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## EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

### QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in the Board Room, Hele Road, Exeter College**

#### **Present**

Dave Underwood	Chair
Bindu Arjoon	
John Bunting	
Dalya Erdogan	
Chris Hoar	
Elaine Hobson	
Craig Marshall	
Martin Owen	
Emma Webber	
Silas Welsh	

#### **Apologies**

John Laramy

#### **Observers**

Philip Bostock  
Aimee Mitchell

#### **In Attendance**

	Rob Bosworth	Vice Principal, Schools Partnerships and Curriculum
	Julie Skinner	Vice Principal, Standards and Student Experience
<i>Item 7.1 only</i>	Nick Anderson	Special Project: Student Progress
<i>Item 5.1 only</i>	Martina Esser	Head of Quality
<i>Item 6 only</i>	Jennie Hamilton	Head of Student Experience
<i>Item 5.2 only</i>	Megan Snell	Deputy Head Student Experience
<i>Item 4 only</i>	Gemma Noble	Head of People

Barbara Sweeney Clerk to the Corporation

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues, including those observing, to the meeting. He particularly welcomed John Bunting, Elaine Hobson, Silas Welsh and Dalya Erdogan, who were attending their last meeting of the Committee prior to completing their term of office, and Chris Hoar who was moving to another committee subject to ratification of the Committee structure for 2017-18 by the Board. The Chair thanked all for their

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valuable contributions.

Apologies were received.

There were no declarations of interest

## 2. **Minutes**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017, as circulated, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## 3. **Matters arising**

- 3.1 HEFCE Annual Provider Review 2016-17 outcome  
The update and circulated letter confirming the Annual Provider Review outcome for 2016-17 were received. Julie Skinner, Vice Principal Standards and Student Experience reminded the Committee that the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) had changed its quality assurance process and now required, as part of the annual return, confirmation that the Board received regular assurance on HE provision.

The Annual Provider Review had requested additional information before issuing its decision, and following submission of requested additional evidence, HEFCE had confirmed that no further action was required in order to satisfy the quality and standards matters.

### **The Committee noted the update.**

- 3.2 Extend Programme – *significance of asterix by subject title*  
The update was received. At its last meeting, the Committee had received a report on curriculum reform. The Committee had requested clarification on the significance of an asterix against subjects included in the Extend Programme, and Julie confirmed that it denoted that the subject was accredited. The Committee received a copy of the Programme and recommended that it be circulated to all Governors at the Board meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017. BHS

*Gemma Noble, Head of People, joined the meeting for item 4.1 only.*

## 4. **Policies**

- 4.1 HR Policies
- i. Recruitment and Selection Procedure
  - ii. Right to Request Flexible Working Procedure
  - iii. Leave for Parents Procedure

The draft Policies were received and Gemma highlighted the key changes. She confirmed that the Unions had been consulted on all three policies.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

The revised policy used the updated equality and diversity terminology,

referring to Disability Confident accreditation. DBS checks were now all on line and there was greater clarity on checks on overseas employees. Workers were now asked to subscribe to the DBS updates to ensure safeguarding controls were in place. There was also clarification on the section on internal applications. Whilst openness and transparency in recruitment was key, there was a culture of developing staff.

Interview panels included a member who has had Safer Recruitment training, and usually an HR team or SLT member to ensure the College promoted good practice in relation to Protected Characteristics. The Committee recommended that the Policy cross reference the Social Media Code of Conduct, to clarify the position relating to pre-employment searches on social media.

GN

#### Right to Request Flexible Working Procedure

The revised policy included additional information on documenting informal local arrangements for absolute clarity and stating that the final decision rested with the Senior Leadership Team.

#### Leave for Parents Procedure

There were four key changes to the policy: Health and Safety was updated to reflect current practice in risk assessment of pregnant workers, with the onus on the employee to initiate discussions with their Head of Faculty/Department. The revised policy also included provision for those taking leave due to surrogacy. Other changes related to pay calculations.

The Committee agreed to approve

- a) Recruitment and Selection Procedure**
- b) Right to Request Flexible Working Procedure**
- c) Leave for Parents Procedure**

*Vote: unanimous*

## 5. Teaching and Learning

*Martina Esser, Quality Manager, joined for item 5.1 only*

- 5.1 Student on Course Teaching and Learning Survey Outcomes 2016  
The report was received and Martina highlighted the key issues. The survey was in a new format, and therefore different from archived reports. Whilst not as tidy as the former Microsoft versions, the new format allowed for individual staff and Heads and Deputy Heads to access and drill down, which was valuable for PPRs. However, staff could not interrogate colleagues' data. Whilst the completion rate had fallen, it was still strong for the sector.

The Committee considered in detail a number of specific questions, either

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new to the survey or where the trend was declining and which are recorded in the confidential minutes in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy.

The Committee considered faculty specific data. By drilling down and establishing high performing areas, there could be dissemination of best practice cross College. Heads of Faculty analysed responses and included areas for improvement in their Quality Improvement Plans. Turning to completion rates, these were lower than in previous years, attributed to churn in faculty leadership with priorities different for those recently in post.

It was noted that the survey was only one part in a suite of feedback. Triangulation was important and individual subjective comments should be considered in the context of overall trends. Learner Voice feedback provided more frequent opportunities to identify and address issues. Whilst it was clear that some questions required refinement, the survey was a valuable tool, albeit one of four or five feedback systems.

In summary it was noted that the survey reflected changing times, both in society and within the curriculum.

The Committee agreed to

**Note the report.**

*Megan Snell, Deputy Head of Student Experience, joined for item 5.2 only*

5.2 Learner Voice

The report was received and Megan used film clips of students taken on day two of freshers' week to illustrate the success of induction in helping learners to settle into College. Groups of students, filmed in a photo booth, responded positively to "how do you feel on day 2"? "What are you looking forward to?" and "what would you change about induction?"

The report was taken as read and Megan confirmed that there was the highest number of tutor representatives ever, with over 300 learners wanting to participate in learner voice feedback. She thanked the two Student Governors and commended the Student Representative Committee which heard direct from tutor reps. The strong integration of the SRC and Learner Voice facilitated the understanding of learner satisfaction.

Finally Megan confirmed that the SRC had spent over £15k of its reserves on items identified by the Learner Voice such as flip down chairs in corridors, table tennis tables on campus and accessible signage

The Committee agreed to

**Note the report.**

*Jennie Hamilton, Head of Student Experience, joined for item 6 only*

**6. Safeguarding**

**6.1 Update on Ofsted**

The update was received and Jennie confirmed that the College had received an unexpected Ofsted inspection in February 2017 which had focused exclusively on safeguarding. The visit had been triggered by an historical incident resulting in a complaint to an MP and forwarded to Ofsted, despite the complainant being satisfied by the College's investigation and response at the time.

Two experienced inspectors had visited the College to examine records, interview students, conduct an unaccompanied walk about and undertake lesson observations. Bullying and child protection policies, procedures and central training records had been reviewed and there had been a lengthy telecom interview with the Safeguarding Governor. There had been robust assessment of support for care leavers, transgender learners, and recruitment and transition arrangements.

The confidential Ofsted report, which was not in the public domain, confirmed that the vast majority of learners felt safe and confident. There was a strong tutorial system with robust safety and anti-bullying procedures. Reporting mechanisms were sound and the College was responsive to national issues. Record keeping was meticulous as were monitoring referrals. Staff training was effective, with well-planned staff development days. The learners' voice was heard and student expertise was well used for issues such as e-safety, with digital champions, and a culture where learners educated themselves and each other, for example, around transgender issues. Safeguarding was embedded in the fabric of the College.

The single recommendation in the report was for the College to continue to do what it is currently doing.

The Safeguarding Governor emphasised the importance of Governor training on Child Protection, Prevent and Equality Diversity and British Values, as it was from the Board that culture, leadership and management emanated.

The Committee commended the report, acknowledging the work of the team and that of the retiring Safeguarding Governor.

**The Committee noted the report.**

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## 6.2 Policies

The following policies were received and taken as read:

- i. Tutorial Policy
- ii. Learner Medical Disclosure Administration and Medication Policy

The biennial review of all Safeguarding Policies was due but, because of the volume, they had been scrutinised in batches over several meetings.

**Tutorial Policy.**

Jennie confirmed that the Tutorial Policy had been slimmed down to essential elements and updated to include work based learning, apprenticeships and 19+ learners. The Policy made explicit what the College strived to accomplish through its tutorials and the implementation section served as a catalogue of the tutorial programme.

The Tutorial Handbook was under review and Jennie confirmed that the HE provision had its own policy. The Committee was assured that tutoring would continue at the College, with the lead tutor role refreshed and additional support in the light of the new Ofsted focus. Not all institutions had such a protected tutor role and it was important to make potential learners aware that the College had kept its tutoring system.

**Learner Medical Disclosure Administration and Medication Policy.**

The revised Policy specified that, following training, a number of staff were now able to administer medication for certain conditions. The responsibility for disclosure was the learners and the automated confidential process used an electronic form, with an option for permissions for information to be shared. The Committee recommended that the drafting be consistent in its use of language and questioned the reference to the Board's responsibility for implementing the Policy. Although it had a statutory requirement to approve the document, there was no requirement for implementation and the Policy should be amended accordingly.

