

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2 December 2019 in the Board Room, Hele Road, Exeter College

Present	Bindu Arjoon John Laramy Dave Underwood Sue Clarke Cassandra Wood Tim Rutherford Tom Matthew	Chair
Apologies	Jo Matthews Toby Smith Sonya Longmore	
In Attendance	Rob Bosworth Jade Otty <i>Item 4 only</i> Kristyn Woodward <i>Item 5.1 only</i> Lucinda Sanders Alison Layton-Hill	Vice Principal Schools, Partnerships and Curriculum Vice Principal Performance Director of Student Experience Director of Adult and HE Clerk to the Corporation

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Jo Matthews, Sonja Longmore and Toby Smith.

There were no declarations of interest received.

2. **Minutes**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2019, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. **Matters arising**

- 3.1 Q&R Review

The Chair had attended the Q&R Review on 7 November 2019 and advised the Committee that it was an excellent opportunity to experience the College's quality assurance framework. The process was considered to be positive for staff, with a balanced and appropriate level of constructive

challenge and support. The Principal complimented the quality and consistency of leadership across the College.

Governors were encouraged to attend a Q&R Review, the next date is in March 2020 and the Clerk will send out an invitation to governors.

Clerk

The Committee noted the update

Kristyn Woodward, Director of Student Experience joined the meeting for item 4 only

4. Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

4.1 Safeguarding Annual Report

The Committee received the annual report and a presentation from the Director of Student Experience. He had recently joined Exeter College from Bridgwater College and governors noted that Bridgwater was graded outstanding for Safeguarding in May 2019.

The Director of Student Experience gave an overview of the structure of the Safeguarding team based in Greystone House. He summarised the data over the previous year, which was similar to the national sector trend. The Committee was particularly pleased to note that 9.3% of Looked After Children and Care Leavers progressed to university from the College, which is 6% above the national benchmark.

Governors were reassured that although the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) training has been decommissioned, the College continues to embed PREVENT awareness into the Child Protection and Safeguarding training for all staff.

The Committee noted that there had been an 83% rise in MASH referrals, 79% rise in VIST Forms, 40% rise in drug and alcohol incidents, 30% rise in anxiety incidents and 30% rise in low mood incidents.

Governors questioned these very high number of recorded incidents (11,643). It was acknowledged that with the introduction of CPOMS, and heightened awareness, there had been a tendency to log all incidents and increase referrals, irrespective of whether these incidents relate to safeguarding (the requirement of intervention to mitigate risk). The Director of Student Experienced explained that staff need more confidence to distinguish between safeguarding and the need for additional pastoral support. The Safeguarding team intend to: provide awareness training to staff on defining 'Safeguarding' and recording; establish a multi-tiered referral structure; develop emotional health and wellbeing practical toolkits; re-evaluate and expand the service provision at Greystone House.

It was recognised that a cultural shift is required so that not every incident results in an alert to the Safeguarding team. Governors questioned whether, in the meantime, current practice was putting pressure on the resources available. The Committee was reassured that, although the number of individual staff involved in safeguarding had decreased, the number of hours in terms of dedicated safeguarding staff had almost doubled.

Governors also raised that the responsibility for personal education plans for Looked After Children must be shared with other relevant professionals and the College must be cautious not to become the lead professional for every referral.

The Committee challenged the lack of any Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) referrals for the previous two years and questioned whether reporting processes are robust. The Director of Student Experience confirmed that there is a clear process of escalation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Senior Leadership Team confirmed that they were unaware of any incidents requiring referral to the LADO.

The Committee:

- a) thanked the Director of Student Experience for his informative and useful presentation**
- b) agreed to recommend the Safeguarding Annual Report to the Clerk Board for approval on 6 December 2019.**

4.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The Committee received and considered the updated Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which is reviewed annually.

The Director of Student Experience outlined updates that are now included in the policy:

- reference to up-skirting, which is now a criminal offence
- the inclusion of Serious Violence Indicators (Gangs/County Lines)
- reference to contextualised Safeguarding (threats of abuse or exploitation outside of the familial setting)

The Committee approved the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Lucinda Sanders, Director of Adult and HE joined the meeting for item 5.1 only

5. Quality Assurance

5.1 Higher Education Update

The Committee received an oral update from the Director of Adult and HE who advised that the Office for Students (OfS) came into effect in 2017 and is the main regulator for Higher Education. Regulation of the College

activities is monitored against the Conditions of Registration, which involves a high level of reporting and an increasing number of deadlines to meet. In cases where deadlines are not met, the College is considered to be in breach of its Conditions of Registration.

The Principal advised the Committee that the College had received a letter from the OfS in terms of the College not meeting one regulatory deadline, which was to pay fees to the Designated Quality Body. It was noted that the £5,000 payment was two weeks late and that Exeter College was one of 73% of providers who missed one or more deadlines.

The Committee was advised that governors must ensure compliance with all of the requirements of the OfS and was reassured that processes are in place to ensure full compliance with the Conditions of Registration in the future. The College is exploring how it can put a greater emphasis on compliance and is looking at this internally, this approach was endorsed by Governors who requested an increased focus on compliance with OfS deadlines and their requirements. Governors asked for an update as part of the next Board Cycle.

