

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION**QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE****Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 4th December 2017 in the Board Room, Hele Road, Exeter College**

Present Dave Underwood Chair
Bindu Arjoon
To item 5.1 (part) John Laramy
Kira Lewis
Craig Marshall
Jo Matthews
Aimee Mitchell
Caleb Stevens
Emma Webber

Apologies Rob Bosworth
Martin Owen

In Attendance Barbara Clerk to the Corporation
Sweeney
Julie Skinner Vice Principal, Standards and Student Experience
Item 7 only Jennie Hamilton Head of Student Experience
Item 5.3 only Jenny Leach Assistant Principal
Item 6 only Stephanie Deputy Head of Advice Recruitment and
Darrie-Laye International
Item 6 only Malcolm Walsh Assistant Principal

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. He particularly welcomed Caleb Stevens to his first meeting, as 19+ Student Governor.

Apologies were received.

The Chair invited Caleb to give a brief introduction and he confirmed that was studying Public Services in the HE Faculty. He held a part time post at Okehampton College as a learner support worker, was a Magistrate in Cornwall, and a members of the Holocaust Education Trust. As employee of Okehampton College, he declared an interest in any items relating to school 6th forms and learner support services.

2. **Minutes**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2017, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

[http://portal.exe-coll.ac.uk/sites/leadership/gov/staff/A Meetings 1718/4. Quality and Standards/3. 5th February/QS open approved mins 041217 for web.doc](http://portal.exe-coll.ac.uk/sites/leadership/gov/staff/A%20Meetings%201718/4.%20Quality%20and%20Standards/3.%205th%20February/QS%20open%20approved%20mins%20041217%20for%20web.doc)

3. Matters arising**3.1 Quality and Resource Review Days (QRR)**

The Chair encouraged Governors to put their names forward to attend a session of the termly Quality and Resource Review Days, which provided quality assurance on different areas within the College.

3.2 Support for Committee Members

The Clerk reminded the Committee that, following the self-evaluation process, it had been recommended that in order to sustain the quality of performance of committees when the membership changed, Governors be offered support if requested.

4. Teaching and Learning**4.1 Student Induction Survey Outcomes**

This item was deferred to the next meeting on 5th February 2018.

5. Quality Assurance

The agenda was reordered to take item 5.3 ahead of 5.1

Jenny Leach, Assistant Principal, joined the meeting for item 5.3 only

5.3 Higher Education Self-Assessment Report (HE SAR)

The report was received and Jenny confirmed that the Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) operating model required the Board to confirm that it received assurance on the quality of HE provision.

The circulated HE SAR provided that assurance. The HE Quality Improvement Plan served as a high level Action Plan. This was the first time HE provision had been rated outstanding, endorsed by the external TEF Gold assessment rating. The College had been one of only 16 FE Colleges to achieve the Gold rating, a commendable result. Outcomes for students were strong and attendance, retention and success all outstanding. The student survey showed a 15% increase in satisfaction to 87%. Additional resources in-year included the appointment of a Student Engagement Officer.

The New Annual Programme Monitoring and Review processes had been successfully implemented in accordance with the Pearson Awarding Body requirements and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. This had been a significant undertaking. The College's first Access Agreement had received positive feedback from the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) and was signed off by the Director of OFFA for implementation in 2017/18.

Areas for improvement included enhancement of the student experience, resourcing both social space and specialist space. The budget included capital for small bids. HE students did not receive the same level of student health and wellbeing support as FE students and there were

serious issues in this area, especially with the inability to respond adequately to learning support entitlements or well-being crises.

Finally Jenny confirmed that HEFCE processes would change in the coming year and proposals were out for consultation. Therefore it was likely that quality assurance requirements would change.

The Committee considered the student experience and the value of HE branded zones for study and social space. Satisfaction surveys showed progress, but there was still a wish for a dedicated adult centre.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board at its meeting on 8th December 2017 the following resolution, for submission to HEFCE.

•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.

BHS

•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.

•The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately maintained.

Vote: Unanimous

5.1 College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2016/2017 and Quality Improvement Plan(QIP) 2017/2018

The report was received and Julie Skinner, Vice Principal Standards and Student Experience, reminded the Committee that it had agreed to changes in the format of the document. The current version included less narrative, and a set of impact statements for each criteria, supported by evidence.

The overall Self-Assessment Grade was Outstanding with all Faculties rated Good or Outstanding and none assessed as grade 3. This year progress was a key Ofsted metric and judgements against the criteria were robust. There was greater consistency across Faculties.

The SAR comprised five sections. The background and context section was followed by the executive summary which summarised the grades for each of the four areas in the Common Inspection Framework (CIF): Outcomes for students, Quality of Teaching Learning and Assessment,

Personal Development, Behaviours and Welfare and Effectiveness of Leadership and Management. All were judged as Outstanding.

Ofsted divided areas into study programmes, and the SAR showed College outcomes compared to the national average. The biggest improvement had been in Adult Learning, resulting in an improvement from a grade 2 to Outstanding.

The four CIF criteria were subdivided into Ofsted's subsections and for each there was an impact statement and evidence drawn from data from internal inspections, surveys and outcomes.

Individual Departmental and Faculty SARs were included in section 3, and section four was the Quality Improvement Plan, followed by appendices.

The Committee was invited to comment on the style of the new format, and feedback was universally positive. There was greater clarity, particularly through the impact statements. Governors recommended that in future years the term "Future strengths under development" be used in place of "Areas for Improvement". Faculty SARs were not all in the same format and the Committee recommended consistency in style. Furthermore, there was an opportunity to expand on the reasons for changes in grades from previous years, for example, the impact of value added progress scores.

If requested, electronic papers provided an opportunity for all Faculty SARs to be circulated, and the Quality and Resource Review Days provided additional opportunity for the Committee to seek assurance on the validity of SAR judgements.

The format of the QIP had not been changed, and future versions could provide a cross reference to the standards to clarify the issues being addressed.

The Committee scrutinised each criteria, impact statement and evidence for assurance on the robustness and accuracy of judgements. Taking each of the four sections, and within them, each of the Ofsted criteria, Governors considered each in turn, providing challenge, particularly where assessed as an Area for Improvement. Governors commended the distance travelled on value added for non-vocational subjects; there were opportunities to replicate such improvements for BTEC provision. However, this was challenging when entry criteria of GCSE was not easily comparable with vocational outcomes.

The Committee challenged why some criteria were judged as Areas for Improvement despite positive evidence, for example, mitigating against variation in achievement of different learners. "Area for Improvement" was given so that such key issues were included in the QIP, to maintain

the focus. Governors also challenged that the threshold for Outstanding was high, with strong evidence not always resulting in a grade 1. High expectations drove excellence and the QIP was a key way to achieve improvement.

The Committee debated the definition of an able student; learners were adept at different things and it was contentious to claim that academic ability had greater value than vocational ability. Governors recommended substituting the word "academic" for "able" in relation to the skills of those on the Reach programme. The Committee requested a future update on the Reach academy. Governors also recommended prioritising the learner voice when listing evidence in relation to criteria on Teaching Learning and Assessment.

BHS

Implementing work experience and work placements was considered challenging, particularly as there was little central guidance. The focus on T levels would support this agenda. Evidence on support for students showed that there was effective signposting and breadth of services. Attendance remained a priority, given the impact on success, and whilst strong, it must remain a focus to maximise learner outcomes.

Finally, the Committee scrutinised the judgements for Leadership and Management. Whilst this was normally considered first of the four CIF criteria, there had been a conscious decision to prioritise student outcomes and teaching and learning in the SAR document. Maths outcomes at level 2 were a focus for improvement and, whilst better than the regional outcomes, it was key to improve outcomes for those with an E entry level grade. Monitoring progression was another key area of focus for Government, and despite excellent MIS, such information was challenging to access once the learner had left the College. There would be potential investment required, using external agencies to contact former students.

After significant discussion the Governors agreed to endorse the assessments for the impact statements across all four CIF criteria and, subject to the recommended minor amendments the Committee agreed to

Recommend the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2016/17 to the Board for approval at its meeting on 8th December 2017

Vote: unanimous

- Quality Improvement Plan
- The Quality Improvement Plan for 2017/18 was received and considered. Several actions were included to maintain focus on key issues.

The Committee agreed to

Recommend the Quality Improvement Plan 2017/18 to the Board for approval at its meeting on 8th December 2017

Vote: unanimous

5.2 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2016/2017 Outcome

The report was received. Julie confirmed that all actions were complete or had been carried over to the 2017-18 QIP. The Committee sought assurance on the implementation of the Digital Strategy and its impact on learning. Whilst the digital platform was under the remit of Marketing, which reported to the Business Services Committee, Governors requested an update on Teaching and Learning to include digital impact and feedback from the Learner Voice.

BHS

The Committee agreed to

Recommend the QIP outturn for 2016/17 to the Board at its meeting on 8th December 2017

5.4 Balanced Scorecard including Targets for the College

The Balanced Scorecard was received and considered. Julie reminded the Committee that the format had been introduced last year and included top line data on four metrics: Progression, English and maths, Success rates and Distance Travelled. Data included past years' outturn, and targets for 2017-18, which also formed the Faculty targets and were the collective judgement of the College Leadership Team.

