

## EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

### QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

#### Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2 October 2023 in the Boardroom, the Tower Building, Hele Road, Exeter

<b>Present</b>	Sue Clarke	Chair
<i>From item 4</i>	Tim Quine	Vice Chair
	John Laramy	Principal/CEO
	Bindu Arjoon	
	Pamela DeGregorio	
	Ashish Ghadiali	Co-opted
	Vicki Roberts	
	Lindsay Skinner	
<b>Apologies</b>	None	
<b>Observers</b>	None	
<b>In Attendance</b>	Jade Otty	Vice Principal
<i>For item 6 only</i>	Lisa Smith	Assistant Principal
<i>For item 5.1 only</i>	Dee Rowett	Director of Teaching, Learning and Development
<i>For item 5.2 &amp; 5.3</i>	Ross Morshead	Director of Curriculum Development
	Alison Layton-Hill	Head of Governance

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting and extended a particular welcome to Lindsay Skinner and Ashish Ghadiali to their first committee meeting. It was noted that a new FE student governor, Ayomide Okesola had been elected on Friday and hopefully there will be a new HE student governor joining the committee in the near future.

No apologies or declarations of interest were received.

2. **Minutes**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2023 as circulated, were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 Support to refugees

The Committee received an update in terms of the progress of the young refugees residing at a nearby hotel, who had enrolled at the College during the summer term. It was pleasing to note that all 16-18 year olds are still attending college and half had been entered for GCSE exams. Almost all had achieved a grade 4 or above for their GCSE English and Maths and the

College had made exceptions where required to enable all learners to join a level 3 course.

- 3.2 Committee self-evaluation update  
The Committee reviewed the narrative prepared by the Head of Governance following the self-assessment discussion at the previous meeting.

**The Committee agreed the proposed self-evaluation**

**HofG**

4. **Quality Assurance**

4.1 Emerging Exeter College results 2023

The Committee received the report and noted the positive headline results across all areas of provision. The report included data covering five years, instead of the usual three, due to the extraordinary Covid years. The current national average comparison data will not be available until January 2024, however the College had performed well against the previous year's national average rates. Early national benchmarks indicate FE colleges performed less well at A level than other providers but Exeter College has bucked this trend.

Considering the significant improvement for Level 1 courses, governors questioned what the College had done to achieve this. The College had moved away from using an alternative curriculum for maths and English and learners who may have previously taken functional skills had embraced engaging with GCSEs. It was of particular note that a high number of foundation learning students had achieved a GCSE grade 4 or above.

The Committee reflected its previous decision to continue with AS exams and was encouraged by the results of that decision. Where available the AS model will continue as it would only be replaced with rigorous internal mock exams which would significantly increase staff workload. External verification is also motivating to learners.

Governors questioned the relatively low numbers on the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme and noted that the College intends to reinvigorate the curriculum and rebrand the messaging around the offer. The College is the only provider in Devon that offers the IB.

The Committee challenged the retention data for T level learners which appeared to be low. Some learners had been offered jobs and some had changed courses due to the restrictions on achieving high grades based on performance in year one. The Committee requested additional data to evaluate reasons for drop out. Governors asked how, given the national uncertainty, the College can provide parents and students with the confidence that T Levels are a positive choice. The College is recruiting with integrity and the T level numbers have been contained in certain areas. The Committee questioned whether learners were able to secure placements. It was confirmed that industry placements had been

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challenging in digital, as this industry had not returned to working face to face which is a requirement for the T Level qualification.

The Committee received the positive UCAS placement data and although nationally fewer students were gaining their first choice, this was not the experience at Exeter College. The top universities that College learners progressed to were UWE, Exeter and Cardiff.

Apprenticeships retention continues to be challenging, although the College is significantly ahead of the low national average of 51%. The College is considering lowering its self-assessment in this area to 'good'.

The Committee extended its congratulations and thanks to all staff and students. Governors were reassured that the College is addressing areas where it wishes to see improvements.

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

#### 4.2 Intensive Care Update

The Committee received the report and noted the subjects that had been supported through the Intensive Care programme. Two subjects had made sufficient improvement, however the third requires a further year of support.

Governors considered subjects that the leadership team had identified as requiring additional support through the programme for the coming year.

### **The Committee supported the intensive care programme for 2023/2024**

#### 4.3 Student Recruitment update

The Principal/CEO gave an oral update and the Committee was pleased to note the positive recruitment for the 2023/2024 academic year.

