

Minutes of the Learning and Quality Committee meeting held on 13th November 2018
4:30pm
CRC, Cambridge campus

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present Heather Du Quesnay (Chair)
 Vernice Key
 Mark Robertson
 Nauris Kalniņš
 Barry Fyfield
 Ian Harvey
 Tim Arthur

In attendance Marcus Doyle, Michelle Dowse, Corrin Hoyes, Trudie McGuinness

Clerk Emily Baldwin

1. General		
1.1	Declarations of Interest	There were apologies for absence from Terry Butcher, Michael Cole and Joseph Winters.
1.2	Apologies for absence	Tim Arthur, Governor was welcomed to the meeting.
1.3	Minutes of the meeting held on 7 th June 2018	The minutes of the meeting of 7 th June 2018 were agreed. The action to have a demonstration of the VLE was carried over.
2. Strategic Items		
2.1	Safeguarding Annual Report	T McGuinness introduced the safeguarding and child protection report for 2017/18. She explained that there 550 referrals in 2017/18, a slight reduction on 2016/17. This trend reflected the staff training that had been carried out to remind staff to refer some cases to the Welfare team, especially for early help and mental health support.

The number of referrals was fairly evenly split by gender. There was a notable reduction in the number of referrals aged 21 and over which had increasingly been routed towards the welfare team as appropriate.

A third of all safeguarding referrals were related to students with a disability. Governors questioned whether this was an issue which should cause concern. It was noted that this included children with an autism spectrum disorder. Governors stressed the need to make sure staff who worked with students with a declared disability were aware of the correlation with increased safeguarding referral rates and were supported to deal with these cases appropriately.

It was noted that the largest number of referrals was related to mental health. Although the number of referrals was stable, some of the issues were more serious. The College had increased the number of actions related to suicide prevention. A confidential item was taken and minuted separately. T McGuinness was asked if information was shared with other agencies and she confirmed that this was the case where appropriate and that the College worked effectively with its partners.

It was noted that the College had achieved beacon status for its work with Looked after Children. Governors asked for their thanks to be conveyed to the safeguarding team.

T McGuinness said that the team had dealt with any concerns that had arisen from or concerning staff members appropriately. It was noted that the College was implementing a new software system which would aid reporting for the next academic year. The new system would allow more detailed recording of presenting issues. Governors discussed whether the presenting issues were too numerous and whether some issues could be merged. It was noted that the team required the more nuanced reporting to support students most effectively.

Governors challenged why there had only been one disciplinary for bullying, whereas the safeguarding report showed a number of referrals. It was noted that the bullying in the safeguarding report did not necessarily take place in the College. Governors asked that the team look into this for the following year and ensure that it was recorded systematically whether the bullying took place on campus so they could correlate this with the disciplinary data in the future.

Governors asked about the College's relationship with the county council; they noted that it was very effective and the council had undertaken a full audit of the College's safeguarding services. The relationship with the youth offending service was also much improved.

Governors questioned whether the team had effective relationships with local schools as regards the exchange of information. T McGuinness confirmed that talks were given at schools before enrolment. It was noted that it was particularly challenging to get information quickly enough at enrolment. Only a minority of