Julie provided justification for each. The target for Maths had increased despite not achieving last year's target because of planned interventions. Progression of full time learners staying on from level one had not been increased because the previous year's outturn had been considered exceptional. The Committee debated the merit of setting targets based on knowledge of the cohort rather than being independent and aspirational. However, context was important to set achievable targets. Was it better to have a lower target that could be met or a higher one to aspire to? Stretch was important but decisions had been made following a process.

The Committee recommended that future Scorecards include more historic data to show trends, rather than a simple snapshot in time.

BHS

The Committee agreed to

Approve the proposed targets

Vote: unanimous

Staph Darrie-Laye, Deputy Head of Advice Recruitment and International, and Malcolm Walsh, Assistant Principal, joined the meeting for item 6.

6. Progression – Annual update

The annual report was received and taken as read and Steph highlighted the key issues. The Progression and Employability Service had a positive impact and the continuing priorities of the service were to support internal progression, increase student access to careers-related support and industry links, enhance university application coordination and support and widen student engagement with the service. Areas for improvement included support for vocational learners and for those applying for Oxbridge.

There was a 3% increase in UCAS applications in 2017 but a downward trend in applicants accepting offers, possibly due to other options such as apprenticeships or entry to employment. This trend reflected the national position, with England seeing a decline of 6%, and a 5% decline for the UK. Additional support for students during the application process was comprehensive. Applications to Oxbridge had also increased, but with a declining conversion rate (with the exception of the REACH Academy) additional support was planned, similar to that for those applying for medicine. The 16-18 student governor confirmed that the Oxbridge application felt an isolated process and group support would be valuable.

Data on destinations showed that the top three remained the most local; UWE, Plymouth and Exeter. Progression to High Tariff Universities was not comparable to previous years, as high tariff was classed as three As, as opposed to AAB in the past. 253 students were successfully placed at Russell Group Universities. This represented 25% of overall successful applicants. Comparisons with previous years were difficult because of changes in offers, and said more about the universities' entry requirements than student success.

The Committee considered the proportion of women studying STEM subjects, comprising Medicine, Veterinary, Engineering, Maths, Sciences and Computing courses. All STEM on course/faculty data showed that 40% were female and progression to STEM-based university study mirrored the on-course trend; 39% of successful STEM applicants were female. 50% of maths and science students were female, with a high percentage of women in in geology and environmental studies. The conversion to university level study was 80%. Whilst there was no national data with which to compare, the College could track its own students.

Turning to the management of the service, there was a better understanding of the peaks and troughs in demand. In addition to drop-in sessions and face to face contact there had been a significant increase in

on-line contact and there was an electronic booking system. Through this the College could track the different types of interaction. Whilst much improved, the system was still evolving.

In the new year the focus would be on CV and interview techniques. It had also been identified that improved contact in the first year at College would support applications in year two.

Internal progression from level 2 to level 3 had remained relatively unchanged year on year. However, there was concern regarding support for vocational learners which an internal progression steering group had been set up to address. A need for better soft skills had been identified. There was a trend for level 2 vocational learners, in some subjects such as health and social care, to go straight into the workplace rather than stay on to achieve a higher level qualification. Here was an opportunity to cross sell apprenticeships.

Governors asked if there was data on the destinations of those who did not take up university places. Research was planned for January/February using a simple App, with a limited number of questions to encourage participation. This was key, since destination information was a focus for Ofsted. Steph confirmed that university figures included those who deferred a year for whom the College offered support with the application process.

The Committee commended the report and agreed to

Note the report.

Jennie Hamilton, Head of Student Experience, joined the meeting for item 7.

7. Safeguarding Annual Report and Child Protection Policy
The Annual Safeguarding Report and summary presentation were received. The report was a retrospective on the year 2016-17, and also indicated priorities for the future.

It had been a challenging year with a number of suicides and attempted suicides and a significant number of mental health issues. The College worked closely with partner organisations and there was a safety plan in place and suicide prevention protocols and flow charts for staff. 16 members of staff were safeguarding level 3 trained and the new team of tutorial leads had received training in mental health.

Despite the challenges, there had also been successes in the year, notably the positive unannounced Ofsted visit, keeping students in College and on track, and strong partnership working with schools and other agencies.

There had also been some ground breaking work with the Missing And Child Sexual Exploitation forums (MACSE).

