

AQUINAS COLLEGE  
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Date: 15 June 2021

Time: 4.00pm

Venue: Virtual

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Mr S Coker, Mr R Harris, Mr B Hickey, Mr G Hynes, Mr A Martin, Mr D Quansah, Dr A Smith, Mr M Taylor and Mr D Pearson.

In attendance:

Miss C Phillips (Assistant Principal – Curriculum & Quality)

Dr A Smith in the Chair.

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Dr Smith.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors and Staff were asked to declare any interest, which they may have in any of the items on the Agenda for this meeting. No interests were declared.

4. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2021 copies of which had been circulated previously were approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda for the meeting.

6. IMPACT OF COVID TAG PROCESS

Ms Phillips advised Governors that students grades this year would be based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) whereas last year they were based on Centre Assessment Grades (CAG). The difference between the grades is that the TAG is more evidence based on what the students have achieved, whilst the CAG was based on what the student was most likely to achieve. The college had been working through the process that is needed to produce a TAG for each subject.

There is more emphasis on assessment in line with guidance received from the examination boards. The assessments are controlled by results from mock examinations and are objective and unbiased. Mock examinations have been undertaken in the college under normal examination conditions. Each department has undertaken validation and moderation training so that their assessments are thorough, vigorous and will stand up to scrutiny.

The college has looked at the national average and the college assessments. Mr Hynes asked if the moderation had been internal or external. Ms Phillips replied that there had been both internal and external moderation in line with the descriptors received from the examination boards. Dr Smith asked if the descriptors were subject specific. Ms Phillips replied that they were and that the college had worked hard on moderation across the college. The college would need to retain evidence to pass on to the examination board if requested.

## 7. IN YEAR PROGRESS

Ms Phillips introduced four papers that had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. The papers covered the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) in relation to ALPS scores for the college. The value added score is based on a scale of 1 – 9 with the top 20% shown in red and the bottom 20% shown in blue.

Paper 1 - ALPS A level – Quality Indicator

Paper 2 – ALPS A level – Subject value added overview

Paper 3 – ALPS A level – T score

Paper 4 – ALPS A level – Raw results.

The A level Quality Indicator for the college was 1.03. The Centre Assessment Grades (CAG) last year gave also gave a 1.03 residual score. This year the results are evidence based and the overall value added for each subject is shown. It forms part of the quality assurance process in the college. The reasons for those subjects that have done better than expect have been explored. Mr Pearson added that Governors are able to see how subjects have moved from one year to the next (paper 2). Ms Phillips drew Governors' attention to Economics, a subject that has seen significant changes in staffing in recent years with a new Head of Department and Head of Subject plus new staff. Mathematics is a 5 in ALPS, was 5 in CAG and is 5 in TAG.

Mr Hynes asked why there was no TAG score shown for Film Studies in Paper 2. Mr Pearson replied that there should have been but it had been deleted in error. Ms Phillips advised Governors that the results for Film Studies were lower than expected and that there is a small number of students in the cohort.

Dr Smith said that he was impressed by the detailed analysis that the college had provided and asked if that was the case across the sector. Mr Pearson replied that at a meeting of North West principals they had all been surprised that the TAG results were higher than expected. He added that students were well prepared and were aware that evidence would be needed to support the TAG. The college's results are closer to the national average.

Dr Beatty felt that whilst the college has done a very thorough methodology in their TAG assessments there may be other influences and wondered what the Government may say about the methodology used to produce the TAGs. Mr Pearson replied that last year an algorithm was used. This year there is more trust in the TAGs because there has been validation and there is evidence to support the grades and there has been due diligence in the process.

Mr Hynes felt that both staff and students had worked very hard under very difficult circumstances. Mr Hickey agreed with those comments and asked how would the appeals procedure work. Mr Pearson replied that an appeal can only be made against transpositional errors. The grade awarded by the college has been subject to validation.

He added that for those students who may have missed out on a university place help will be provided on results day when senior staff will be available.

Mr Taylor advised Governors that employers were looking for consistency across the board and that students have been prepared for the next step. Mr Coker felt that students had put in a great deal of extra work. Mr Harris felt that staff had been working under emotional stress and that people don't realise how many assessments have been undertaken to produce a TAG. He added that it has been a very difficult couple of years and that staff have adapted to the many challenges that they have had to face.

## 8. CURRICULUM ISSUES

Mr Pearson advised Governors that

i) There were no new courses for 2021/2022

ii) The provision at the college includes level 2 provision including OCR Business, LIBF Financial Studies and GCSE Japanese that students can take alongside GCSE Maths and/or English.

iii) The level 3 provision offers a variety of more vocationally focussed courses, mainly BTECs, which complement the A level courses. These include subjects graded Distinction\* (A\* equivalent) Distinction (A grade equivalent), Merit (C grade equivalent) and Pass (E grade equivalent). The Criminology course offers students a vocational option graded A\* - E.

iv) The courses at level 3 include 9 BTECs, including 7 subjects teaching the newer specification, which includes both coursework and examined units/controlled assessments, and 2 subjects that have continued on the 2010 specification where students are assessed entirely on coursework. The college also offers 4 other Vocational qualifications that sit alongside the A level and BTEC provision with one course, Sport, offering both a double and single award.

v) The benefits to our students include the vast array of different assessment methods the vocational subjects offer. Importantly, these qualifications also give more curriculum flexibility enabling the college to cater better for individual needs. In all of the courses detailed below students can be certificated at different points whilst at the college. Students have the flexibility to complete the full qualification or gain a smaller qualification at the end of their first year of study if they decide to change study programme or leave college. Where needed, it also allows for the option to offer students the opportunity in their upper 6<sup>th</sup> year to take the certificate or the extended certificate in a year if they have decided to change study programme.

vi) Level 3 subjects on offer include: Applied Business (AQA), Applied Law (BTEC), Applied Science (BTEC), Creative Media (BTEC), Criminology (Eduqas), Financial Studies (LiBF), Health and Social Care (BTEC), Information Technology (BTEC), Music (BTEC), Performance Acting (BTEC), Performance Dance (BTEC), Public Services (BTEC), Sport (OCR). About 50% of students take at least one BTEC.

vii) Additional support will be given to these subject areas to ensure that the student is on the right course.

viii) Some examination boards are looking at modules for some A level subjects.

ix) In an attempt to introduce more contact time for students the college is looking at the timetable for the next academic year with a view to increase the contact time from 4.5 hours to 5 hours or something in between.

Mr Hickey asked if the college was doing anything extra in terms of the transition for students starting in September 2021. Mr Pearson replied that the college has been keeping in touch with the students and are trying to get them more focussed on what is needed when they come to the college.

The college website has details of preparation work that they can do and also has reading material. There are plans to put more information online. The Induction Days are very important but it is unlikely that they will take place on site. Mr Pearson added that he hopes to appoint a transition tutor to work with the more vulnerable students

9. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

A copy of the current Teaching and Learning Committee Terms of Reference had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. After a full discussion it was agreed that no changes needed to be made.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 5 October 2021 at 4.30pm, subject to the Calendar of Meetings being agreed by the Governing Body at its meeting on 29 June 2021.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

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Chairperson

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