

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting on Monday 11 March 2024 held remotely via Zoom

Present	Tim Quine Bindu Arjoon Pamela DeGregorio Laura Eggins Ashish Ghadiali John Laramy Ayo Okesola Vicki Roberts Lindsay Skinner	Vice Chair Co-opted
Apologies	Sue Clarke	Chair
Observers	Fiona Chalk	The Board Advisor
In Attendance	Jade Otty Rob Bosworth <i>Items 4, 5 and 6</i> Lisa Smith <i>Item 7.1 only</i> Dee Rowett <i>Item 7.2 only</i> Ross Morshead Alison Layton-Hill	Vice Principal Deputy CEO Assistant Principal Director of Teaching, Learning and Development Director of Curriculum Development Head of Governance

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

The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting and extended a particular welcome to Fiona Chalk who was observing the meeting.

Apologies were received from Sue Clarke and there were no declarations of interest received.
2. **Minutes**
 - 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2023 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
3. **Matters arising**
 - 3.1 Complaint update
The Committee received the report outlining the timeliness of responding to complaints. It was noted that although response times were not as the College would have wished during 2022/2023, there had been a significant

improvement following a thorough review of the feedback administrative and reporting process.

The Committee noted the assurance and requested that timeliness of response is included in the annual report **HofG**

3.2 Quality and Resources Review Feedback

The Principal/CEO updated the Committee following the recent quality and resources cycle of assurance meetings with faculties. The process had been positive although concerns related to space were raised, which may impact the College's ability to offer the same level of commercial courses into the future.

The Committee acknowledged the growth in learners and requested oversight and understanding of the impact of reducing courses in advance.

The Committee agreed to receive an update related to potentially reducing commercial courses as a matter arising to the next meeting **JL**

Lisa Smith, Assistant Principal joined the meeting

4. Policies

4.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy

The Assistant Principal advised that the existing EDI policy had been extended pending the final DfE guidance related to gender questioning children. The consultation closed on 12 March 2024 and a revised policy will be considered by governors at the June 2023 Quality and Standards meeting.

The Committee noted that the College had been considering government requirements and undertaking benchmarking against best practice in terms of ensuring it has the most impactful and meaningful EDI agenda. Updated advice suggested that publishing a statement of EDI intent and ethos would be more meaningful for stakeholders rather than a legalistic policy. It was proposed that this option is discussed at the EDI steering group, including anonymised case studies, and a report is received by the Committee at its next meeting.

Governors challenged the rationale for not publishing the full policy on the website in addition to a statement of intent and ethos. It was advised that the policy merely reflects the legal requirements and might detract from the purpose, intention and spirit of the College's approach to EDI in the context of its learners.

The Committee sought and received assurance that learners will be able to contribute to the statement of intent.

The Committee agreed:

- a) that the concept of a statement of intent would be discussed by the EDI Steering Group** **LS**
- b) that a report will be received by the Committee at its next meeting on 24 June 2024** **LS**

4.2 Admissions policy

The Committee received the updated admissions policy and noted the amendments related to the increasing number of learners joining the college from alternative provision or from reduced timetabled learning.

The importance of collaborating with external agencies to ensure clarity of the requirements of individual learners and that they are well prepared for transition was accepted.

The Committee approved the Admissions policy

Lindsay Skinner joined the meeting

5. Safeguarding

5.1 Safeguarding update (risk management) including filtering and monitoring compliance

At the previous meeting governors noted the safeguarding challenges facing colleges nationally and that the College's residual risk related to safeguarding had remained high for some time. The Committee received a presentation outlining the College's approach to mitigating the identified risks.

Governors noted that the mandatory training had been revised and relaunched, the crisis protocol had been relaunched and the readiness to study policy had been updated. A more robust and widened staffing structure had been implemented to increase the capacity and visibility of the safeguarding team across all college campuses. The College also confirmed that it had implemented a new bespoke reporting system to meet the Keeping Children Safe In Education compliance requirements.

In response to question, it was confirmed that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had asked the Committee to evaluate the risk to gain additional assurance. The Committee acknowledged that the risk score had reduced but despite mitigating actions, the risk remained high. The new structure may reduce the risk further, however safeguarding demands continue to increase.

The Committee agreed that it had received assurance from the report

6. **EHCP/High Needs**

6.1 High Needs strategy

The Committee received a presentation related to improving high needs provision both at the College, locally and regionally.

The increase in learners with EHCPs, a self-diagnosis, electively home educated or from alternative provision was noted. The Committee was informed of the challenges new learners who are not college read bring. The positive work undertaken with the County Council was explained including the need for specialist space.

The Committee noted the changes being made to the faculty of Foundation Learning and Support to meet growing need, which will take effect from September 2024. The Committee embraced the ethos of the College's approach to inclusion but noted the need for funding.

The Committee raised that schools were completing EHCPs at that time and encouraged the College to maximise communication with schools where possible.

The Committee was assured of the College's strategic direction

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

7. **Teaching, Learning and Curriculum**

7.1 Careers Strategy

The Committee received the presentation and noted the College's progress against statutory guidance. Governors sought reassurance that accessibility to careers events was maximised for all learners.

Touchpoints for monitoring the evolution of the careers strategy and subsequent annual review were discussed.

The Committee agreed to receive the final careers strategy at its meeting on 24 June 2024

DR

Ross Morshead, Director of Curriculum Development and Experience joined the meeting

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

The Committee received the report and noted how the catch-up funding had been used to support low prior attaining and disadvantaged learners and the positive impact on their learning. The Committee was pleased to note a significant improvement in retention.

It was explained that catch up funding would not continue but may be replaced by more targeted funding for GCSE English and maths. The Committee was disappointed that the funding would cease but noted the College's intention to make every effort to retain small group intervention.

The Chair explained how students from the University of Exeter were supporting GCSE maths and English in schools and suggested that there may be the opportunity to extend this to the College.

The Committee thanked the Director of Curriculum Development and Experience and was assured that the College would endeavour to continue the work that had been funded from catch-up funding

8. **Quality Assurance**

8.1 Intensive Care Progress update

The Committee received the report and noted the progress made in the three curriculum areas that were receiving additional support.

Retention data, sequencing of the curriculum and securing industry placements, where required, had all had a positive impact.

The Committee was assured that the intensive care process was working well

9. **Responsiveness**

9.1 Accountability Agreement

The Committee received the draft 2024/2025 Accountability Agreement for consideration prior to approval at the Board meeting in April 2024. The Accountability Agreement is the College's statement to the DfE to justify receipt of DfE funding.

The Committee considered the outcomes of the success measures and targets for the previous year and agreed those for 2024/2025.

Governors questioned the sequencing of the Annual Strategic Conversation and the Accountability Agreement alignment and coherence.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Accountability Agreement to the Board for approval

HofG

10. **Risk Register and Emerging Risks**

Governors considered the risk register.

The Committee did not raise any additional risks to add to the register.

11. **Future Meetings**

11.1 Items to take to Board were agreed as:

- Safeguarding update
- High Needs strategy
- Careers strategy
- Catch-up funding
- Accountability Agreement

11.2 Items for the next meeting

The Committee reviewed the cycle of business for the meeting on 24 June 2024.

11.3 Dates of future meetings

- Monday 24 June 2024

12. **Minutes/reports for information**

12.1 QIP Progress update

12.2 Retention and Attendance

12.3 Safeguarding bulletin

Signed by the Chair: *Tim Quine*

Dated: 24th June 2024