JH

Subject to the agreed amendments the Committee agreed to approve

### **a) Tutorial Policy**

### **b) Learner Medical Disclosure Administration and Medication**

*Vote: Unanimous*

## 7. **Quality Assurance**

*Nick Anderson, Special Projects: Student Progress, joined for item 7.1*

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#### 7.1 Progress Strategy

The report was received and considered. The three year strategy was circulated and Nick highlighted the key issues using a PowerPoint presentation.

There were five key measures: progress in A levels, IB and Applied General level 3 (vocational) subjects, attainment, retention, progress in English and maths and destinations. This was a significant shift in focus from success rates as the historical key outcome. Nick presented the A level ALPS scores over the last four years, demonstrating good progress. There was also clear correlation between ALPS and Value Added Progress, illustrated by a scatter graph of subjects.

Progress scores were variable across the College and the A level ALPS improvements served as an example of good practice to be replicated. However, there was considerable change, with moving goal posts, particularly the tension between success rates and progress measures and curriculum changes.

The aim of the three year plan was to become the leading college in the SW on Progress Measures. Objectives were to achieve "Above Average" Progress Measures for A level and Applied General Level 3 courses, achieve positive Value Added for English and Maths, develop clear college-wide systems which staff were able to use consistently to support Progress and to ensure that all learners had a nationally benchmarked aspirational target grade which they were supported to achieve and that reflected positive Progress.

To achieve this, Nick's role was to champion the process, embed progress into teaching learning and assessment, and achieve progress in academic vocational and foundation English and maths curriculum. There was also a strand to develop staff understanding and embed progress into the staff appraisal and course self-assessment.

Working with the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Vocational Director, intervention strategies would be developed, and within faculties, a culture would be promoted where student performance related to target grades based on ALPS and value added measures. In foundation English and maths, Echo and Delta GCSE groups had been introduced, working towards progress commensurate with the learner's ability. The leads for foundation English and maths were key and dashboards to monitor progress were being developed. The local secondary schools were anticipating that, with the changes to GCSE grading, more students would achieve the required grades in school, resulting in fewer coming to the College requiring foundation English and maths.

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Finally Nick cautioned that the project would take time to complete but that the three year strategy was in place.

The Committee agreed to

### **Note the report on the Progress Strategy**

#### 7.2 Retention, attendance and targets

The report was received and Julie highlighted the improved in-year retention on all lines bar one. Attendance was also better than last year. However she cautioned that, because of curriculum reforms, this was a year when outcomes were uncertain and historic drivers to strong success rates did not apply.

### **The Committee noted the report.**

#### 7.3 Intensive Care update

The report was received and taken as read. Julie reminded the Committee of the process and rationale behind the supportive programme, and confirmed that following results, the Committee would be invited in the autumn to consider the subjects which would be proposed for inclusion in Intensive Care.

### **The Committee noted the report.**

#### 8. **Committee Self-Evaluation**

The report was received. The Board had agreed a new process for Committee Self-Assessment, comprising feedback from Governors' individual self-evaluation forms, and a review of the Committee's year at the last meeting of the academic year. A copy of the previous year's SAR was circulated as a resource and strengths and areas for improvement for the current year were identified. The discussion would form the basis of a narrative, to be produced by the Clerk and considered at the autumn meeting of the Committee.

### **The Committee noted the report.**

#### 9. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

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

#### 9.

##### 9.1 Self-Assessment Process

Julie confirmed that she had researched other colleges' methodology and proposed the same content for the 2016-17 SAR but with an evolved format. Currently the document was lengthy and strong on narrative. The proposal was for the SAR to be more concise and more evidence based.

### **The Committee endorsed the proposal.**

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- 9.2 Risk Register  
Deferred to the next meeting
- 9.3 Safeguarding meeting – Draft minutes from meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017
- 9.4 Internal Inspection Report – Apprenticeship Provision  
Rob Bosworth, Vice Principal Schools Partnerships and Curriculum confirmed that the report related to three areas: core apprenticeships, Engineering Aerospace and Automotive and Health Care and Public Services. The inspection had been valuable to assess provision and promote consistency.
- 9.5 QIP update  
The report showed progress towards actions from the 2015-16 Quality Improvement Plan
- 9.6 HR Update on Teaching Staff Qualifications
- 9.7 Items to take to Board  
The Committee agreed to items for the executive summary to go to the Board on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017.
- 9.8 Items for next meeting  
Items for the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017 were as per the circulated cycles of business
- 10. **Date of meetings for 2017-18**
  - 18 Sept 2017
  - 4 Dec 2017
  - 5 Feb 2018
  - 26 Mar 2018
  - 18 June 2018

Chair: