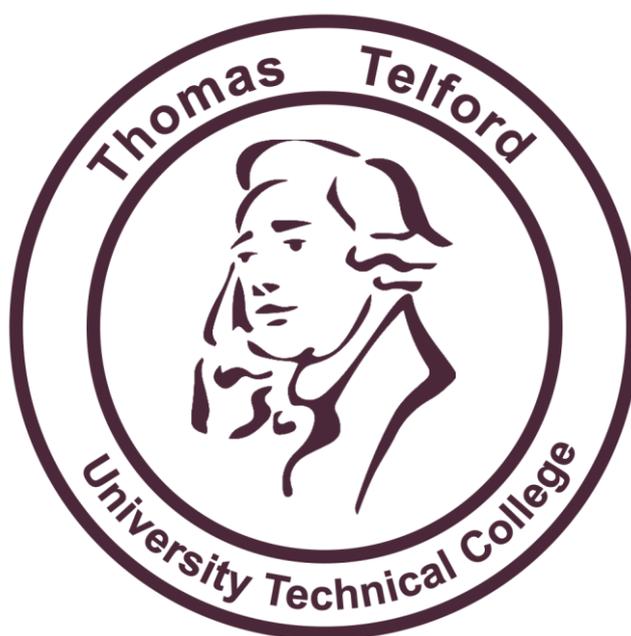


Principal's Report to the Local Governing Board



Prepared by
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Principal

For the Local Governing Board's Meeting to be held Thursday 22 October 2020

Matters Arising

Actions for the Principal from July 2020 Local Governing Board meeting:

- I met with Professor Mohammed Arif at the Springfield Campus to discuss the socially distanced return of apprenticeship students to the University of Wolverhampton. I was able to share not only our approach but also documentation including the TTUTC risk-assessment for the safe return of students.
- To date we have incurred some extra costs to a value of £411 associated with the pandemic beyond the contribution of £1000 from the council towards our Covid-19 response. We have purchased plastic screens around reception and the serving area within the canteen as well as a supply of masks, anti-bacterial gel and tissues. During lockdown we made visors using our specialist equipment to distribute to local care homes and health centres.
- To clarify HS2 were not able to offer Industrial Placements for our students but have agreed to host a number of Work Experience Placements (WEX) during the academic year 2020-21. However, at this current time all work experience placements are on hold. Also, site visits will be replaced by 'virtual' tours by making best of our newly acquired VR technology.
- I have contacted the DFE and asked for clarification of our future OFSTED inspection cycle and can confirm that we are not classed as a new school and can therefore expect an OFSTED visit at any time beyond June 2021.

Introduction

2020 has been a quite extraordinary year and I suspect that this academic year will be every bit as challenging as the last for the UTC. However, it is important to focus on the positives of which there are many. We have welcomed our first cohort of Year 7 students. The UTC, as you would imagine, has a slightly different feel to it. I can report that this is a good thing and we have a very positive and energetic vibe across the UTC with not only the addition of these younger students but also with the enthusiasm of the additional staff. We are now very much a part of the Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT) and together we have been working hard with the Department for Education (DFE) to agree on an appropriate design of our extension to the current building.

Autumn Return to School with COVID-19 Restrictions

All students returned to school in early September under a new kind of normal. We have previously discussed and shared risk-assessments for this return and the latest version can be found on our website. To summarise, we are operating with 2 bubbles who are encouraged to maintain social distancing. One bubble consists of 160 Year 7 students and the other bubble is all of KS4 and KS5 students. We have different start and finish times for the 2 bubbles and all students are provided with a full days teaching and homework. All students are encouraged to regularly wash their hands. Teachers maintain a distance of 2 metres in classrooms and are also encouraged to not spend time in close proximity to each other.

We are not running UTC Extra this term though I am giving thought to introducing it for either Year 7 or for Year 11 and 13 catch-up after half-term though it is important to look at the rate of transmission across Wolverhampton before we start changing current measures.

As a part of this process I have drawn up contingency plans for the running of the UTC should I or other senior leaders be absent with COVID-19 or be asked to isolate following a positive contact. See Appendix A.

Catch-Up

We are not expecting Key Stage 2 data from primary schools and have therefore initiated a programme of baseline testing using GL assessments and departmental audits. This will help course leaders to identify gaps in learning and initiate appropriate provision. A similar approach has been taken with Year 10 and Year 12 students.

We will operate our normal KS4 intervention programme as soon as we believe it is safe to extend the UTC day though teams have been encouraged to build catch-up for gaps in knowledge into normal lessons as soon as the information is available.

We have access to a 16-19 tuition fund which is primarily to be used with those sixth form students who do not have a grade 4 in English or maths though we will target support in all curriculum areas to run from half-term onwards.

We have made best use of 'Aspire to HE' funding of £5000 to provide all of our current Year 11 with packs of revision guides for all subjects at no cost to students. These were packaged and delivered to family homes during lockdown. We have used the remainder of this funding to purchase Careers Software (Unifrog and Start Profile) to support destinations for KS4/5 and future career planning for our new Year 7s. This software will be particularly helpful if we go into another lockdown.

Employer Engagement

We are unable to offer work experience and employer-led projects at this time. However, we have continued with our plans to offer Industrial Placements for sixth formers as we prepare to offer T-levels from next September. Four of our students will be working with employers in a mix of on-site attendance and virtual work. This number is likely to grow over the course of this academic year.

Examination Outcomes

The UTC applied a robust evidence-based process of determining grades and rank orders that were moderated and checked. The data provided to the exam boards was consistent with our prior tracking and would demonstrate continued improvement at all levels. The teacher predicted grades at A-level, GCSE and BTEC were accepted as the final outcome for students and in a number of cases an improved grade counted as the OFQUAL algorithm generated a higher prediction.

See Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of outcomes.

Destinations

Destinations has been a challenge for the UTC this year, more so than previously, as many of our students come with a view to securing an apprenticeship and these roles have simply not materialised this year. See Appendix C for a detailed breakdown of destinations.

Year 11

Cohort number	43
TTUTC Sixth Form	17
Alternative post-16 provider	26
Apprenticeship	0
NEET	0

Year 13

Cohort number	35
University	18
Apprenticeship/training scheme/employment	5 (2 Higher Apprenticeships, 1 Traineeship)
Further education	2 (Enhancement programme at the UTC)
NEET	10 (6 actively seeking apprenticeships within construction, 2 in Business/IT and 2 seeking Employment)

All NEETs continue to seek apprenticeships or employment with our support with interviews in the pipeline. Many employers we normally work with will not offer these roles this year or have suspended these roles until January for now. We are confident that 9 students will achieve a suitable destination but they are determined that it is closely matched to what they are looking for. We are struggling to contact the 1 other student and have involved Connexions -she was last seeking a role in IT. We have particular success with two of our Y13 being offered apprenticeships with Bailey Garner who were very complimentary about their calibre.

Safeguarding Update

See Appendix D for latest version of TTUTC Safeguarding Policy. This has considered the changes that feature in the updated KCSiE guidelines released on September 1st 2020. The changes are as follows:

Page 8 Section 4.1 - addition of last bullet point.

Page 9 Section 4.3, addition of new bullet point 16 - 'Help promote educational...'

Page 10 Section 4.3, 3rd bullet point down - inclusion of reference to Senior Mental Health Leads

Page 15 Honour Based Violence (HBV) changed to Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

Page 19 under Peer on Peer abuse subsection - addition of 'bullying-including cyberbullying' in final paragraph.

Page 19 wording within subsection on Up-Skirting has been changed.

Page 26 Amendments to Child Criminal Exploitation and county lines section.

Page 28 inclusion of details around Operation Encompass have been added to the Domestic Abuse section

Page 30 - addition of explanation of Contextual Safeguarding.

Page 39 - addition of two sub sections under section 17 - Children potentially at greater risk of harm and Children requiring mental health support.

Page 40 Section 19 E-safety - removed first line that referred to use of mobile phones to support learning. Addition of new paragraphs 2 and 3 re filters and education at home.

Page 43 Section 21 - addition of sentence 'This may include covering relevant issues through Relationship, Health and Sex Education, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), citizenship and British Values.'

Page 43 Section 22 Preventing Radicalisation. Addition of paragraphs 3, 5, 6 (indicators), 8 (at Thomas Telford UTC...) and local Channel contact details in Channel subsection.

Throughout the policy the addition of supply staff has been added where it refers to staff, governors, volunteers.

Wolverhampton LADO has left his post and not yet been replaced.

I am seeking approval for this policy.

I am also seeking approval for the PSHE/RSE policy recently sent out to governors.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

We have changed the format of the School Improvement Plan. It includes key strategic priorities for this academic year which are made up of 3 elements:

- Areas of Improvement highlighted by our OFSTED report in June 2018.
- A focus on catch-up and re-establishing an effective learning environment in light of COVID-19 restrictions. These priorities are common to all schools within the TTMAT.
- New areas of development such as T-levels, the age-range change and the new build.

You can find a copy of the SIP in Appendix E with each priority and strategies to ensure a positive impact. This will be a working document which will be reviewed 3 times a year and progress reported to governors.

The UTC's Self Evaluation Form (SEF) will be updated next half-term and I will share this with you at the next local governing board.

Governor Metrics

See Appendix F

Admissions

On the 1st October which was census day we had 355 students on our roll. The most challenging area of recruitment has been with Year 12. The sense I have got is that these students have not been comfortable moving schools during the pandemic and we have not been able to hold Open Events to help attract them.

The next round of Admissions for September 2021 has started. Last year I visited nearly every primary school in Wolverhampton and our Information Evenings attracted 3000 visitors. I am unable to take a similar approach this year. I would like to thank the TTMAT for supporting the creation of an admissions video for the UTC. I have organised for a pack to go to every primary school containing a letter from myself, which contains a link to this video, alongside our prospectus with enough copies for every Year 6 student in the city.

Attendance

Despite these challenging times the attendance of the TTUTC students has to date been acceptable. Students isolating due to COVID-19 have been receiving work to complete at home.

Attendance is celebrated in all weekly assemblies the mantra of 'In Every Day' is reiterated. All absences are challenged. A number of Year 11 students who presented as an early concern have been discussed with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and home visits conducted as appropriate.

Student Conduct and Exclusions

'The UTC Way' continues to be the foundation of our approach to conduct. It provides a simple and consistent message to both staff and students. SLT and conduct leaders are timetabled to complete learning walks throughout the school day. This provides support to the teaching staff and therefore enhances the learning environment for all.

The Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) have observed all new students within classes to identify those with a learning need that is impacting on behaviour. The LSAs have then been deployed to ensure these students are supported appropriately so the teaching and learning is not impacted adversely.

All Personal Tutors (PT) have contacted parents this half term to reinforce our expectations at TTUTC including those around conduct. For students where concerns have been raised around engagement with their learning, early parent meetings have taken place.

There is a Conduct Intervention Room (CIR) available but this has been used very infrequently this term. There has been no use of fixed term exclusions to date.

Staffing

The UTC has a full complement of teaching staff and the new staff are adapting well to the culture and ethos of the UTC. We have started work on the timetable for the academic year 21-22 which when completed will enable me to know precisely how many new staff and within which curriculum areas they are required. I will then start posting adverts and interviewing early in the new year to help attract the best available teachers.

We are in the process of recruiting an Accounts Assistant. We are no longer using Clear Accountancy as most of the process are supported by the TTMAT but we require some extra capacity to help prepare our monthly accounts.

Health & Safety

Nearly all staff absence has been related to COVID-19 and a requirement to isolate until test results arrive. Do date no member of staff or child has tested positive.

We are planning for our first fire drill of the academic year. It will be a more complex process than normal as we would want to maintain social distancing of the two separate bubbles.

On-line Curriculum

The design and development of a diverse and invigorating Key Stage 3 curriculum in preparation for our first ever Year 7 cohort is now complete and available to all students on-line. We refer to this as the 'on-line curriculum' and it will develop further over the next 5 years so that all students can take advantage of this resource.

Further Matters Arising

Millennium Point Grant

During last academic year we completed a bid for the annual Millennium Point Grant, which supports STEM related projects, usually up to £2,500 in value, or larger projects up to £15,000. Our bid was a full larger bid, to fund a class set (32) of VR headsets, with charging cases, training and online content available across the full range of curriculum subjects. In addition, the bid included funds to purchase 4 GoPro Max 360 cameras, with carry cases, tripods and spare batteries and memory cards. I am delighted to say that this bid was approved and we have now taken delivery of the technology which we will make available for use to all subject staff in the very near future. Students will then be able to enjoy state of the art experiences, for example, touring the solar system in science, visiting New York in Geography, examining sculptures in Art.

1 camera will be loaned to employers, with the first camera being by Midland Metro Alliance. The cameras can capture site visits, including in places students cannot normally go, so that students are still able to access this part of the curriculum within Construction. Y7 students as well as KS4 students

will be able to make use of the technology within their curriculum and in their responses to employer projects – meaning judging panels will be able to really experience their designs!

T-levels

Our vision is very much that the T-Level we offer is the gold standard in the West Midlands. Unlike other local colleges that will need to secure significant numbers to make the courses financially viable, it is our intent to recruit only a relatively small number (12) in collaboration with employers committing to the provision of each placement. Marketing will consist of adverts placed by the UTC and Employer, a recruitment process that considers predicted grades, school report and interview with the UTC and employer – competitive in nature, but with a strong emphasis on the opportunity it will provide to establish themselves within the employer’s business. Students unsuccessful in their application will be able to opt for the T-Level transition year or indeed our current BTEC Nationals offer as a single or double award in Construction.

In recognising the challenges for space, we face next year as a UTC, and to support strong recruitment, it is hoped that we may be able to make use of facilities at the new School of Architecture from time to time. This would tangibly demonstrate the link we have with the University, allow the University to market themselves as a potential provider for Post T-Level Apprenticeship opportunities and give the all-important first cohort a very special experience that can cement our reputation in the West Midlands. All of the teaching delivery will of course be managed by UTC staff.

T-Levels will give students an excellent start to their Construction career, are challenging and robust in their demand and combine 80% classroom delivery with 20% placement experience. For those students joining us, it is a real chance to secure a highly successful future.

**End of Principal’s Report to the Local Governing Board.
Summary of Annexes Overleaf**

Summary of Annexes

- A - Contingency Plan for the Absence of the Principal**
- B - Examination Outcomes**
- C - Destinations**
- D - Safeguarding Policy**
- E - SIP**
- F - Governor Metrics**
- G - Wellbeing and Mindfulness Policy**