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

*Lisa Smith, Assistant Principal joined the meeting*

#### 4.4 Residential Accommodation Ofsted report

The Committee received the report and noted that the residential inspection had been carried out under the social care framework. The College had been awarded a 'good' grade. Most issues raised were around compliance and the action plan had picked up on those.

The Committee requested that the College remains mindful of changes to the social care framework as well as the education framework.

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

*Dee Rowett, Director of Teaching, Learning and Development joined the meeting*

## 5. **Teaching, Learning and Curriculum**

### 5.1 Careers update

The Committee received the report and noted the objectives as: 1. Review the careers strategy 2. Identify a lead governor for careers 3. Give some additional focus to careers for EHCP learners. The Committee requested sight of the draft Careers Strategy.

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Governors raised the need to ensure that the careers model is fit for purpose, that there is positive communication with stakeholders and employers and to check what the learners want from the service.

The Committee requested assurance that students are not missing out on careers advice. Reassurance was given that discussions are held in tutorials and that tutors are familiar with the Future Steps service. Clarification was given to the role of Next Steps South-West.

Governors were asked to consider taking up the role of lead governor for careers.

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

*Ross Morshead, Director for Curriculum Development joined the meeting*

### 5.2 Catch-up funding – 2022/23 outcomes and 2023/24 approach

The Committee received the report and noted how the fund had been used positively to support low prior attaining and disadvantaged learners with a focus on the disruption caused by Covid. The allocation for 2023/2024, which will be the final year, will focus on early intervention.

Governors noted that disadvantaged learners had not fully engaged with the programme and some had not taken up their full entitlement. The College will be targeting these learners early to ensure they benefit from the funding.

The Committee challenged whether activities reported as being provided by catch-up funding would be mainstream activities in any event. In 2022/2023, there had been more of a focus on maths and English, however the senior leadership team will evaluate whether activities can become mainstream or identified separately.

The Committee was pleased to note that foundation learners were receiving Haven Banks support.

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

### 5.3 External and Internal Verification update 2022/2023

The Committee received the positive report and noted the verification and moderation activity over the last academic year. The College had performed well, was deemed low risk and had not been subject to any sanctions or blocks.

The Committee was informed that there was a potential issue where BTEC qualifications had been reformed and whether certain ranges of units were permissible. However, no challenge had been received from the awarding body and all ranges had been double checked for the current academic year.

**The Committee noted the report**

*Lisa Smith, Assistant Principal joined the meeting*

- 6. **EDI Annual Report and Action Plan** (including a high needs update)  
 The Committee considered the report as circulated and noted the progress against the action plan. The College intends to give a greater focus on disadvantaged learners and to ensure that students are using their allocated bursary. It was confirmed that where bursary is not spent it can be rolled over. Attendance was noted again as an area where improvement is required. The EDI action plan will be considered in more detail at the EDI Steering Group meeting.

The Committee requested that a report detailing the characteristics of the college population is brought to the next meeting.

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**The Committee noted the report**

- 7. **Responsiveness**

- 7.1 Stakeholder Feedback report

The Committee received the report which, in response to governor challenge, now included a more detailed breakdown of complaints previously categorised as 'other'.

Governors requested some data to provide assurance related to the timeliness of responding to complaints ie. if the College is complying with its published timescales.

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**The Committee noted the report**

- 8. **Risk Register and Emerging Risks**

The Committee considered the risk register and noted amendments since the previous meeting. The Committee requested that only the risks allocated to the Quality and Standards Committee are tabled at future meetings.

**HofG**

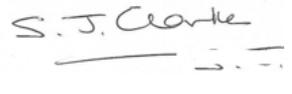
**The Committee noted the risks**

- 9. **Future Meetings**

- 9.1 Items to take to Board were agreed as:
  - Emerging Results
  - Catch-up funding
  - Feedback report
  - EDI Annual report and action plan
- 9.2 Items for the next meeting  
The Committee noted the cycle of business
- 9.3 Dates of future meetings
  - Monday 4 December 2023
  - Monday 11 March 2024
  - Monday 24 June 2024

10. **Minutes/reports for information**

- 10.1 Safeguarding update  
The Committee Chair highlighted the issues raised in the safeguarding update.
- 10.2 Safeguarding minutes

Signed by the Chair 

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023