

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 25 March 2019 in the Board Room, Hele Road, Exeter College

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| Present | Mark Goodwin Dave Underwood John Laramy Sue Clarke Aimee Mitchell Jacob Harris Cassandra Wood Sonja Longmore | Vice Chair |
| Apologies | Bindu Arjoon Jo Matthews Ben Gardner | |
| In Attendance | Rob Bosworth Malcolm Walsh Jade Otty | Vice Principal Schools, Partnerships and Curriculum Deputy Vice Principal, Engagement People and Performance Assistant Principal |
| <i>Item 5.3 only</i> | Mike Blakeley | Director of Apprenticeships |
| <i>Item 4 and 5.1 only</i> | Gemma Noble | Head of People and Organisational Development |
| <i>Item 5.2 to 5.4 only</i> | Lisa Smith | Assistant Principal |
| <i>Item 6.1 only</i> | Sam Hillman | Assistant Principal |
| | Alison Layton-Hill | Clerk to the Corporation |

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

The Vice Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. Apologies were received from Bindu Arjoon, Ben Gardner and Jo Matthews.

2. **Minutes**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2019, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 Quality and Resources Review Update

The Principal updated the Committee and advised that the reviews had been positive. Retention had increased, there had been progress in terms

of making essential savings and the performance of the new teams is impressive.

3.2 Parent Portal

The Assistant Principal, Curriculum Academic gave an overview of the proposed parent portal. There had been extensive consultation with staff and students, the technical solution is in place and go live is planned for September 2019. The name/brand is still to be finalised and consideration needs to be given to how the portal will be communicated to staff. The portal will be an information board and not initially interactive, although it will provide the contact details of a student's tutor if further information is required.

Gemma Noble, Head of People and Organisational Development joined the meeting for item 4 and item 5.1

4. **HR Policies**

4.1 Code of Practice on the use of Social Media

The Committee considered the updated policy as circulated. Main changes include: expanding the reference to terrorism to include extremism; specifically referencing Instagram, Yammer and Tiktok with additional guidance around Yammer; highlighting the expectation on staff to participate in training and upskilling.

The Committee approved the Code of Practice on the use of Social Media

4.2 Probation Procedure

The Committee considered the updated Probation Procedure as circulated. Attendance as a consideration was included which was not referenced previously. Governors agreed that attendance is a critical part of the probation period. Reference to occupational health support had also been added.

The Committee approved the Probation Procedure

4.3 Suspension and Dismissal

The Committee considered the updated Suspension and Dismissal policy as circulated. The Committee questioned how long a 'period of absence' is and was advised that any absence is defined as a period of absence, with a period of four weeks or more being considered as a long term absence. The Committee was referred to the Attendance Management policy, which details three trigger points for absence: three periods of absence in any six month period; four periods of absence or more in a rolling 12 month period; Bradford Factor score of 150 points or more.

The Committee approved the Suspension and Dismissal policy

5. **Quality Assurance**

5.1 Gender Pay report

The committee considered the Gender Pay report, which referred to data that was current as at 31 March 2018. When compared to the previous year the mean and median gaps had increased slightly, however the bonus mean and median had reduced substantially.

Reasons for the gap widening can be attributed to the fact that the college has appointed more women but the increase in junior roles had been mostly filled by female staff members. There had been an increase in market forces payments to deal with recruitment challenges and 95% of recipients were male.

There was detailed debate about what the college is doing to address the gender pay gap and it was acknowledged that the college is robust in its efforts. It was also noted that the college compares very favourably to public sector norms and there are elements the college cannot affect such as career decisions and choices that males and females make.

The Head of People and Organisational Development will submit the report by the end of the week and it will be published on the college website.

The Committee noted the report

Lisa Smith, Assistant Principal Quality, Student Experience and Careers joined for item 5.2 to 5.4

5.2 The Gatsby Benchmarks

The Committee considered the reports as circulated which included a detailed GAP analysis and action plan. The Assistant Principal Quality, Student Experience and Careers outlined the progress the college has made to date to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks and areas that are still to be addressed. The Principal raised that this series of expectations placed on colleges is done so with no additional funding.

There was a discussion on the merit and future of work experience for students and acknowledgement that placements are difficult to secure. The competition for placements from schools in the region and the impact on local business was noted. The Committee questioned what risk this puts on the college as work experience is clearly part of the new framework. As an outstanding college a level of pragmatism is adopted, however a policy will be developed by the end of the academic year.

The Committee asked how students are made aware of the wider application (in terms of their career) of the subjects they are studying and how staff are equipped to advise them. This may be particularly pertinent to digital technology opportunities that have not existed previously. The

college has invested in a labour market information tool (Pathways) which identifies where the local employment opportunities are. Staff will be trained in its use and will be able to target the curriculum and delivery to these opportunities.

The Committee valued the information provided and requested that progress is reported to a subsequent meeting of this committee for monitoring.

The Committee

a) noted the report

b) requested a progress report for the September 2019 meeting

Clerk

Mike Blakeley, Director of Apprenticeships joined for item 5.3

- 5.3 Partnership Quality Assurance and Subcontractor Policy
The Committee considered the oral report from the Director of Apprenticeships. He explained that sub-contracting can be challenging and nationally there have been issues with a lack of vigour when managing sub-contractors.

The college is small in terms of sub-contracting, with a value of £220k and affecting 108 learners. The college has an established relationship with the sub-contractor with regular meetings having an emphasis on quality. There is a Q&R session annually with the sub-contractor and a regular desktop exercise to audit the documentation.

There may be the opportunity of sub-contracting further, however the Committee was reassured that the revised policy identifies a clear process in terms of due diligence and anything over £250k is referred to governors.

The Committee noted the update

- 5.4 HMI Visit Feedback
The Assistant Principal Quality, Student Experience and Careers summarised the report that had been circulated following a two day inspection from a retired Senior HMI.

Despite many recommendations it was noted that current College practice mostly covers the requirements in the EIF going forward and that changes are more to style and how the impact on students is evidenced, as opposed to content. It was suggested that the Committee receive a list of actions identified by the inspection which will be prioritised and subsequently monitored by the Committee.

The consultation in terms of the new framework concludes in April 2019 for implementation from 1 September 2019. Teaching staff will receive updates during the staff study days in July, however it is unlikely that the impact on teaching staff will be high.

The Committee

a) noted the report

b) agreed to receive a list of actions for monitoring at a future meeting

Clerk

5.5 HE Retention and Attendance

The Committee considered the report as circulated and noted that the attendance of HE students is improving and overall pleasing. The withdrawal of students was discussed and the Committee were advised that mental health issues were cited as a reason and those who had applied late were also more likely to withdraw.

The Committee was informed that benchmarks were not available from other colleges. However, it was noted that the College compares favourably with the completion measure at the University.

The Committee noted the report

Sam Hillman, Assistant Principal Curriculum, Vocational and Applied joined for Item 6

6. **Teaching and Learning**

6.1 Curriculum Reform – T Levels update

The Committee considered the report as circulated, which was summarised by the Assistant Principal Curriculum Vocational and Applied.

Exeter College is one of the few colleges that is delivering all three initial routes for T Levels: Digital, Construction and Education and Childcare. The College is currently targeting 138 learners to increase to 263 in 2019/2020.

The Capacity Development Fund has enabled the appointment of a new Industry Placement Liaison Officer (IPLO), the creation of a new industry placement tracker and access to first aid qualifications. A further bid for funding will be submitted by the middle of April. Securing industry placement is challenging, particularly from smaller businesses that do not have the time or resources to invest in students.

There is a focus on communication and a marketing campaign and the T Level stand at the College Expo generated much interest from learners and businesses.

The Committee was impressed with the level of assurance and acknowledged that the College is well prepared to deliver T levels. Governors particularly thanked Sam Hillman and recognised her expertise as a national leader in T Levels.

The Committee noted the report

7. Risk Register

Governors considered and agreed the ratings and mitigations of risks relevant to the Committee.

7.1 Flybe Update

The Committee received an oral update in terms of Risk 35 – Flybe, which had increased. The new company has agreed to take on 15 learners in September 2019 at L3 or L4 and to honour progression from year 1 to year 2 for full time students. It is unlikely that the EASA 66 will be supported. The College is engaging with other potential partners and is considering HNC and HND in Aerospace.

The Committee noted the update

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

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

8.1 Safeguarding meeting minutes

8.2 EDBV meeting minutes

8.3 QIP Update

8.4 Retention, Attendance and Punctuality

8.5 Items to take to Board were agreed: HR Policies, Gender Pay report, Gatsby action plan, T Levels.

8.6 Items for next meeting

The Committee reviewed the cycle of business for the 17 June 2019 meeting and agreed items to be included on the agenda. In addition, the Committee requested a priority list in terms of the new Ofsted Framework.

8. Dates of Next meetings

Monday 17 June 2019

Monday 30 September 2019

Monday 2 December 2019

Monday 3 February 2020

Monday 23 March 2020

Monday 22 June 2020

Signed by the Chair

Date: