

**WALSALL COLLEGE  
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE  
HELD ON FRIDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 1230 HRS  
VENUE: VIA TEAMS**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Charlotte Bosworth Fiona Macmillan Malissa Clarke Jo Hughes Aisling McGowan Jaswinder Dhillon	Chair Governor Student Governor Tutorial Coordinator/Staff Governor Governor Governor
<b>TOGETHER WITH:</b>	Helen Griffiths Richard Brennan David Turner Andrea Packer Aldrich Gonsalves Alison Buick	Student Engagement Officer Assistant Principal Curriculum Assistant Principal Quality and HE Head of Student Services YSA Apprentice Clerk to the Corporation
<b>STUDENTS</b>	Katriona Hedmin Adam Motara Jessica Taylor-Gibbs Caleel Benjamin Amenze Igbinge	L2 Motor Vehicle Maintenance L2 Public Services T Level 3 in Education and Childcare L2 Creative Media Skills ESOL E3
<b>APOLOGIES</b>	None	

**01.22 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and welcomed them to the meeting. Student Voice was an important area for the college and one that the Chair hoped to see more engagement in this year.

A particular welcome was extended to Malissa Clarke, the Student Union President for this year. The Chair had discussed Malissa's plans for the year with her, all of which focused on ways to improve college life. It was hoped that students would support this in a variety of ways.

**02.22 MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 May 2021, having been circulated, were taken as read and approved.

**03.22 MATTERS ARISING**

The Action Points record was reviewed and the following were noted:

Item 19.21.1

Catering had been brought in house in August 2021 so the service was now provided by the college. This meant there was better control over the offer.

The Chair noted that the SU President's manifesto had included improving catering, so asked for her view.

The President responded that much of the feedback she received from students was the need for more vegan options, to extend choice, such as meals deals that were available at other local venues, and to reduce prices. Many students felt there were better value options at McDonalds, Greggs and Tesco, all very close to college. Other students in attendance agreed. There was also no hot food halal option for Muslim students. One student commented that the food options had been better at his previous school.

The Assistant Principal Curriculum also commented on the college's environmental agenda, which had a focus on catering. There was a teaching and learning group looking at this, so it was suggested that Student reps be invited to attend. He also agreed to take back the comments on pricing, variety and type of food for further discussion with the management team.

Assistant Principal  
Curriculum

The introduction of compostable cutlery was noted.

The Chair commented that part of the reason for bringing catering in-house was to allow student voice on this to be taken into account. This had been a useful discussion.

A Governor asked whether the SU President and Student Reps would consider working towards a Green Gown award. The university where she worked had done this and she was willing to share information on this if it would be useful. The SU President thought this would be very helpful. It was agreed that it be reviewed and reported back to the next meeting.

Jaswinder  
Dhillon/Malissa  
Clarke

The Tutorial Coordinator noted that the SU Exec did have a Green Impact Officer, so it would be appropriate to involve them in any activities too.

Item 19.21.2

The signage at Portland Street had been changed.

Item 21.21.1

The Student Voice action plan had been issued.

Item 22.21.1

It was not possible to offer Governor access to LinkedIn learning as it was a paid service and a Walsall College email address was needed.

#### **04.22 STUDENT UNION PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The Student Union President presented her report for the year and the following were noted:

- SU elections and results;
- Activities that the Student Union had run and planned for the term;
- That some changes were planned to the Student Lounge.

The Chair thanked the President for her report. It was clear that the Union continued to be very active and to provide a range of experiences for students, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

Questions and comments were invited.

A student commented on the activities of the LGBT group, which was now meeting twice per week.

The Chair asked the President if there were any other aspects of her manifesto she wished to comment on. The President responded that she had a particular interest in HE and would like to discuss improving the HE student experience. She also felt strongly that there had been much impact of Covid-19 on student mental health, so activities to support this were needed. The LGBT group wished to have more focused celebrations, so this was being considered.

The Committee was happy to support the plans. In particular, a Governor was interested to look at the HE issues, as she worked at a university, so was willing to share ideas.

