.3	**LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS** Members received Link Governor reports from JS and KS and GW thanked them for these. JS asked for clarification following this year's IR as to the new college leads who each link governor is linked to. PM-S agreed to provide that once the IR is completed. It was **resolved** to note these reports. .
7.	**STRATEGIC AMBITION – DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**
7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4	**DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY - PROGRESS UPDATE** JM presented a progress update report. A new student intranet "My College Hub" will be piloted from August 2022 and work on onboarding new students into college IT systems is taking place as part of their induction. JS challenged what the college is doing about offering blended learning options providing opportunities for learners to study courses at home. JS pointed that management needs to link ideas for blended learning opportunities to the curriculum strategy to ensure that the college is offering courses that students want to study. PM-S agreed that the college needs to do more work on exploring diversification of the offer. JP-B reported on work exploring alternative options for delivering some professional courses digitally. It was **resolved** to note this update.

8.

REVIEW OF BOARD ASSURANCE RISK AREAS (PART II)

Members reviewed the two risk areas allocated to the committee and the assessment of the level of risk for each as shown below:

Severity of Risk	Minor	Medium	Critical
	< 19	20-34	>35
Level of Assurance	High	Medium	Low

Assurance / Risk Areas	Risk Assessment: Cross Reference to Risk Register	Gross	Net	Overall Assessment of Assurance Level
Poor Ofsted or OFS Result	14,16,18	48	20	
Declining student numbers or planned student targets not achieved	1,2,3a,3b,4	99	78	

The Committee discussed enrolment numbers noting that the risks attached to declining student numbers are correctly assessed as red risks.

It was **resolved**:
That the Committee was satisfied that the risk level for each of the risks is correct at the moment and that sufficient controls and/or actions are being taken to manage these risks.

9.

FUTUTE MEETING DATES FOR 2022-23

Following the meeting the GSAR validation and November QLS meeting dates were changed to Tuesday 22 November 2022

Quality, Learning & Standards	**Tuesday 18 October 2022** **Tuesday 22 November 2022** **Tuesday 31 January 2023** **Thursday 9 March 2023** **Tuesday 9 May 2023** **Tuesday 13 June 2022**	**5.30-8.00pm** **5.00-6.00pm** **5.30-8.00pm** **5.30-8.00pm** **5.30-8.00pm** **5.30-8.00pm**	**Virtual Meeting** **Location TBC** **Virtual Meeting** **Virtual Meeting** **Virtual Meeting If needed** **Virtual Meeting**
College SAR validation events	Tuesday 4 October Wednesday 5 October Thursday 6 October	Morning Afternoon Morning	Carshalton/Merton Colleges South Thames College Kingston College
CSAR Validation Event	**Tuesday 22 November 2022**	**? All day?**	**Location TBC**

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday 18 October 2022 5.30-8.00pm

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm

The Chair thanked College Officers and Committee members for their contributions to the work of this committee this year and particularly thanked report writers for producing the papers for this meeting.

Signed: **…….....Date:……**

Action points		Responsible	Deadline	Signed off
1.	Include more reference to LSIPs in reports / agenda for QLS	Report writers	Ongoing	
2.	MT to review the forecasting relating to the impact of 16-19 Tuition Fund and circulate a note about that following the meeting.	MT	July 22	
3.	An annual refresh of the curriculum should take place	PM-S	Ongoing	
4.	PM-S to produce an impact assessment of new curriculum innovations based on enrolments to new provision	PM-S	Oct 22	
5.	PM-S to model the impact of the defunding of BTECs and the alternative qualification options for college students	PM-S	Oct 22	
6.	T Level Implementation Plan to be brought to the next meeting.	SM / CV	Oct 22	
7.	SRR to investigate sending employer survey after each contact	SR-R	Ongoing	
8.	Employer Advisory Board to be set up	SR-R	Sep22	

9.	In future QMAP data to be presented RAG rated.	JM	Oct 22	
10.	Slides re SEND Green paper impacts to be shared following the meeting	JP / HM	June 22	
11.	Date of CSAR validation to be clarified following the meeting	JM / HM	June 22	
12.	PM-S to provide clarification following this year's IR as to the new college leads who each link governor is linked to.	PM-S	July 22	
13.	The college to do more work on exploring diversification of the offer re blended learning options	PM-S	Ongoing	