		<p>schools were able to get the information to the College electronically, although this was likely to improve over the next 3-4 years.</p> <p>Governors noted that the safeguarding and child protection policy had been rewritten to take account of the Child Protection Act.</p> <p>The Committee recommended the report and updated policy to Corporation.</p> <p><i>T McGuinness left the meeting.</i></p>
2.2	Termly performance update	<p>M Doyle introduced the performance report for 17/18.</p> <p>Overall there had a slight improvement in achievement rates for 2017/18. For all ages, all levels, overall achievement had improved by 0.5% (0.7% above national average). For students aged 16-18, overall achievement had improved by 1.2% (1% above national average). The Chair noted that CRC should not be satisfied with national average as a comparator.</p> <p>There had been closer monitoring of courses deemed to be underperforming. 87 courses had been discussed and monitored at underperforming course meetings. Governors questioned whether these courses were continuing to run. M Doyle responded that while some were of these were still running, they were doing so with an amended specification. Governors stressed the importance of continuing to monitor underperforming courses.</p> <p>In terms of value-added data, this was the first year of monitoring in-year. Governors asked what the target was for value-added, and it was noted that the target was to move to positive. The latest data showed improvement, with a reported -0.04 for the majority of students on a Level 3 programme and positive value-added for level 2 (+0.42). It was noted that the official published data for Level 3 only related to 12 students who were in scope (on a BTEC Health and Social Care programme) and was likely to remain negative. Improving value-added continued to be a priority for the College.</p> <p>Overall achievement for Level 3 was down. This was partly a consequence of the standardisation of entry criteria across the campuses and the increase in the number of 2 year courses, rather than 1 year courses.</p> <p>Governors challenged management for further clarification of the reasons why all of the teaching and learning targets were not hit. It was noted there were several reasons for this, most notably the impact of the merger, with some historic underperformance from HRC. The management restructure had inevitably affected some teaching due to uncertainty while positions were filled and the lack of management continuity to ensure that staff preparation and training for new syllabuses had been carried out in a timely way.</p> <p>It was recognised that the English and Maths results were particularly disappointing. The number of students sitting English and Maths had risen</p>

		<p>dramatically over time. The biggest concern was GCSE Maths which had traditionally been high performing. It was noted that there was a decline in outcomes nationally in part due to the introduction of a new specification and some changes to boundary levels. At the College, the loss of key personnel had had a big impact. It was noted that the College had secured status as a national centre of excellence (based on its previous performance) which would provide some additional funding into maths. Governors asked whether the College was doing enough to recruit English and Maths teachers and discussed the level of qualification appropriate for teaching staff. They asked that management ensure they used all available recruitment channels, including social media. It was important for the College to conduct learning walks early in the academic year to ensure any issues with the teaching of English and Maths were picked up quickly. Governors noted that the SAR pointed to the need to ensure English and Maths were incorporated into vocational lessons so as to provide practical illustrations of the principles in a work context.</p> <p>Governors asked why attendance was still not at the College target. This was partly due to the change from progression coaches to tutors: tutors had not always understood their responsibilities in this area and needed more supervision and support. This would be clearer in 2018/19 and would also be stressed in curriculum meetings.</p> <p>The Committee <u>received</u> the report.</p>
2.3	College Self-Assessment Report 2017/18	<p>C Hoyes introduced the draft Self Assessment Report (SAR). The final SAR would be validated by a panel including an external member.</p> <p>C Hoyes explained the key strengths and weaknesses under the four categories of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and management • Teaching, learning and assessment • Personal development, behaviour and welfare • Outcomes for learners <p>Strengths included clarity of vision, governance, pace of harmonisation, high quality resources, safeguarding arrangements, overall achievement rates, HE destinations, high quality work experience and strong Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).</p> <p>Areas for improvement included apprenticeship delivery management, English and Maths, destinations at Huntingdon, attendance levels, group tutorials, support for students with disabilities at high levels and variable achievement rates on some courses.</p> <p><i>I Harvey left the meeting.</i></p>

		<p>Governors discussed achievement levels for apprenticeships at length. The achievement rate for all apprenticeships was 40.7%. Governors noted that without subcontractors, apprenticeship achievement levels increased to 67.3%. Governors said this was still not high enough and the College should be aiming to outperform the national average. They asked for clarification on the timescale for when apprenticeship achievement levels would reach the stated target. Management said this was likely to be 2019/20.</p> <p>Governors were encouraged by improvements at Huntingdon. However, they said that there were clearly still issues to do with consistency which needed to be addressed. It was also disappointing that some underperforming courses were still not improving. They asked that management continue to scrutinise such courses closely.</p> <p>Governors noted that the systems were now in place to support improvement, particularly with the roll-out of ProMonitor which would enable more accessible recording of achievement data (and targets). Governors asked for assurance that target setting was embedded across the college. Management assured Governors that this was the case.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the demands of harmonisation had inevitably affected the pace of improvement of achievement rates. They were pleased to note that achievement rates had continued to improve. It was expected that the pace of improvement would increase again in 2018/19.</p> <p>The Committee received the report, noting that the full SAR would be presented to Corporation and agreed to discuss appropriate targets at the December Corporation meeting.</p> <p><i>V Key left the meeting.</i></p>
2.4	English and Maths Action Plan 2018/19	<p>M Doyle introduced the English and Maths Action Plan. There had already been extensive discussion of English and Maths earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>Governors asked about engagement with parents on English and Maths. It was noted that English and Maths was included in student reports and would also be discussed at parent evenings.</p> <p>The Student Governor asked about communication on English and Maths requirements at enrolment, and stressed the need for clear guidance for the staff who talked to students. It was agreed he would meet M Doyle outside of the meeting to discuss further. Governors requested that an additional action on communication of English and Maths requirements be introduced into the Action Plan.</p> <p>Governors asked that achievement of English and Maths by course was scrutinised. M Doyle assured Governors that this was the case.</p>

