

Approved

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
CORPORATION BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 9th December 2016 in the Boardroom,
Hele Road, Exeter College**

Present	Philip Bostock	Chair
<i>Bar item 4.4</i>	Emma Webber	Vice Chair
	John Laramy	
<i>Bar items 4.2 & 4.3</i>	David Allen	
<i>To item 10</i>	Bindu Arjoon	
<i>To item 8</i>	David Batho	
	John Bunting	
	Dalya Erdogan	
	Mark Goodwin	
	Chris Hoar	
	Craig Marshall	
	Martin Owen	
	Michelle Pugh	
	Matt Roach	
	Silas Welsh	
	Glenn Woodcock	
Apologies	Sarah Brampton	
	Elaine Hobson	
	Dave Underwood	
	John Coombs	(Co-optee invited to observe)
	Jo Matthews	(Co-optee invited to observe)
In Attendance	Rob Bosworth	Vice Principal, Schools, Curriculum and Partnerships
	Steve Campion	Vice Principal, Finance and Business Operations
	Julie Skinner	Vice Principal, Standards and Student Experience
<i>Item 7 only</i>	Mike Blakeley	Director of Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement
	Barbara Sweeney	Clerk to the Corporation

1. **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest** **Action**

The Chair welcomed members to the last meeting of 2016.

Approved

He particularly welcomed Dalya Erdogan and Glenn Woodcock who were attending their first Board meeting.

Apologies were received.

Bindu Arjoon declared an interest in item 5, Principal's Strategic report, item 9.4, Property Update and 12.1 Opportunities and Developments Risk Register, as Assistant Director, Exeter City Council, for any issues relating to planning.

Mark Goodwin declared an interest in item 5, Principal's Strategic report, item 9.4, Property Update and 12.1 Opportunities and Developments Risk Register, as Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Exeter, for any items relating to the University of Exeter.

David Allen declared an interest in items 4.2 and 4.3, as the subject of the resolutions.

Emma Webber, declared an interest in item 4.4, as the subject of the resolutions.

Chair's Update on Association of Colleges (AoC) Conference

The update was received and the Chair reminded Governors that it was customary for the Board to receive a summary of the annual Association of Colleges (AoC) conference at this meeting. This year he had been joined by the Chair of the Business Services Committee. Several members of the Senior Leadership Team had attended. The conference had been a good opportunity for networking and the positive, knowledgeable input from the new Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Colleges had been a highlight. During the conference, FE week had announced that the College ranked first in its league tables and the College was shortlisted for a Beacon Award for its Apprenticeship provision.

Breakout groups on governance had shown that the College was in a good position and that across the sector quality of governance was variable.

The Board noted the report.

2. Minutes of Meetings

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2016, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2016, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

Approved

- 2.3 The confidential minutes of the special meeting held on 28th November 2016, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. **Matters Arising**

3.1 Strategic Plan – final version

The final version of the Strategic Plan, approved by the Board at its last meeting on 7th October 2016 was **received and noted**. Other than some changes to pictures, the circulated version was the final iteration and an internal launch was scheduled after Christmas, with a launch to external stakeholders planned, alongside that of the Property Masterplan, in March 2017. The Board commended the final version and thanked Dee Rowett for her input and latterly Ben Norman, Head of Marketing.

3.2 Process Chart for Nomination and election of Chair

The updated process was **received and noted**, and included the requested amendment for clarification.

All other matters were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. **Appointments**

4.1 19+ Student Governor

The report, including the 19+ Governor's manifesto and application for the role, was received and the Chair reminded the Board that, whilst external appointments required ratification, Staff and Student appointments were for information only. Since the last Board meeting Dalya Erdogan has been elected 19+ Student Governor and had attended several meetings including the Special Board Meeting, and Quality and Standards Committee.

The Board agreed to

a) Note Dalya Erdogan's election as 19+ Student Governor for the academic year ending 31 July 2017

b) Appoint Dalya Erdogan to the Quality and Standards Committee for the academic year ending July 31 2017.

