

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 24 June 2024 via Zoom

Present	Sue Clarke	Chair
<i>From item</i>	Tim Quine	Vice Chair
	John Laramy	Principal/CEO
	Bindu Arjoon	
	Pamela DeGregorio	
	Laura Eggins	
	Ashish Ghadiali	Co-opted
	Antony Hart	
	Ayomide Okesola	
	Vicki Roberts	
	Lindsay Skinner	
Apologies	None	
Observers	None	
In Attendance	Jade Otty	Vice Principal
<i>Item 7.2 only</i>	Gemma Noble	Executive Director of People and Organisational Development
<i>Item 4 and 5 only</i>	Dee Rowett	Director of Teaching, Learning and Development
<i>Item 6.1 and 6.2 only</i>	Lucinda Sanders	Director of Adult and HE
	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 Antony Hart to his first committee meeting.

 The Chair advised that this would be Ayo and Laura's final committee meeting and thanked them for bringing their lived experience and positive challenge. On behalf of the Committee, she wished them well for their future. Jade Otty announced that Ayo had been awarded runner up in the category of governance at the Sixth Form Colleges Association awards. The Committee warmly congratulated Ayo for the well-deserved recognition.

 There were no declarations of interest received.
2. **Minutes**
- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2024, as circulated, were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.
3. **Matters arising**
- 3.1 Curriculum offer and space challenge

The Vice Principal provided information related to proposed courses to be paused, due to the challenge of space. Recruitment had been low to each course and students affected have secured a place on other similar courses. The Committee acknowledged the dynamic situation and requested a further update to the next meeting.

3.2 High Needs Provision

The Vice Principal gave an update to advise governors that the College had been working to secure additional space on a three year lease for high needs learners who are not college ready. The building is in a city centre location with easy access by public transport.

3.3 Quality and Resources Review update

The Principal/CEO updated the Committee following the recent quality and resources reviews and the Committee noted that the sessions had been very positive.

Student recruitment was currently positive and areas that had grown significantly were in faculties located outside of the city centre. There may be some pressure on space in Victoria House, however with the programmes that had been paused, current accommodation should meet need. Quality had demonstrated real distance travelled and 12 out of 14 faculties had the potential to be outstanding.

3.4 Safeguarding

The Chair raised that a safeguarding update was not requested for this meeting, however she had been into college to view the filtering and monitoring software. There was full confidence in the College's compliance.

Dee Rowett joined the meeting for items 4.1, 5.1 and 5.2

4. Responsiveness

4.1 Student On Course Teaching and Learning Survey Outcomes

The Committee received the report and noted the good return rate, helpful data and qualitative feedback. The Chair commented that the report was clear, open and reflective. The Committee discussed the report and it was confirmed that the content will contribute to staff CPD in the coming year.

The positive feedback on the role of the student voice was noted. The Committee sought reassurance related to some areas where there had been a slight decrease in satisfaction. It was confirmed that improving consistency in tutorials working closely with Area Tutorial Managers, supporting confidence in feedback methodologies and promoting more interactive teaching were priorities.

Governors questioned whether the College was considering the use of AI in terms of managing teacher workload. It was confirmed that the College is exploring the use of AI with a focus on quality and reliability.

The Committee was advised of a new role within the Department for Teaching, Learning and Development. The Head of Teacher Advancement, is responsible for the delivery and monitoring of CPD and learner engagement.

The Committee raised that the apprenticeship return rate was lower than other areas but responses received expressed a high satisfaction rate. It was acknowledged that the period of time the survey remains open for will be extended to ensure full inclusion of those learners on apprenticeship programmes.

The Committee gained assurance from the report

5. Teaching and Learning

- 5.1 Department for Teaching, Learning and Development Annual Report
The Committee received a presentation outlining the broad work of TLD: EXtra, Learner Voice, Careers Advice and Guidance, Personal Development and Tutorial and supporting teaching and learning. Areas of future focus will be the stability of staffing, EXtra Wellbeing, learner experience related to space issues, CPD and the implementation of the Careers Strategy.

The Committee noted the report

- 5.2 Careers Strategy
The Committee received the Careers Strategy. There were suggestions to include: a reference to a strategic commitment to the College's vulnerable learners, the tracking at tutor level and involvement of students to ensure a more student focused version is available.

The Committee received assurance that the Careers Strategy would be reviewed and refreshed by the careers steering group, as well as following the launch of the new Strategic Plan.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Careers Strategy to the Board for approval

HofG

Lucinda Sanders joined the meeting for items 6.1 and 6.2

6. Quality Assurance

- 6.1 HE Student Voice
The Committee received the presentation and noted the mechanisms available to capture and evaluate the student voice. It was noted that the national survey results would be available in July 2024.

Governors noted that overall satisfaction had increased by 2% to 89%. Strengths were noted as quality of teaching, learning opportunities and academic support. Areas for development included access to learning resource centres, marking and assessment. A key action to promote the quality of HE and its line of sight to high level skilled jobs was identified.

The Committee was advised that student representatives attend programme monitoring meetings where they feedback on behalf of their peers twice each year. There are also class visits and digital forms can be completed at any time during the course. There was some question as to how effective the process works in practice and further opportunities to provide feedback would be considered.

Governors raised the importance of comparing published data with appropriate comparator groups.

The Committee noted the assurance provided by the report

6.2 Access and Participation Plan

The Director of Adult and HE advised the Committee that the College's Access and Participation Plan must be submitted to the OfS by 1 October 2024 and outlined that SLT will approve the submission and the final will be shared with the Committee on 30 September 2024.

The submission must include how the College will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from HE. There is a focus on differential outcomes and the evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions.

Sue Clarke and Ashish Ghadiali expressed their support with providing some oversight of the process.

The Committee noted the report

6.3 Intensive Care Progress update

The Committee noted that two out of the three courses receiving additional support have significantly improved. One course was struggling with retention in year 1 and it was acknowledged that more work could be done to support learner resilience and timely submission of assignments.

The Committee was assured by the report

6.4 Retention and Attendance update

The Committee received the report and noted that attendance remains a challenge nationally. The College is putting focused effort into improving attendance, despite it tracking in excess of the FE sector benchmark. Retention data is tracking positive in almost all areas.

Governors discussed the impact of mental health on attendance and noted that the wellbeing service will move to Teaching Learning and Development under the EXtra provision. Work will be undertaken to promote positivity among learners about coming to College. The Committee sought assurance as to how the College will support those learners who have complex mental health conditions that cannot be ameliorated by engaging with enrichment and courses. The College provides a counselling service and invests in

professional teachers to be personal tutors so that learners can build a trusting relationship. The importance of recognising what is a safeguarding issue as opposed to a wellbeing issue was raised, as well as the need to reassure tutors.

It was agreed that the Committee would receive a wellbeing update in the next academic year.

The Committee noted the report

- 6.5 QIP Progress
The Committee received the report and noted the positive overall progress.

The Committee noted the report

7. Policies

7.1 EDI Statement of Intent

The Committee was reminded that the College had paused its review of the EDI policy pending the publication of the government's consultation on gender questioning. The EDI statement of intent was considered at the EDI Steering Group with a view to bringing a completed draft statement to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee was assured that the life of the existing policy can be extended.

The Committee agreed to receive the final draft Statement of Intent to its next meeting LS

7.2 HR Policies

The Committee received the following updated HR policies and the Executive Director of People and Organisational Development explained the changes:

- Grievance
- Disciplinary
- Flexible Working

It was confirmed that any grievance received from a group would follow the same process as for an individual and would be dealt with collectively.

The Committee agreed to approve all of the above HR policies

8. Risk Management

8.1 Risk Register

The Committee received the risk register that had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 10 June 2024.

The Committee questioned why the risk relating to safeguarding remains high despite mitigations. It was confirmed that the resource associated with safeguarding had more than doubled, however not all posts had been

recruited to. When the new structure is firm, the risk will be revisited with a view to reducing the status.

The Committee noted the risk register and did not propose any additional risks

9. Future Meetings

9.1 Items to take to Board were agreed as:

- TLD annual report
- Careers strategy
- Student on course survey feedback
- HE Learner Voice
- Intensive Care progress
- HR Policies

9.2 Items for the next meeting

The Committee reviewed the cycle of business for the meeting on 30 September 2024

9.3 Date of future meetings:

- Monday 30 September 2024
- Monday 2 December 2024
- Monday 3 March 2025
- Monday 23 June 2025

10. Minutes/reports for information

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

- 10.1 Safeguarding and Prevent steering group minutes
- 10.2 EDI steering group minutes

Signed by the Chair:



Dated: 30th September 2024