

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th December 2014 in the Board Room, Hele Road, Exeter College

Present	Emma Webber John Bunting Elaine Hobson James Jefferson Mark Overton Martin Owen Tim Tamblyn	Chair
Apologies	Richard Atkins Craig Marshall Dave Underwood Cameron Seymour (Observer)	
Observers	Philip Bostock	
In Attendance	Barbara Sweeney John Laramy	Clerk to the Corporation Vice Principal

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. She particularly welcomed Philip Bostock as observer. She confirmed that Vicky Carah had resigned from the Board on 7th November 2014. The Search and Governance Committee would be considering the vacancy and the appointed member would serve on the Quality and Standards Committee. She also confirmed that a 19+ student governor had been elected by his peers and that his appointment would be ratified by the Board on the 12th December 2014. He would be appointed to this Committee.

Apologies were received.

Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest

2. **Minutes**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2014, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.
- 2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2014, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 **Quality and Resource Review Days**

At the invitation of the Chair, John Bunting updated the Committee on his attendance at a session of the Quality and Resource Review (QRR) days on 12th November 2014, when he had observed the Media and Performing Arts and Hospitality Hair and Beauty Faculties. He commended the process and recommended that others should attend future QRR days. The process was clear and transparent, with good discussion and consensus between Heads of Faculty and members of the Senior Leadership Team to agree self-assessment grades, strengths and areas for improvement. For the benefit of new Governors, the Chair confirmed that the purpose of the QRR was to provide a forum to scrutinise performance and agree action plans. It was agreed that the process had matured into one which was conducive to constructive open discussion, demonstrating a healthy relationship.

The Committee noted the update.

4. **Quality Assurance**

4.1 **Learner Outcomes**

- Final outturn

The confidential report was received and John confirmed that it had been one of the most consistent reports in terms of student outturn, with no significant weaknesses in the 16-18 offer and a stunning result for 19+, albeit with small and therefore volatile numbers.

The Committee debated the meaning of success in this context. Lower entry requirements provided an opportunity to improve value added. Higher entry requirements were more likely to deliver better success rates. The challenge was to aspire to both. The "right student right course" philosophy was always under review. An increase in the percentage of high grades was another measure to aspire to.

John confirmed the impact of significant growth of circa 900 learners in two years on AS levels and that there was a focus on consistency. There had been an increase in teaching staff to support student growth and the Committee discussed the value of continuity of teaching staff, requesting a further update in February 2015, to provide Governors with detailed information on the attrition rate and service profiles versus benchmark data. The College supported newly appointed staff with mentoring and sharing best practice to enable teachers to achieve optimal results as soon as possible. Students had common assessment points so there were clear timelines for intervention if required. Triangulation of student

BHS

feedback, assessment and observation was key. The College had also changed its value added metrics to ALPs to inform greater support.

Turning to apprenticeships, the impact of retention on the overall success rates on one course, and underperformance in timely success of another were discussed and the Committee was assured that measures were in place to address issues.

The Committee agreed to

a) Note the confidential report.

b) Request a report on A Levels reforms and staff attrition at the meeting on 9th February 2015. BHS

4.2 Intensive Care update

The report was received and taken as read and John invited questions.

The Committee noted that a subject which did not appear in intensive care featured in the Quality Improvement Plan. It was confirmed that there was no underperformance in success, which was currently the trigger for intensive care support. Nevertheless, the Committee recommended that the subject be included. It was also confirmed that there was a finite number of subjects in the programme so that focus was maintained to achieve the best improvement.

The Committee debated criteria for inclusion. Success rates were the clearest and cleanest measure, however by also considering value added and percentage of high grades, intensive care would act as a driver for further improvement. Furthermore, the new metrics used to measure value added would support better data.

The Committee requested an update on the former subcontractor provision which was in intensive care. The responsible Assistant Principal was fully engaged in the process and whilst still work in progress there was focus on improving teaching learning and assessment.

The Committee agreed to:

Note the report.

4.3 College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2013/2014 and Quality Improvement Plan(QIP) 2014/2015

The report was received including the full SAR 2013-14, the Executive Summary and the Quality Improvement Plan for 2014/15. John reminded the Committee that it was its responsibility to scrutinise the SAR and QIP and to recommend it to the Board. In the previous year a very detailed SAR had been produced in anticipation of the Ofsted Inspection. Following

that, the Committee had requested a refresh, with a new format and more reference to the culture and soul of the College.

The Chair and another member of the Committee had reviewed the draft SAR and agreed that whilst there was still excessive detail in the first section, there was progress toward a less detailed and fresher document in later sections, although there was still work to do in future SARs. The final part of the document, in particular, captured the soul of the College with such references as colleagues being "a pretty good bunch to work with."

John reminded the Committee of the key issues on which the College was focusing, namely value added and high grades at AS level. He confirmed the agreed grades by faculty and the Committee noted the introduction of a new grade: very good. This was between good and outstanding, and was useful where the faculty was borderline 1 or 2. Whilst accepting its value, the Committee agreed that as "very good" was not a recognised Ofsted Grade, a definition was required in the document.

JL

The Executive Summary was confirmed as a stand-alone document, and would be received by the full Board to provide the headlines and key issues. It did not include the teaching observation grades which were in the full SAR, and the Committee recommended their inclusion to set the context.

JL

John updated the Committee on the timeline for including Aplus in the SAR. As a subsidiary it had not been, but as it had come into the College on 1st August 2014, it would be included in the 2014/15 SAR as a faculty, and was now part of all College quality processes.

Finally it was noted that the learner voice element of the Maths and Science report was still awaited and would be included in the final SAR.

JL

Subject to the above change the Committee agreed to

Recommend the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2013/14 to the Board for approval at its meeting on 12th December 2014

- Quality Improvement Plan

The Quality Improvement Plan for 2014/15 was received and considered. The Committee noted the statutory duty of colleges to have policies relating to prevention of terrorism and radicalisation and requested inclusion in the document. Governors also discussed the impact of changes to BTec, where greater external assessment would result in a decline in success rates. It also noted the proposed A level reforms, depending on the outcome of the general election. Finally John confirmed that the impact on retention of providing maths and English to level two.

JL

Subject to a small number of amends the Committee agreed to

Recommend the Quality Improvement Plan 2014/15 to the Board for approval at its meeting on 12th December 2014

4.4 Quality Improvement Plan(QIP) 2013/2014 Outcome

The report was received. Since the version received did not include completed review of actions, the Committee requested that an updated version be circulated electronically prior to the Board. Subject to review the Committee agreed to

Recommend the QIP out turn for 2013/14 to the Board at its meeting on 12th December 2014

4.5 Targets for the College

The annual report was received. It provided proposed targets for 2014/15 for provision at all levels in the context of the College's performance in 2013/14 and national benchmarks.

Targets had been agreed by Heads of Faculty in consultation with Senior Managers. In some cases the targets were lower than the previous outturn to reflect the uncertainty to curriculum changes, such as BTec and A level reforms, and impact on retention, ultimately affecting success. Although there were not the year on year increases in targets, the volatility of the environment meant that this year targets had been set, with significant input from managers, to be challenging but achievable.

John updated a number of outcomes in 2013/14. No proposed targets were amended. BHS

Turning to Higher Education, the Committee discussed HE targets and why they had not been increased. Success was measured in different ways and difficult to benchmark within the FE sector. However, at inspection the QAA would review the leadership and oversight of HE so it would be beneficial to find data for meaningful comparison. Governors challenged the dropout rate between years. HE Learners must benefit from success but also the experience. The population studying HE at General Further Education colleges was different from that going to HE institutions. The Committee requested an update from the HE and Quality Manager and a report setting out the context and history of HE at the College. JL/LS/
BHS

Following detailed discussion the Committee agreed to

Approve the proposed targets

5. Higher Education (HE) Update

The update was received and John confirmed that this was the first year that HE had been included in the College SAR, and that with income of £3million to the College, it was a considerable component of the College's offer and should receive greater scrutiny. Graded good, the self-assessment identified the following areas for improvement: work needed on consistency; sharing best practice and improving the student experience in the CCI, with enhanced access to specialist provision.

It was recommended that the Board and College would benefit from identifying a Governor with special responsibility for HE, and a proposal would be considered by the Search and Governance Committee at its meeting on 19th January 2015, with a recommendation going to Board for approval on 13th February 2014.

BHS

The Committee noted the update.

6. **Holistic**

6.1 Student Induction Survey Outcomes

The comprehensive report was received and John confirmed that there had been a big increase in the response rate to 87% giving the survey greater validity. Managers had worked hard to achieve this, which the Committee commended.

Results were consistent but a small number of questions were rated lower compared to last year. In response to challenge on specific questions, John provided context and discussion ensued. Uncertainty over some qualifications such as A levels and BTec was reflected in the survey. Depending on timetables, not all students experienced fire evacuation testing, which would impact on responses. Governors asked how actions would be taken forward and John confirmed that lead tutors would be working with staff to make improvements.

The Committee asked if the survey informed marketing campaigns. The survey reviewed opinions of current students rather than those considering an application who were targeted by campaigns. Market research also sought the opinion of those who had decided not to enrol. It was therefore looking at different populations.

The Committee noted the report.

7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

The following reports were received and noted:

7.1 Safeguarding meeting – Minutes 4 July 2014

- 7.2 Safeguarding meeting - Minutes 10 October 2014 *Draft*
- 7.3 Equality Objectives Scheme meeting – Minutes 14th May 2014
- 7.4 Equality Objectives Scheme meeting – Minutes 1 Oct 2014
- 7.5 HR Update on Teaching Staff Qualifications
Governors were concerned at the percentage of staff without teaching qualifications. John confirmed that at the beginning of the year this was always at its lowest as new staff had not yet taken up places on courses. Despite there being no requirement for staff to have teaching qualifications, the College had decided to train all on a nationally recognised qualification. The Committee recommended that there be a focus on newly appointed teachers. JL
- 7.6 Internal Inspection Reports – Humanities 6th–8th October 2014.
- 7.7 Risk register
The Clerk confirmed which risk had been removed from the register. The Committee requested an update on the nursery and John confirmed that it was awaiting an Ofsted inspection.
- 7.8 E4L Minutes from meeting held on 6th October 2014
The minutes were circulated for information following the meeting.

AOB The Safeguarding Governor updated the Committee on the level two safeguarding training which she had completed on line. She commended the training to colleagues and recommended future on line training for all Governors. The Clerk confirmed that initial two hour training was required on appointment followed by updates every three years. The College was looking to provide reminders to Governors and to provide the training via the portal. There would be an update to the Board when this was established.

8. **Dates of next meetings**

Monday	9	February	2015
Monday	27	April	2015
Monday	8	June	2015