

**Minutes of the Learning and Quality Committee meeting held on 5th March 2019 4:30pm
CRC, Cambridge campus**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

- Present** Heather Du Quesnay (Chair)
 Vernice Key
 Mark Robertson
 Nauris Kalniņš
 Joseph Winters
 Teresa van Ruth
 Ian Harvey
 Mike Coles
- In attendance** Marcus Doyle, Michelle Dowse, Corrin Hoyes
- Clerk** Emily Baldwin

1. General		
1.1 1.2	Declarations of Interest Apologies for absence	<p>There were apologies for absence from Terry Butcher and Barry Fyfield.</p> <p>Teresa van Ruth, new Staff Governor, was welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>M Robertson gave an update on interim arrangements in light of the departure of the Deputy Principal. He gave assurance that arrangements were working well in the interim; he would report back when progress had been made with a permanent appointment.</p>
1.3	Minutes of the meeting held on 13 th November 2018	<p>The minutes of the meeting of 13th November 2018 were agreed.</p> <p>In response to an action, M Dowse confirmed that the College had secured a small number of learners from a local training provider that had gone bankrupt.</p>
1.4	Demonstration of the VLE	<p>Christine Helme and Ian Sparke were welcomed to the meeting in order to give Governors a demonstration of the VLE. They introduced Governors to 6 key areas of the VLE focused on teaching staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Teacher Takeaway toolkit • an area for professional learning communities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-learning and VLE • quality resources • personal tutor resources • e-learning guide. <p><i>V Key joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>They explained that development of the VLE was being carried out in conjunction with teaching staff. Governors asked how far teachers were engaged with the toolkit. C Hoyes explained a variety of ways that teachers were encouraged to use it and how staff were engaged from its inception and consulted over what they wanted. Staff usage was monitored on the site.</p> <p>It was an ongoing project, and the virtual staffroom was growing in order to build a sense of community. There was improved visibility of the course materials and there was now one page for each course, which was a real improvement on the previous system. The VLE was now embedded in teaching training, staff induction and appraisal processes. The College was undertaking a range of initiatives to encourage use of the VLE. It was noted that some staff members were more resistant than others to using the VLE; however, it was designed as a general introduction to sharing best practice electronically to encourage take-up. Governors supported this approach and said it was important to remain consistent in developing the system further.</p> <p>Governors asked at what point it was appropriate to monitor the effectiveness of the VLE. It was noted that there was an e-learning implementation plan and progress against the plan was monitored annually at L&Q Committee meetings: the VLE would be included in these reports. It was important to capture the views of staff who were not engaged with the VLE in order to make it as accessible as possible and to ensure the VLE represented value for money.</p> <p><i>Christine Helme and Ian Sparke were thanked for their demonstration and left the meeting.</i></p>
2. Strategic Items		
2.1	Termly Curriculum and Quality Performance Update	<p>C Hoyes introduced the termly curriculum and quality report.</p> <p>Governors expressed disappointment at the attendance levels, particularly for English and Maths, and robustly challenged management to explain why the promised improvements had not been forthcoming. The Principal explained that there were a number of factors, some of which were related to timetabling problems at the start of the year which had particularly affected Maths and English. Students were now receiving individual letters regarding their attendance and weekly attendance reports were now in place for Maths and English. The Principal was personally overseeing meetings to ensure the timetabling issues were not repeated. The Principal outlined the disciplinary procedure for students who did not attend, including not allowing students to progress to the next level if their attendance did not improve.</p>

		<p>M Cole asked if Maths and English could be more fully integrated into the curriculum. The Principal explained the College was required to have separate classes for English and Maths in order to receive the funding. He underlined that although the College target had not been met, the College remained above the national average for attendance. Student services were involved with students who had lower attendance. Governors expressed frustration that it was difficult to distinguish between data and recording issues, and actual attendance of English and Maths.</p> <p>Governors noted the issues with timetabling and underlined the importance of not repeating the same mistake next year. The Principal said that a different approach to the organisation of Maths and English classes was being taken for next year with students being grouped in their curriculum areas for Maths and English. He assured Governors that all timetabling would be completed by May.</p> <p>Governors supported the actions being taken, but stressed the importance of ensuring the timetabling errors did not happen again and that the current data issues were resolved as quickly as possible. They asked that management continue to monitor the matter closely and report back to the next Committee.</p> <p>A list of qualifications with low achievement rates were included in the papers. 31 programmes had been underachieving for two years, of which half had improved in the second year. The affected courses were monitored closely with monitoring meetings taking place twice a term.</p> <p>Retention rates had improved, which Governors welcomed.</p> <p>Governors also noted the DfE Performance table scores for 2017/18, which includes data on progress (value added) measures. As forecast, the College scores had improved for Level 2. Level 3 scores were lower, which was largely due to the limited number of qualifications in scope delivered by the College. The score for 'Level 3 other' demonstrated improved value added.</p> <p>The Principal indicated that the College was looking at introducing more courses that acted as pre-entry into vocational areas.</p> <p>The Committee noted the revised targets which had also been presented to Corporation. Where targets had not been met in the post-merger year, these had been carried over.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>
2.2	Quality Improvement Plan	C Hoyes introduced the Quality Improvement Plan which identified key areas for improvement. The Plan was updated regularly to monitor progress. It also was mapped against statements in the Ofsted reports of outstanding colleges.

		<p>Governors noted that apprenticeship outcomes were still affected by the legacy of Decorus and would be until 2019/20.</p> <p>Governors challenged management over actions that were needed to support students at a higher level with a declared disability. The College had introduced a revised learning support strategy, which had clearer actions to support such students.</p> <p>The College had also undertaken work on improving the training for tutors, with training focused on the group tutorial and the role of the tutor.</p> <p>Staff turnover was lower than the national average, and slightly below the College's KPI. The biggest challenge in staff turnover was English and Maths tutors due to the pay differential with secondary schools.</p> <p>The Committee received the report.</p> <p><i>Kate Da Costa joined the meeting.</i></p>
2.3	Teaching and learning risks	<p>The Committee noted the latest version of the Risks Register.</p> <p>They particularly noted that apprenticeships remained a major red risk for the College. This was due to a lower than planned number of apprenticeship starts, as well as concerns over success rates. The College was continuing to measure its satisfaction with employers and was aiming for this to continue to improve.</p> <p>The risks around English and Maths were also noted. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to retain the RAG ratings as proposed.</p> <p>The Committee received the report.</p>
2.4	Planning for T-levels	<p>Kate da Costa introduced the paper on T-levels.</p> <p>The College had made an application to bid for two T-Levels - digital business services and education & childcare. The decision had been made based on the College's existing track record and expertise in both areas. Digital services was also a priority for the Combined Authority.</p> <p>There was a risk around the level of funding that might be available for the roll-out of T-levels. The College had not chosen to apply for those qualifications that might require considerable capital resources.</p> <p>The Childcare T-level would replace the College's existing qualification in full as it was very similar in scope.</p> <p>Governors asked what marketing would be carried out for T-levels. K da Costa indicated this would be done nearer the time of roll-out and would aim to link into</p>

		<p>national campaigns. Parents were a critical target audience. Governors advised ensuring schools were well informed to give appropriate advice to pupils.</p> <p>It was noted that curriculum planning was now in place for 2 years ahead on a rolling programme.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend the approach on T-levels to Corporation.</p>
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Student involvement strategy</p>	<p>M Dowse introduced the Student Involvement Strategy.</p> <p>The strategy had been revised with some minor changes. Management had been very pleased with the progress made in the year. Recruiting student union representatives earlier in the year had had a good impact. There was now a more formal structure which enabled a strong student voice to be heard.</p> <p>The areas for improvement included enhancing the feedback from work based learning and adult learners, although it was acknowledged that progress had been made in this area which could be particularly challenging as many of the students were part-time or offsite. Although student involvement had improved, communication did not always cascade through the whole college.</p> <p>Student governors confirmed that they felt that student involvement had improved, with much better quality of engagement from students. The Student Liaison Committee was the most effective forum for gathering students' views, but there needed to be more contact with department representatives to ensure there was effective two-way communication.</p> <p>Governors asked if there were formal processes for the Student Union to communicate to the rest of the student body. It was noted that there was a president blog and college clinics. However, communicating to the whole of the student body was an area for potential improvement.</p> <p>Governors asked the extent to which the student body was used to help tackle some of the major college issues. It was confirmed that the forum had been used to tackle issues such as feeling safe in the college. It was suggested that it would be worth exploring whether it could be used to help tackle broader issues such as student attendance.</p> <p>Governors noted that the way in which student involvement had improved at the College was impressive and thanked the staff and students involved for helping to bring about such progress.</p> <p>The Clerk agreed to invite link governors to department board meetings.</p> <p>The Committee received the report.</p>

2.6	Apprenticeship improvement plan	<p>C Hoyes introduced the Apprenticeship Improvement Plan. There were two elements to the plan, delivery and customer journey. The latter was monitored by the Commercial Strategy Committee.</p> <p>The overall achievement rate for apprentices for 18-19 was 48.7%, including Decorus. The College was currently forecasting that this would increase to 62% in the current year, rising to 75.1% for internal delivery. This represented a 5% improvement on last year. Apprenticeships finished at different points in the year, so there was no single point in time when the data could be easily collected as with school exams.</p> <p>Governors asked if the strategy to complete some Maths and English courses before the apprenticeship started had worked. The Principal confirmed it had done in some areas, but was not always suitable for everyone such as those with English as a second language. It was important to manage employer expectations.</p> <p>The Principal confirmed that the College had a full complement of assessors, but there remained some vacancies for lecturers.</p> <p>The Committee <u>received</u> the report.</p>
2.7	Annual destinations report 2017/18	<p>C Hoyes presented the Annual Destinations Report 2017/18.</p> <p>Of the 87% of leavers with a known destination, 96% had a positive destination to work or further training, which was a 1% increase on the previous year. The College had significantly increased the number of leavers with a known destination at Huntingdon campus. The number of students progressing to HE has gone up significantly.</p> <p>Governors agreed that this was very promising data, and the high percentage of leavers progressing should be used extensively in marketing. They advised that case studies could be used within the College.</p> <p>The Committee <u>received</u> the report.</p>
2.8	Ofsted position paper	<p>C Hoyes presented the Ofsted position paper. The paper had been developed in light of an expected monitoring visit to Huntingdon campus.</p> <p>The paper gave examples of challenge at Corporation meetings, and would be updated regularly.</p> <p>It was noted that Corporation had focused more on monitoring value-added, and welcomed the value-added strategy which was included in the papers. There had been a change in culture at the College and staff had higher aspirations for students progressing. Attendance at Huntingdon had also significantly improved.</p>

		The Committee <u>received</u> the report.
3. Matters for information		
3.1	Students' Success Stories	The Committee noted and welcomed the Student and College Success Stories. They advised that the College developed the alumni network further in order to more systematically track students who had left the College.
4. Committee business		
4.1	Any other business	There was no other business.
4.2	Self-assessment of Governors' Performance	Committee members felt there had been a very focused, robust and challenging debate. It had been useful to have the opportunity to see the VLE even though the demonstration had been curtailed due to timings and a need to discuss other matters. It would be useful to have a demonstration of Pro-Monitor in due course.

Summary of Actions

Actions from Committee meeting				
2.4	Planning for T-levels	The Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend the approach on T-levels to Corporation.	Chair	March 2019
2.5	Student involvement strategy	The Clerk agreed to invite link governors to department board meetings.	E Baldwin	May 2019

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 7:00 pm.

Signed

Chair