The Committee expressed concern that delivering HE is becoming increasingly challenging. It would appear that the bar has been set very high from the OfS, which may not necessarily encourage innovation in the delivery of HE and may potentially discourage current and new providers from delivering HE in any form.

The Senior Leadership Team expressed a commitment to providing a high quality HE offer to its students and was hopeful that opportunities through the construction of the IoT will support the provision. It was agreed that governors would have the opportunity to shape and influence the future of HE through the formulation of the new strategic plan and during discussions around the curriculum at the Board Residential.

Clerk

The Committee noted the report and agreed to receive an HE update after the Board Residential

5.2 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018/2019 Outcome

The Committee received the Quality Improvement Plan for the 2018/2019 academic year and the Vice Principal Performance advised governors that all actions had been completed or carried over to the 2019/2020 QIP.

The Vice Principal Performance outlined some of the positive headlines including: progress for learners studying Foundation Maths; capacity for leadership in teaching, learning and performance; recognising staff contribution and opportunities for development.

Elements for improvement include: progress score; attendance; recruitment and retention of specialist staff.

The Committee noted the update and requested that future reports distinguish between those items carried forward as examples of ongoing good practice and those that were not wholly achieved.

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The Committee agreed to recommend the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018/2019 to the Board for approval

Clerk

5.3 College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2018/2019 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2019/2020.

The report was received and the Committee noted the overall assessment grade as 'Outstanding'.

The SAR reflected the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (CIF) and the executive summary summarised the grades for each of the four areas: Outcomes for students, Quality of Teaching Learning and Assessment, Personal Development, Behaviours and Welfare and Effectiveness of Leadership and Management. All study programmes were judged as Outstanding except for Adult Learning Programmes which was considered Good.

The Vice Principal Performance highlighted the key achievements and the areas for improvement and also reassured the Committee that the College is rigorous in terms of its self-assessment and grading.

The Committee requested that destination data for the most vulnerable students is included in future reports. It was also agreed that the Foundation Learning and Support faculty will present to a future Committee meeting.

Clerk

There was a full debate around the issue of attendance. Governors were reassured that absence for vulnerable students is no higher than elsewhere and that all absences are tracked, with support being provided where necessary. Unconditional university offers had impacted on the attendance of A Level students, but distance travelled did not appear to affect attendance data negatively. The potential for celebrating excellent attendance is also being considered. The issue of attendance is included in the QIP for 2019/2020 with the intention of understanding the complexities affecting the issue further and how improvements can be made.

After significant consideration of the evidence, followed by review and challenge, governors agreed to endorse the assessments across all four CIF criteria.

The Committee agreed to recommend the College SAR 2018/2019 to the Board for approval

Clerk

The Quality Improvement Plan for 2019/20 was received and considered. The Vice Principal Performance highlighted the key areas for consideration.

Governors requested reassurance that the College is preparing for the new EIF. It was noted that new style learning walks were welcomed by staff and there has been an increased engagement with students to enable them to gain confidence in discussing the content and purpose of the courses they are studying.

The Committee agreed to recommend the College QIP 2019/2020 to the Board for approval Clerk

- 5.4 Balance score card including targets for 2019/2020
The balanced score card and proposed targets for 2019/2020 were received and considered by the Committee.

The Vice Principal Performance explained that the targets evolved from meetings with faculty heads and covered the areas of Progression, Foundation English and Maths, Success Rates and Distance Travelled/Value Added.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposed targets

6. Risk Management

- 6.1 Risk Register
The Risk Register was received by the Committee and the reduction in the risk rating for Safeguarding/Prevent to 'medium' was noted. The Committee was also made aware that the Business Services Committee had raised a new risk relating to the disruption likely to be caused by the impending building works.

There was a discussion around the Deep Dive process and whether this should remain with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee or become the responsibility of the relevant Committees. It was noted that the Deep Dive evolved as an independent review by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of how high risk areas are being monitored. It was agreed that there would be further discussion at the Board Residential. Clerk

The Committee noted the risk register

- 6.2 Emerging Risks
The Committee considered any additional risks that had emerged from the discussion.

The Committee did not propose any additional risks

7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

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

- 7.1 Safeguarding meeting minutes – 4 October 2019
- 7.2 EDBV meeting minutes – 4 October 2019
- 7.3 HR Annual Report
- 7.4 Items to take to Board were agreed as: Safeguarding Annual Report, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, QIP 2018/2019, QIP and SAR 2019/2020, balance score card targets 2019/2020 and the letter from the Office for Students.
- 7.5 Items for the next meeting
The Committee reviewed the cycle of business for the 3 February 2020 meeting and carried forward a previously agreed additional item “how learners are reflecting on their progress against behaviour, skills and knowledge targets”.

8. **Dates of Next meetings**

Monday 3 February 2020

Monday 23 March 2020

Monday 22 June 2020