Turning to the Prevent agenda, there had been five referrals, each having a proportionate response. One had gone to the Chanel panel. The new bespoke on-line reporting for bullying had been commended by Ofsted, and year to date there were 24 entries compared to a total of 27 last year, most likely due to the visibility of the new system.

Student feedback was positive with 98.2% saying they felt safe at College. There had been an 11% increase in the number of learners on the safeguarding and vulnerability log, with a significant number of Foundation Studies' students because all learners in this Faculty were included due to their specific vulnerabilities and learning needs. By age, the vast majority were 16-18 learners but there was also a cohort of adults and there were plans to provide specific counselling for this group. By gender the split was almost even, a positive metric indicating better reach to men. Retention of vulnerable learners was commendable at 89%. There was also good retention of carers and young carers, commended by Ofsted. Jennie updated on training for staff, which included fortnightly safeguarding updates on the Staff Bulletin.

The report included Action Plans and Targets for 2017-18.

There had been increased capacity within the team and students were always seen. Access to psychological therapies was being piloted with the University of Exeter, and the three wellbeing practitioners provided another layer of support. CPOMS, an electronic referral system, was supporting transition from the secondary schools.

Mental Health was a key issue and a cross college mental health steering group had been set up, and the College represented on the national AoC mental Health Group. There would be a further update at the Board Residential.

Wellbeing initiatives included outreach work by the Welfare and Wellbeing teams to outlying sites of the College, targeting young men, There were student focus groups in HE, Apprenticeships and full time 16-18 learners. Student Wellbeing Ambassadors attended these focus groups and there was counselling support available to HE students. The College's 1 minute guides for staff and students were commended. Wellbeing advice sessions were designed to build resilience.

The Committee noted the comprehensive report and the Safeguarding Governor confirmed that she had undertaken the required training and could assure the Committee and Board that systems and processes were advanced and commended Jennie's team. A highlight was the positive Ofsted visit

The Committee noted the report and agreed

BHS

To recommend the Safeguarding Annual Report to the Board on 8th December 2017.

Vote: unanimous

Child Protection Policy

The annually reviewed Child Protection Policy was received and Jennie confirmed that the only amendments related to legal changes and the inclusion of live links.

The Committee agreed

BHS

To recommend the Child Protection Policy to the Board on 8th December 2018.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following reports were received and noted:

8.1 Intensive Care update

The report was received and taken as read and Julie confirmed that four courses had been identified for support through the Intensive Care process and three in outpatients. The rationale for inclusion in the process was detailed in the report. All were receiving support because of outcomes or progress or both. Those in outpatients were included because of a one year blip.

The supportive process was already underway with action plans agreed. Intensive care had a strong record of success, and with a limited number of programmes, there could be focus where needed.

The Committee noted the report.

8.2 Safeguarding meeting – Minutes

The report was **received and noted**

8.3 EDBV meeting

The report was **received and noted.**

8.4 HR Update on Teaching Staff Qualifications

The report was **received and noted.**

8.5 Internal Inspection Reports: Maths and Science: 13-15 November 2017

The internal inspection of the Maths and Science Faculty had been

completed at the start of the academic year and an exceptional Ofsted inspector had been involved in the process. Teaching and Learning had been judged outstanding and the area for improvement was maths level 2 for those with E grade entry. Outstanding teachers within the Faculty were providing peer support. A2 outcomes were strong but AS less so and the Faculty was assessed an overall grade of Good.

It had been an invaluable process, rich in evidence, and the benefit of the early inspection was that action plans were being progressed to impact in-year.

The Committee noted the report.

8.6 Risk register

The register was **received and noted**. The Committee considered risks for which the Committee was responsible in conjunction with the Business Services Committee. Whilst a single risk, the elements for which each Committee was responsible were distinct and unconnected. Therefore a single rating was not helpful.

The Committee also challenged that it did not receive assurances that mitigations were effective. However, the Quality Improvement Plan included all risks for which the Committee was responsible and Governors received an update on progress towards actions, for information, at every meeting, albeit as items which were not scrutinised.

The Committee recommended that the Audit and Risk Assurance consider an action column be added to the Risk Register. Deeper occasional scrutiny of the QIP would also provide assurance. BHS

8.7 Items to take to the Board

The Committee agreed on items to take to the Board on 8th December 2017.

8.8 Items for next meeting

The Committee was content that beside those items on the annual cycle of business, the deferred Student Induction Survey report should be included on the next agenda. There would be an update on the Reach Academy and an update on the impact of ILT on teaching and learning. BHS

7. **Dates of next meetings**

Monday	5	February	2018
Monday	26	March	2018
Monday	18	June	2018