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EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th June 2018 in the Board Room,
Hele Road, Exeter College**

Present	Dave Underwood	Chair
	Bindu Arjoon	
	John Laramy	
	Sue Clarke	
	Kira Lewis	
	Jo Matthews	
	Martin Owen	
<i>From item 3</i>	Caleb Stevens	
	Emma Webber	
Apologies	Rob Bosworth	
	Jenny Leach	
	Aimee Mitchell	
Observing	Mary Graves	ESFA
	Cass Wood	Incoming Business Support Staff Governor
	Lily Garth	Incoming Clerk
In Attendance	Julie Skinner	Vice Principal, Standards and Student Experience
<i>Items 4 & 4.2 only</i>	Martina Esser	Acting Head of Quality
<i>Item 4.3 only</i>	Megan Snell	
<i>Item 5.1 only</i>		
<i>Item 5.1 only</i>	Catherine Taylor	
	Barbara Sweeney	Clerk to the Corporation

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the last meeting of the academic year and his last as Chair after 3 years. The Vice Chair, who would succeed him, thanked him for his sterling work as Chair, giving space for member engagement. His continued membership of the Committee was welcomed.

The Chair particularly welcomed Mary Graves from the ESFA, who was observing the College's governance structures, Lily Garth, the incoming Clerk and Cass Wood, incoming Business Support Staff Governor, who

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would be joining the Committee in 2018-19. The Chair also welcomed Sue Clarke to her first meeting.

The Chair thanked Emma Webber, for whom it was her last meeting of this Committee after seven years as she was joining Business Services Committee in 2018-19. As a former Chair of the Committee she had served with distinction and provided tenacious challenge.

Kira Lewis, 16-18 Student Governor and Caleb Stevens, 19+ Governor were also attending their last meeting, and the Chair thanked them for their exceptional contributions during their one year term of office.

Finally the Chair thanked Julie Skinner, Vice Principal Standards and Student Experience for the long service to the College and to this Committee, particularly over the past two years. Her contribution to the changes to the Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan had been significant.

Apologies were received.

Caleb Stevens, employee of Okehampton College, 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 26th March 2018, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 Quality and Standards Terms of Reference

The updated Terms of Reference, revised to include responsibility for quality assurance of nursery provision were **received and noted**. The Board had approved the revised version at its meeting on 4th May 2018.

3.2 Nursery Update

The update was **received and noted**. The Principal confirmed that progress of the new nursery, developed in collaboration with the University, had been closely monitored by the Business Services Committee, with regular updates to the Board via that Committee's Executive Summary. Contracts had been signed this week with existing staff at the University TUPEd to the College.

Terms of Reference had been amended so that this Committee had oversight of quality assurance of the nursery and Ofsted would complete and inspection prior to the opening, with no delay in provision coming on line for the new academic year.

3.3 Quality and Resources Review Update

The Committee was reminded that the Quality Review and Resource Days (QRR) provided Governors with an opportunity to observe the termly

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reviews of Faculties and Departments. Heads and Deputy Heads of Faculty and Departments presented to the Senior Leadership Team, supported by their responsible Assistant Principals. All governors were encouraged to observe a QRR periodically.

Jo Matthews had attended a session in the last round and updated the Committee. The process was impressive, with clear ownership by the Heads, and evidence of a good understanding of their areas, the strengths and challenges, the learner journey, understanding the market and effective interrogation of data and risks. Improvement of value added scores was also high on the agenda. The process demonstrated good triangulation and the positive language of success promoted empowerment. In summary the observation had provided assurance that the Senior Leadership Team were aware of issues at Department and Faculty level.

- 3.4 Subcontractor Quality Assurance – report to September meeting
At its last meeting the Committee had requested a further update on quality assurance of subcontractor provision. The report would have greater value when the outcome from examinations was known. It was therefore recommended that the report be deferred until the next meeting on 17th September 2018, with an annual update in the autumn term thereafter.

Clerk

Martina Esser, Acting Head of Quality, joined for items 4.1 and 4.2 only.

4. **Teaching and Learning**

- 4.1 Student on Course Teaching and Learning Survey Outcomes
The report and PowerPoint presentation were received and Martina confirmed that, at 90%, it was the highest completion rate ever, demonstrating the impact of actions taken at the request of this Committee last year to improve the response rate and in so doing, provide more valid data.

The report was taken as read and the slides highlighted some of the key findings, including use of Moodle, awareness on how to provide feedback, awareness of student targets and support in improving English and maths skills. The 10 point improvement in the survey over last year confirmed that this was now better embedded into the College, confirmed by the Student Governors.

Areas for improvement were considered, including timely feedback on assessments and contact hours. Was the decline in both related? On the recommendation of the Committee last year, some questions had been reworded following consultation with students. Was there still ambiguity? Whilst the survey's high level data provided an overview, it was important to drill down to establish where improvements could have the greatest

impact.

The Committee challenged on stretch, and the use of the survey to drive standards. Governors were reminded that the survey was only one example of feedback, and triangulation with other metrics, such as internal inspection and success outcomes, all contributed to the picture. The survey was valuable in identifying variance between Faculties, so that best practice was shared. There was individual feedback to teachers with targets set during the appraisal process.

Finally Governors challenged how the Committee would review the impact of drilling down where survey scores indicated need and areas of concern. The Committee requested a further update in the autumn term. The September meeting would be too soon for any meaningful changes to have been implemented and the report would be received in the December meeting.

Clerk

The Committee noted the report.

4.2 Internal Inspection – Sport Leisure and Tourism

The internal inspection for Sport Leisure and Tourism was received and taken as read. Martina highlighted the key issues. Validated by an external inspector with Ofsted experience, the inspection had validated the Faculty's Grade 1 Self-Assessment with 20 outstanding observations, 19 good, 2 requiring improvement and none rated poor.

Martina summarised the programme of internal inspections since 2011, illustrating full and cyclical coverage of Faculties. Plans for the 2019-20 were already underway in order to secure external inspectors.

The process was for each Faculty to receive an initial one day Development Visit with the external inspector and the Head and Deputy Head of Faculty, to analyse data, including the SAR and progress (Value Added) and learning walks. Strengths and areas for improvement were identified and a short report produced. Six to twelve months later the inspector returned for a three day visit to check progress and undertake a full schedule of observations and several meetings with students, so emulating an Ofsted inspection. Martina reminded the Committee that it received all reports at this Committee.

The Committee commended the report. However the Committee challenged why, in a report where there was an extensive list of outstanding areas, provision for high needs learners was rated as good, and yet without a recommendation. The report focussed on recommendations which would deliver the greatest impact, and the high needs rating was based on a small sample of two.

The Committee also challenged why the recommendation to revisit the

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embedding of Equality Diversity and British Values was advisory and not essential. The Board was committed to promote EDBV and “advisory” did not reflect this commitment. There followed a discussion on the challenge of effectively demonstrating these values without looking contrived. The Committee was clear of the commitment to the promotion of EDBV. However, ultimately the criteria for judgements (essential or advisory) was set by Ofsted.

The Committee noted the report.

Megan Snell, Deputy Head of Student Experience, joined the meeting for item 4.3 only

4.3 Learner Voice

The report was received and taken as read. Megan confirmed that the Learner Voice related to feedback from 16-18 learners only. There was a recognised positive listening culture, with Megan in her role as Deputy Head of Student Support the key point of contact, and with 341 tutor reps representing the student body.

Megan updated on agreed enhancements which included the change of titles and roles from the 16-18 Student Governor and 19+ Student Governor to the FE and HE Student Governors, which were no longer Student Representative Committee (SRC) officer roles. The previous roles had caused confusion with dual operational and strategic responsibilities. Going forward the FE and HE Governor roles, whilst having an open invitation to SRC meetings and events, would have a far more strategic role, representative of the constituency which elected them, but not representing them. That role fell to the SRC. The HE role also supported the new regulatory requirement of the Office for Students, which required a link between the HE Students and the Governing Body.

Elections had taken place and the newly elected FE and HE Governors, supported by the Clerk, would take their roles in the new academic year.

This was the last Learner Voice annual report to the Committee, as in future it was proposed that there be a Community Voice Report, including input from the Learner Voice (16-18 students), the Student Voice (HE learners), Apprenticeship Voice, Adult Learner Voice, Staff Voice and Employer Voice. This overarching Community Voice would provide assurance on the views of all the College’s stakeholders.

Governors commended the changes but sought assurance that they had the backing of the SRC. The current Student Governors confirmed that the new process provided clarity of roles and that the SRC had considered carefully the changes and agreed that it provided greater clarity.

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The FE and HE Governors would remain in touch with the student body. Both were encouraged to attend student events and SRC meetings and the Role Descriptions were explicit. The SRC had revised roles to enhance links to students. The Clerk confirmed that the standing agenda item, the Student Governor report to the Board, would be replaced by the Community Voice update, to which the student Governors would talk.

The Committee agreed to review the process mid-year and receive an update to the January meeting. Clerk

The Committee noted the report.

5. Quality Assurance

Catherine Taylor, Head of HE, joined the meeting for item 5.1.

- 5.1 Higher Education Update
- Office for Students
 - Quality Assurance
 - Student Voice

The report and PowerPoint presentation were received. Catherine confirmed that an overview of quality was premature, since national surveys were yet to be undertaken and an update on quality assurance would be deferred until the next meeting. Clerk

At the last Board meeting Governors had resolved to give the Head of HE delegated authority to undertake the complex process for registering with the Office for Students (OfS). Submission was completed by the 25th May 2018 deadline, (with support from Governors, who had provided required contact and conflict of interests information). The process had involved completion of a self-assessment, consideration of additional governance processes, compliance with consumer law and changes to enhance links between the student body and Governing Body. Total compliance was a lofty aim, and registration required evidence of the institution as an "honest trier" with realistic action plans derived from the SAR.

The OfS had access to existing ratings on quality assurance metrics, including the Teaching Excellence Framework. The process of registration had promoted positive changes in practice including the adoption of the HE Code of Governance, the conversion of the 19+ Student Governor role to an HE Student Governor with direct access to the Governing Body, compliance with consumer protection and enhanced transparency on information to students.

Subject to a satisfactory submission, registration would be confirmed from September 2018, and progress toward compliance would continue. Plans included greater embedding of academic freedom and freedom of speech.

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The new Community Voice updates to Board would enhance HE feedback to the Governing Body and an Academic Board would be established to oversee academic standards, and included in the HE risk register. New policies would be developed relating to HE fees, refunds and compensation, and complaints.

In response to questions, Catherine confirmed that a member of this Governing Body would not sit on the Academic Board on the advice of the HE Governor, as this was not the practice in the Senate at the University. However, the HE Student Governor would provide the reporting link to Board. This also maintained the strategic oversight role of the Governing Body rather than becoming involved in operational delivery.

The Committee considered current HE student feedback, collated from the Student Voice forum, student representatives, and meetings with external examiners. Internal and external surveys were mandatory for provision with over 500 students as part of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Positive feedback included content of lectures, class sizes, use of moodle and social interaction. Areas for improvement included speedier assessment for those with special needs, counselling, LRC opening hours, dedicated space and the negative impact of cancelling classes for College events. Catherine updated the committee on current and proposed actions to address these areas, albeit it some were more challenging than others. The Committee discussed various options to support improvements.

The Committee agreed that the process for registration had been challenging but essential, given a population of over 500 learners and the importance of the associated income and commitment in Strategic Plan. By September there would be greater clarity on the most appropriate reporting cycle and it would be key for the Board and this Committee to monitor the link between HE and the Governing Body, particularly relating to the student experience. Clerk

The Committee noted the report.

5.2 Retention, attendance and predicted outcomes

The report, showing retention and attendance by faculty and level, was received and considered. Data on predicted outturn was also circulated and considered.

In summary, retention and predicted outcomes were strong. Linear programmes had the potential to impact on retention but had not, indicating good adherence to the right learner right course philosophy. Attendance was down at just under 90%, and Julie Skinner, Vice Principal Standards and Student Experience, highlighted the key reasons: mental health, the impact of moving from a programme of four to three subjects and the impact of GCSE English and maths. There were planned strategies to increase attendance through on-line monitoring systems, already

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piloted with success.

Numbers attending English and maths GCSE exams had increased on previous years, which would impact on outcomes. There was consistency across subjects indicating a good response in areas of former weakness.

Julie confirmed that she would undertake a first draft of the Self-Assessment Report before leaving the College at the end of the academic year

The Committee noted the report.

5.3 Intensive Care update

The report was received and served as one of the College's Quality Assurance processes. Courses where there was concern, for example a consistent decline in success or poor progress scores, were identified by the Senior Curriculum Group for additional support and greater scrutiny under the Intensive Care process. Areas where there was a blip were supported, with a lighter touch, through the Outpatient process. The outcomes were positive, with a strong record of turnaround.

Julie provided the regular update on progress and the committee agreed to

Note the report.

6. **Committee Self Evaluation**

The report was received. The Board had agreed the process for Committee Self-Assessment, including a review of the Committee's year at the last meeting of the academic year. 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.

7. **Minutes/ reports for information**

The following reports were received and noted:

7.1 Self-Assessment Process

Julie confirmed that. Following a radical change last year, it was proposed that the same format be adopted for the overarching 2017-18 SAR. Faculty level SARs would, for the first time, include comment on personal development and welfare. **The Committee endorsed the proposal.**

7.2 Risk Register

The revised risk register was received **and noted**. Scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting on 13th June 2018, recommended amendments had been included in the revised version. The Committee considered further the risk on delivery of English and maths

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GCSE examinations. The scheduled exams were now completed and controls had been effective.

7.3 Safeguarding meeting – 4th May 2018 *draft*. **Noted**

7.4 QIP update

The report showed progress towards actions from the 2017-18 Quality Improvement Plan was received **and noted**. The overarching version indicated that there was good progress toward the targets.

The Chair commended the report which was more accessible and better linked to the work of the College than in the past.

7.5 Items to take to Board

The Committee agreed on items to take to the Board on 6th July 2018.

7.6 Items for next meeting

The Committee agreed the items to be included on the agenda for the next meeting on 17 September 2018. In addition to those on the cycle of business, the deferred update on quality assurance for subcontractor provision would be received.

8. **Dates of meetings for 2018-19**

17 Sept 2018

3 Dec 2018

4 Feb 2019

25 Mar 2019

17 June 2019