

Appendix 11: Post 16 Operational Board - Post 16 survey

Post 16 Survey – narrative

Results overall were excellent with regard to the rate of response. It was pleasing to see that the overall impression provided was of a positive experience with very few negative areas. What is highlighted in the report and narrative are the differences across schools, topics, staff and students and the relative degree of positivity expressed by respondents.

Of the 1,522 responses from students 1,078 were from 6th forms and 444 from Bridgend College; with respect to staff out of 533 responses 368 were from school staff and 165 from college staff.

In general staff provided more optimistic responses compared with students by a factor of +1.

Teaching & Learning

- Rank position 1st of 7 – the most positive section of the survey for staff and second for students.
- Staff are consistently and significantly more positive over this element of the survey than the students
- The students in CCYD, Maesteg and Pencoed provided slightly weaker responses in this area
- Amongst staff Bridgend College, CCYD and Pencoed gave the weaker responses with this being more noticeable amongst middle leaders in the college and teaching staff in the 2 schools.
- *“Staff are approachable and have developed positive relationships with me”* – this statement was the top ranked by both staff and students in this section and consistently across all providers
- *“In all my courses I am introduced to the concept of enterprise and entrepreneurship”* – this statement had the weakest response in this section particularly from the students. In the light of Donaldson and the revised Welsh Bac there is scope for subject staff to indicate potential opportunities in their subject areas but their ability to do so may well be limited by their own experience and understanding. There was little reference to Enterprise Troopers (KS2 & 3) and Big Ideas Wales (KS4 & 5) in the recent review of 6th forms – two WG initiatives designed to highlight self-employment to young people and help them meet entrepreneurs. Bridgend College responses were stronger for this statement which reflects the more vocational nature of courses but also that college lecturers often have direct experience of this and some have their own businesses running alongside their lecturing duties.
- Across all providers this section was never ranked less than 3rd and Cynffig provided the strongest overall response.

- Whilst the survey provides strong support for the overall quality of teaching there is scope for the development of pedagogy. This is reflected in the areas of personalising learning and the range of approaches used in learning where there is a significant difference in staff / student opinion across all providers

Subject Choices

- Rank position 7th of 7 – this was the least positive section of the survey
- Choice, balance and breadth of curriculum receive variable responses with more positive feedback from larger providers
- For some learners timetable clashes limited choice
- Ease of access to courses was among the least positive statements
- The main weakness perceived in this section is the lack of access to Games and PE which produced the only overall negative response from students. This together with the feedback on extra-curricular activities suggests a need to debate the nature of the overall curriculum offer for this age group.
- The statements on Transport were not straightforward to interpret and it is the feedback from the text based responses that is more helpful

Learner Support

- Rank position – 6th for students and 2nd for staff; this section shows the greatest difference between students and staff
- There is a strong divergence over 1:1 meetings between students and staff with the former giving this a considerably lower score than the staff. An increase in the amount of 1:1 support was a strong feature of the feedback on post 16 ambitions from the Student Councils and reflects the desire for more time for personalised feedback for learners. Whilst there might be more prevalent whole class feedback in KS4 it would appear that learners in post 16 want individualised feedback and time devoted to this. This would require a re-balancing of delivery time between teacher interaction with the class and individuals over the 8 hours allocated per fortnight and potentially an increase in the amount of independent study time built into a course.
- Lower levels of satisfaction are expressed over the guidance provided in Years 10/11 and to lesser extent in Years 12/13; this is particularly expressed by students who have gone on to college but also a number of schools gave scores at the lower end of the range. College staff gave significantly lower scores for these statements. This area has been discussed on a number of occasions with senior leaders in schools and college.
- Students are significantly less assured than the staff that they know how to apply for the range of progression opportunities available to them.

Digital Learning

- There was much closer agreement between staff and students in this section

- However there was significant variation between centres over the use of personal devices although this did not necessarily impact on responses related to the availability and access to IT. Should we be seeking greater consistency in this for learners who are Post 16?
- CCYD students gave their most positive response to this section and also the highest average response across all providers; this is a reflection of the centre's investment in iPads and Apple Macs however the issue of sustainability of these platforms is proving problematic. The need to share, understand, plan and resource IT infrastructure on a sustainable basis is clearly something that needs to be considered. Interestingly, in a reversal of the student / staff trend in data, the College and CCYD staff were less positive than students.

Personal Skills

- This section was ranked 1st by students and 4th by staff.
- In general students were quite positive about their skill levels but opinion from staff was less uniform and sometimes lower.
- The survey appears to show that the support across transition from GCSE to Level 3 courses appears to be weaker for students moving on to college. Many of the students going on to college will have ALN (Additional Learning Needs), possibly as many as 300+. In a separate piece of work around ALN transition BCBC is working with the college to review transition arrangements and provide better continuity of support for these learners. The new ALN reform bill also provides a sharp focus on this aspect of transition. There is a need to build stronger school / college links at the KS4 / post 16 interface.
- The statement related to Work Experience (WEX) produced the lowest average response from both staff and students in this section, particularly so for students in Maesteg. This contrasts with the ambitions of learners as revealed through the Student Councils where there were numerous references from learners who wanted WEX as part of the educational offer in post 16. For learners with ALN work experience is often a critical path in securing future progression to employment. The needs and aspirations of learners are possibly not being met as a result of policy moves by Welsh Government, Careers Wales and individual providers. This area probably merits a review of the position across BCBC.
- The introduction of the revised Welsh Bac has been received positively by the majority of students in KS4 and post 16. It would be interesting to investigate whether the students' high rating for this section is linked to the overt development and assessment of skills in the Welsh Bac.

The Extra-curricular offer

- This was the lowest ranked section by students and 5th by staff
- Staff are noticeably more positive in this section than students

- Peer support and social networks received slightly more positive responses in most centres
- The statements on extra-curricular activities split providers into 2 groups with 4 of the 9 centres returning significantly lower scores
- The position is weaker as the focus of extra-curricular activity turns more toward its presence in course provision. The variation in the range and quality of enrichment at subject / course level needs further investigation.

The Learning Environment

- This section is ranked 4th by students and 3rd by staff and both groups were in agreement over the priority of the statements
- The survey would seem to support, in general, an inclusive environment in both 6th forms and the college
- There is a reasonably positive view of study facilities among staff and students. The students in college are more positive about their facilities than their peers in 6th forms. However this perspective is reversed in the responses from staff.
- With a couple of exceptions students rank the common room and related facilities least favourably and also significantly below the perceptions of staff. This would seem to indicate a lack of dedicated space for 16-18 year olds in schools