David Allen withdrew for items 4.2 and 4.3

4.2 Reappointments

The report was received. The Chair confirmed that at its special meeting on 5th December 2016 the Search and Governance Committee considered the proposal that David Allen be appointed to serve a second four year term of office from 1st April 2017 – 31 March 2021. His

Approved

contribution, attendance and commitment were considered by the Committee, which unanimously recommended his appointment for a second term of office.

The Board agreed to

Approve the appointment of David Allen for a second term of office from 1st April 2017 to the 31st March 2021

Vote: unanimous

- 4.3 Election of Chair of the Board: 1st August 2017 – 31st July 2019
The report was received and the Chair reminded the Board that at its last meeting on 7th October 2016, it had agreed the process to nominate and elect a new Chair with effect from 1 August 2017 for a two year term of office. In accordance with the approved process, invitations for nominations were circulated with a deadline of noon on the 25th November 2016. By the agreed deadline one nomination had been received.

As per the Standing Orders, approved by the Board on 7th October 2016, in the event of a single nominee, there was an open vote, by show of hands.

The timing of the election was to provide for all possible scenarios. The single nomination and election by open vote was the least complex possible, which meant that there was a long lead in time before taking office. However timescales could be reviewed ahead of the next election for a Chair.

The Board agreed to

Elect David Allen as Chair of the Corporation of Exeter College for a two year term of office from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2019, after which there is an option of a second term subject to Board approval.

Vote: unanimous

Emma Webber withdrew for item 4.4

- 4.4 Vice Chair of the Board: 1st August 2017 – 31st July 2019
The report was received. The current Vice Chair completed her first two year term of office as Vice Chair on 31st July 2017 and was eligible for a second two year term from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2019, which the Search and Governance Committee recommended unanimously.

However, given that the Vice Chair completed her second term of office

Approved

as a Governor on 17th February 2019, ahead of the completion of her term of office as Vice Chair, the Search and Governance Committee recommended that the Board consider invoking the provision included in the Standing Orders, to appoint her for a limited third term of office.

On the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee the Board agreed to

a) Approve the reappointment of Emma Webber for a third term of office with a limited duration from 18 February 2019 to 31 July 2019.

b) Approve the reappointment of Emma Webber as Vice Chair for a second two year term of office from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2019

Vote: unanimous

5. **Strategic Matters**

5.1 Area review update

This item was taken under item 5.2

5.2 Principal's Strategic Report

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

6. **Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2015/16 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) years ending 2016 and 2017**

The presentation was received and Julie Skinner, Vice Principal Standards and Student Experience, reminded the Board that, two years post Ofsted, it was often the case that quality outcomes dipped. However in 2015- 2016, there had been further improvement in outcomes, continued growth and a reshuffled Senior Leadership Team. The SAR followed the same format as last year, but with four grades to reflect the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework. The College was recommending an overall grade of outstanding, with grade 1 for each of the four areas: Outcomes for Learners, Teaching Learning and Assessment, Effectiveness of Leadership and Management and Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare.

Graphs illustrated outcomes compared to national averages for key provision, notwithstanding that national data was not yet available for 2015-16. A levels, IB results and level 3 vocational outcomes were the best ever. Overall apprenticeship success rates were increasing and English and Maths results, despite the challenges, were above the national average. However for adult provision the picture was more mixed. The College did not offer short courses which could falsely inflate

Approved

success rates and a number of courses had been withdrawn. There was improvement in progression in non-vocational subjects and currently a focus on vocational value added scores.

Teaching and learning was outstanding. Observations showed 94% of lessons as good or outstanding. This was endorsed by 95% of students rating teaching as grade 1 or 2, in a sample of 5500.

Julie provided evidence to support the grade 1 rating for leadership and Management and Personal Development, which included a range of positive surveys and behaviour and wellbeing metrics. However attendance was an area for improvement.