There was a discussion about support needs for HE students and the differences in teaching and studying on HE courses. It was noted that one to one tutorials for HE students were not always taking place. It was **agreed** that the Assistant Principal Quality and HE, and his team, would meet with the President for a further discussion. The HE tutors would also be reminded to hold tutorial activities. There were some important differences in study at FE and HE to be taken into account.

Assistant Principal  
Quality and HE

There was also a discussion about the frequency with which tutors checked progress against student targets. Some students felt this was too often, but the Assistant Principal Curriculum explained that it would vary depending on the requirements of the course being studied.

## 05.22 INDUCTION EXPERIENCE REPORT (FE AND HE)

The Assistant Principal Quality and HE shared his screen and noted the key points of his report as being:

- The role of the Quality team;
- The surveys completed and the results that had been shared with college staff teams;
- That overall FE satisfaction was 98.6%;
- Some areas for improvement had been identified, including the ways in which students can provide feedback.

The group discussed how safe students felt travelling to college. It was noted that students felt safe in college but many travelled some distance and had concerns about this. The Head of Student Services outlined the work of the college with the Violence Reduction Unit on this.

- Results by Faculty area;
- Apprenticeship survey results;
- CCM survey results;
- The Student Voice action plan for November 2021, which tracked all agreed actions;
- The college Self-Assessment report had been approved and this judged Personal Development as requires improvement.

Students commented on survey results and noted that for apprentices responses may be influenced by the fact that they were not often in college. The Chair commented on the use of technology and social media to connect with students.

A Governor noted the need to know the actual response rate for surveys to enable the context of the results to be considered. There was possibly an element of survey fatigue, which reduced the response rate. The Assistant Principal Curriculum responded that the college did have data on 'cold spots' of curriculum areas where response rates were lower, and did look into these.

The college's 'Seven Ways to have Your Say' concept was discussed. This had been in place for some time. It was recognised that the majority of students knew some but not all seven feedback mechanisms.

Students felt that ways to provide feedback were not always clearly explained to them and that surveys weren't as good as having opportunities to meet face to face. The Assistant Principal Quality and HE noted that a key feedback route was via Course Reps, although some inconsistencies had been identified in how this operated in practice across the college. Not all courses had a Rep or a termly meeting.

Governors supported the suggestion that some more informal feedback mechanisms be created, including anonymous comment boxes, to gain wider student voice. The SU President intended to set up some weekly drop in sessions for students with the SU Exec. This would be another feedback route for student comments. The Head of Student Services would support this and it was agreed that they would meet to discuss.

**SU President and  
Head of Student  
Services**

**06.22 STUDENT VOICE 2021/22**

The Tutorial Coordinator commented that much of her report content had been covered in earlier discussions.

Information was provided about the student reps system, including the numbers signed up and in which curriculum area. It was noted that a series of meetings had been held across all Faculties. Attendance had been variable, which made it more difficult to have meaningful discussions.

All actions in the Student Voice action plan from last academic year had been closed down. There had been only one action in this year to date (relating to catering at CCM), and that had been completed.

The committee members were introduced to Aldrich Gonsalves, who was working with Walsall and other Black Country colleges through an AOC funded partnership for two years. His role was as a Youth Social Worker Level 3 Apprentice. The main focus was to raise the awareness of Youth Social Action (YSA) and empower students to act and address local issues, as well as creating opportunities to undertake meaningful work experience around social action. It was noted that there was an intention to set up a Black Country Student Union to facilitate working across the colleges.

The Chair asked whether environmental and sustainability issues were part of the remit of the apprentice role, and it was confirmed that they were. Another local college was setting up an Eco committee, and Aldrich was keen to do this in all colleges. Students confirmed interest in being involved with this and it was agreed that the SU Exec would meet Aldrich to discuss.

**Tutorial  
Coordinator and  
SU President**

**07.22 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Clerk explained that this was a house keeping issue, to ensure that the focus of the committee was clear and appropriate. The Corporation had reviewed the terms of reference for all of its committees and was happy with them.

Committee members agreed the terms of reference as presented.

**08.22 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 10 March 2022 at 1230 hrs. Venue to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 2.05pm