Julie confirmed that each Faculty wrote its own SAR, which was then validated at the Quality and Resource Review Days, at which a provisional grade was agreed, to be ratified by the Board. The proposal was that ten Faculties be graded outstanding, two as good and one requiring improvement. The faculty had been borderline 2 and 3, but with end of year outcomes falling short of target, the rating had been confirmed as requiring improvement. Action plans for improvement included the Intensive Care process, performance management of two members of staff and overarching responsibility by an Assistant Principal with a history of turning around challenging faculties.

Julie explained the process for agreeing Departmental Self Assessment grades. There was still a need to support the Higher education offer with dedicated accommodation and Finance and Funding was graded as two entities, given the merger had taken place mid-year.

Governors confirmed the strong reputation of the College with Ofsted. The Student Governor asked for clarification on the criteria which determined if a faculty was good or outstanding. Heads of Faculty submitted evidence, checked against MIS data. Justification was interrogated by SLT and defended by Heads of Faculty at the Quality and Resource Review Days (QRR). The Chair of Audit confirmed that he had attended the latest round of QRR days and that the process was robust. It was important that the success of the College did not lead to complacency.

The Board challenged whether problems were identified in a timely manner. Was the annual SAR the first point at which problems were identified? The timing of the SAR review had served as a trigger in the case of the grade 3 Faculty. However, the Board was assured that QRR was undertaken three times a year and the weekly Senior Curriculum Group scrutinised in-year data. A report on the work of this Committee would be received by the Board in the New Year. The consistency of quality of individuals in the Faculty Management Group was important. However the different profiles of each Faculty meant that the role

Approved

description was not standardised. The Board recommended that a low grade 2 should be a trigger for intervention.

- Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2016/17

Julie confirmed that there were 27 actions in the QIP, including several to address the current challenges relating to changes in the curriculum, and actions pertaining to the new Directorates. These included attendance, value added for vocational subjects, apprenticeship timely achievement and functional skills. The Board considered the challenge of high attendance in English and Maths, where Government assumption was that several years of failing in schools could be addressed by two years in FE. Learners were not motivated and the impact on overall attendance was substantial. New proposals to improve attendance rates were included in the QIP 2016-17.

- QIP 2014/15 outturn

The completed QIP for 2014/15 was received.

The Board resolved to:

- a) Approve the SAR for 2015/16**
- b) Approve the QIP for 2016/17**
- c) Approve the QIP outturn for 2015/16**

Vote: Unanimous

Mike Blakeley, Director Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement, joined the meeting for item 7.

7. Curriculum Update - Apprenticeships

Rob Bosworth, Vice Principal Schools Partnerships and Curriculum reminded the Board of the significant curriculum changes within the sector. The Quality and Standards Committee had received an update on linear A levels. It was important for decisions to evolve, following assessment of risk and having interrogated strategies adopted by other outstanding providers. A recommendation would be made to the Board in the New Year. Vocational and technical curriculum changes had been scrutinised at the Autumn Twilight Session. The update on apprenticeship reform was received.

Mike summarised the key issues on changes to apprenticeships in a power point presentation. There had been a step change in growth of numbers and income over the past three years. Sustaining that

Approved

trajectory would be challenging, but Mike outlined the College's approach to the reforms.

The Government target of 3 million apprentices also sought to improve the status of apprentices, with improved quality of provision in addition to growth in numbers. There were two key aspects to the reforms: funding, with a different payment model, and new apprenticeship standards. Employers with turnover over £3million would be taxed, with the levy used to fund apprenticeships. Mike confirmed that 8% of the employers with whom the College worked were in this bracket, employing 15% of the College's apprentices. This figure would increase.

Employers would get increased ownership of their apprentices. The complexities of managing students, which currently sat with the College, would be transferred to the employer. Levy Ready accreditation would be rolled out in April 2017. The College's approach must be to continue supporting employers and build confidence. Relationships were key and the account manager model would be important, hence the Employer Engagement Strategy. The College was ahead of the game with good intelligence on the support required and on which employers to focus. A recent conference with circa 200 employers had been valuable and the customer facing approach would be key to offset the impact of new providers entering the market. A number of Governors had attended as part of the businesses community and commended the event.

Instead of the current 666 frameworks, of which the College delivered 72, there would be 147 new standards. This number would evolve. New standards were often similar to current frameworks. The College would produce a Standards Register in April 2017, ready for a September 2017 roll out, with three criteria to be satisfied; had the standard been published, was there an end point assessment and could the end point assessment be delivered and if so by whom? Only if the three criteria were achieved would there be a move to deliver the standard, following consultation with the relevant Faculty and with the Senior Curriculum Group. If the standard failed to achieve the criteria, the College would retain the current framework. Government funding was intended to encourage the implementation of new standards.

Governors considered that some sectors would be more responsive to the reforms than others. New providers would enter the market, so relationships with employers were critical. The Government was pushing level 3 apprenticeships so it was important to increase progression within the College from level 2 to 3. Relevant KPIs would monitor progress.

The Board thanked Mike and his team and **noted the update.**

Approved

8. **Learner Voice Update**

8.1 College news

The report was received and taken as read. The Principal highlighted the recent success of the Chiefs Rugby Academy winning the national 16-18 final at Allianz Park against the Gosforth Falcons, 53-19.

The Board noted the report.

8.2 Student Governor's Report

The report was received and Silas Welsh, Student Governor (16-18) and Dalya Erdogan, 19+ Student Governor, highlighted the key points.

Two new roles had been filled on the Student Representative Committee Team; the 19+ Governor and Apprentice Officer, both augmenting the Learner Voice. There had been two successful open events, both with positive feedback and good engagement. Mental Health Awareness had included drop in tea and talk sessions, which would be repeated, such was the success.

The College Learner Voice meeting had been held in the new sports hall, attended by over 200 students, and had provided excellent feedback. In response to Governors' questions Silas confirmed that feedback on social media was captured, as it was incorporated into the Learner Voice process.

Finally Silas updated the Board on fundraising. Prior to the Carol Service the amount raised for the College Charity, Devon Air Ambulance, was up circa 150% on the same time last year and had included some outstanding efforts by a number of tutor groups. The Carol Service had raised £1181 and so the total for the year to date was £2,877, 15% higher than the same time last year.

The Principal confirmed that SRC income was above budget by £20k and that a planned spend would support the student experience.

The Board noted the report

Part 2 REPORTS FOR APPROVAL

9. **Recommendations from Business Services Committee**

9.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 28th November 2016.

The report summarising the key issues considered by the Business Services Committee meeting held on 28th November 2016 was received and noted. The Committee Chair highlighted the key issues.

The Committee had received and considered the student recruitment

Approved

report, comprising analysis of the current funding position by learner type. The end of year forecast for Education Funding Agency (EFA) funded 16-18 year olds was 5524 learners which, because of the lagged funding model, would result in an additional income of circa £350k-£400k in 2017-18. Because of the growth there was potential to secure some of the income in 2016-17 from the EFA in year growth fund. There was also growth in adult and apprenticeship numbers and therefore income.

The Board noted the report

9.2 Statutory Accounts for Financial Year Ended 31st July 2016:

9.2(i) Exeter College

The draft accounts for Exeter College for the year ended 31st July 2016, which had been reviewed by the Business Services Committee and recommended for approval, were received. The Finance Department was thanked for a smooth, clean audit.

The Financial Statements showed a strong performance with an operating surplus of £285k. The impact of FRS102 had been significant. Nonetheless it had been a good year with effective control of costs including business efficiencies, and despite significant costs on pensions and national insurance. Without the impact of the FRS 102 accounting standards, this had been one of the best outcomes for several years.

Confirmation of SFA funding was still awaited and the External Auditors had signed off the accounts subject to the SFA confirmation. This was considered a technicality, but the recommendation was that the Board give delegated powers to the signatories to sign the accounts, once confirmation was received, anticipated early the following week.

The Board resolved to:

a) Approve the Exeter College Financial Statements for the year ended 31st July 2016 subject to receipt of the confirmation of funding from the SFA.

b) Delegate responsibility to the signatories on the accounts to sign and approve the accounts and Letter of Representation.

Vote: Unanimous

9.2(ii) Aplus Training (SW) Ltd

The draft accounts for Aplus Training (SW) Ltd for the year ended 31st July 2016, which had been reviewed by the Business Services Committee and were recommended for approval, were received. The Board resolved to:

Approved

Approve the Aplus Training (SW) Ltd Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2016.

- 9.2(iii) Ecole Limited
The draft accounts for Ecole Limited for the year ended 31st July 2016, which had been reviewed by the Business Services Committee and were recommended for approval, were received. The Board resolved to:

Approve the Ecole Limited Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st July 2016.

Vote: Unanimous

9.3 **Policies for Approval**

- i. Treasury Policy
- ii. Local Government Pension Scheme Policy (LGPS)

The policies were received. Both were reviewed as part of the normal biennial cycle and there were no significant changes.

The Board agreed to approve

- a) Treasury Policy**
- b) Local Government Pension Scheme Policy**

Vote: Unanimous

9.4. **Property Matters**

- i Wear Barton
Covered under item 5.1
- ii Nursery Collaboration
The rationale for considering the proposal to collaborate on the project was considered and the Board noted that further research into the viability would be received by the Committee at its next meeting. The Committee would continue to challenge on the business case.
- iii Student residential accommodation
The Masterplan would address the long term needs of the College. However, a short term solution was required and was being explored.
- iv Property Update including Masterplan

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

Approved

10. **Recommendations from Audit Committee**

10.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 28th September 2016.

The report summarising the key issues considered by the Audit Committee meeting held on 30th November 2016 was received and noted. The Committee Chair highlighted the key issues.

There was a progress update on four outstanding actions from the Business Continuity Internal Audit. Membership of the Business Continuity Group had been reconfigured and the new membership was working to drive through the other four actions. Business impact assessments were being completed and the various documents collated. A scenario rehearsal was scheduled for the summer term.

All other issues were considered under items 10.2-10.4

The Board noted the report

10.2 Audit Committee Annual Report.

The report was received and recommended for approval. The Chair of Audit confirmed that the Committee had scrutinised the Annual Report, which provided the Board with a review of the work of the Committee and provided assurance that controls were in place.

The Board resolved to:

Approve the Audit Committee Annual Report.

Vote: unanimous

10.3 **Statutory Accounts**

10.3(i) Audit Findings Report

The report was received and confirmed a smooth clean audit. There had been no change to the agreed plan, no significant findings and no override of manual controls. The Financial Statements represented a fair view of the College's position and there was nothing to threaten it as a going concern, despite challenges within the sector.

The Board resolved to:

Approve the Audit Findings Report.

Vote: unanimous

Approved

- 10.3(ii) Regularity Self-Assessment
The report was received and the Chair of Audit confirmed that the Audit Committee had reviewed the self-assessment document, and recommended it to the Board.

The Board resolved to:

Approve the Regularity Self-Assessment.

Vote: unanimous

- 10.3(iii) Letter of Representation.
The report was received and Chair of Audit confirmed that the Auditors required the Board to confirm its understanding of its responsibilities by signing the Letter of Representation before the accounts could be finalised. The Board resolved to:

Approve Letter of Representation for signature by the Chair, subject to confirmation of funding from the SFA.

BHS

Vote: unanimous

- 10.4(i) Risk Management Annual Report.
The report was received and the Chair of Audit confirmed the Annual Report summarised the activity relating to risk management for the year. It highlighted the risk management policy and framework and the College Risk Register.

The Board agreed to

Approve the annual Risk Management Report

Vote: unanimous

- 10.4(ii) Risk Register
The report, which had been scrutinised by the Audit Committee, was received. Key changes were highlighted.

The Board agreed to

Approve the Risk Register

Vote: unanimous

11. Key Issues from Quality and Standards Committee

- 11.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 5th December 2016.
The report summarising the key issues considered by the Quality and

Approved

Standards Committee meeting held on 5th December 2016 was received and noted. In the absence of the Committee Chair and Vice Chair, the Vice Chair of the Board highlighted the key issues.

The Vice Chair confirmed that in addition to items taken under agenda items 6, Self Assessment Report and 11.2, Higher Education Self Assessment Report, the Committee had received the Student Induction Survey. The completion rate was down slightly on last year, but still high at 84%. In future, Heads of Faculty would be more active in encouraging participation. However, overall the response rate was good for the sector. The Committee had also sought clarification on how the sample was chosen. The report to the Committee in December 2017 would highlight the modifications to the current survey and sampling methods.

The Committee had received a report on the outcome of an internal inspection of the Foundation Faculty, which comprised circa 350 learners on a range of programmes. The inspection was completed at the same time as the QRR process and the Faculty had achieved an outstanding result, with a current Ofsted Inspector undertaking the review. This confirmed the reliability of the Self-Assessment grading at QRR. Over 50% of lesson observations had been outstanding. Nevertheless, the review had identified some areas for improvement and action plans and a follow up meeting were scheduled.

The Balanced Scorecard, including targets, had been received and considered. Key issues included metrics to record percentage of learners who achieved high tariff scores of AAB rather than those gaining entry to Russell Group Universities. The assumption that all learners with high scores sought university entry had been challenged. There was also a metric to show university entry as a percentage of applications.

The target for English and Maths outcomes had been lowered because students were now allocated to groups based on ability, with targets to achieve over two years for the low ability groups and for whom progression was the focus.

Although the importance of success rates as a metric had declined, it remained relevant and was set to increase for 19+ learners and apprentices. It remained static at the high level of 87% for 16-18 learners. Finally, the targets for distance travelled were scrutinised. For the first time a value added target was proposed for vocational provision.

The Board noted the report.

- 11.2 Higher Education Quality Assurance
The report was received. There was a new Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) operating model which required the Board to

confirm that it received assurance on the quality of HE provision within an institution. The return for 2015-16 was due on 1st December 2016 but has been extended to 12th December 2016 to enable the HE Self assessment report (SAR), updated Action plan and minutes from meetings where HE quality assurance was scrutinised, to be considered by Quality and Standards Committee on 5th December 2016, with a recommendation on quality assurance to the Board on 9th December 2016. The Board was assured that future updates on progress towards the Action plan were scheduled into the cycle of Committee meetings.

On the recommendation of the Quality and Standards Committee the Board approved the following resolutions, for submission to HEFCE:

- a) The governing body has received and discussed a report and accompanying action plan relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes. This included evidence from the provider's own periodic review processes, which fully involve students and include embedded external peer or professional review.**
- b) The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust and appropriate.**
- c) The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately maintained.**

PART 3: REPORTS AND MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

12. Reports

The following reports were **received and noted**.

- 12.1 Opportunities and Development Risk Register.
- 12.2 Management Accounts (September 2016).
Accounts showed additional income for the growth case for apprentices. October and November accounts would show an increase in surplus forecast due to HE growth but also the negative impact of the budgeted pay award.
- 12.3 Balanced Score Cards including Quality Targets for 2016-17
- 12.4 Governance Report.
The report was taken as read. Future EDBV training, details of the location of the Board Residential and the proposed appraisal process were highlighted.

Approved

12.5 Sealing Report.

12.6 Chair's Actions.

13. **Minutes**

The following minutes were **received and noted**.

13.1 Business Services Minutes 28 November 2016 *Draft*

13.2 Audit Committee Minutes 30 November 2016 *Draft*

13.3 Quality and Standards Minutes 5 December 2016 *Draft*

14. **Confidential Minutes**

The following confidential minutes were received and noted:

14.1 Business Services Confidential Minutes 28 November 2016 *Draft*

14.2 Audit Committee Confidential Minutes 30 November 2016 *Draft*

14.3 Special Search Committee Minutes 5 December *Draft*

15. **Dates of scheduled meetings for 2016/2017**

Friday 10th February 2017

Friday 5th May 2017

Wed 5th July 2017