		<p>Governors recommended that practice interviews be introduced at the College.</p> <p>Governors <u>received</u> the report.</p>
2.5	HE assurance report	<p>C Hoyes introduced the HE assurance statement.</p> <p>It was noted that Governors were required to sign a declaration that they had received and discussed a report on the academic experience of HE students together with evidence of the College's review processes.</p> <p>Governors noted the draft SAR for HE, HE Quality Improvement plan and overview of HE quality processes that had been provided at the meeting.</p> <p>On that basis, the Committee <u>recommended</u> the statement to Corporation for signature.</p>
2.6	Learner satisfaction survey	<p>C Hoyes introduced the learner satisfaction survey.</p> <p>The survey had been carried out later in the year than usual due to technical issues. As a consequence, the response rate was lower. The survey showed some declining scores compared to previous years, although learner satisfaction in Huntingdon had improved. There had been an increase in the proportion of students that understood the dangers of radicalization and extremism.</p> <p>Governors asked how the results of the survey were monitored. These were followed up through student boards. Buses and food remained the main two headline issues for students.</p> <p>Governors stressed the importance of focusing on the real issues that were necessary to help the College become outstanding. They asked for assurance that the survey was being administered correctly. C Hoyes said that they were making use of the expertise of a new staff member who had extensive experience in surveys to ensure that the wording was consistent in the questions.</p> <p>Governors questioned the results on satisfaction with the VLE. They noted that since the survey, significant improvements had been made to the VLE.</p> <p>The Student Governor also raised the issue of library resources. It was asked that this issue be looked at after the meeting.</p> <p>Governors <u>received</u> the report.</p>
2.7	Careers strategy	<p>M Dowse introduced the Careers Strategy. It identified five priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Quality • Leadership • Curriculum <p>These were built on the Gatsby benchmarks.</p> <p>It was proposed that an annual report on the careers strategy be presented to the L&Q Committee, including feedback from students and assessment against the Gatsby benchmarks.</p> <p>T Arthur asked for a copy of the College’s structured careers programme.</p> <p>It was suggested that the current governor link for Learner Experience be asked to expand her role to include the careers strategy.</p> <p>Governors asked how useful it was to use labour market information in giving career guidance. M Dowse confirmed it was useful, as well as data and feedback from employers. There were issues around delivering popular courses that did not necessarily lead to related employment (such as Media Make-up). In such cases, it was important to ensure students had transferable skills. Progression still remained strong in these areas. Labour market intelligence was vital in exploring potential new courses.</p> <p>The Committee <u>recommended</u> the Strategy to Corporation for approval.</p>
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3. Matters for information

<p>3.1</p>	<p>Apprenticeship Improvement Plan</p>	<p>M Doyle introduced the Apprenticeship Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Governors discussed the extent to which delivery was being taken in-house now that sub-contractor numbers were falling. The College was focused on growing capacity to improve the quality of direct delivery.</p> <p>It was noted that the College was talking to the ESFA about taking on learners who had not finished their learning from two local providers that had gone bankrupt.</p> <p>The Principal said the College’s focus was on quality before expanding certain areas. Staff and physical capacity were limiting factors.</p> <p>Committee members welcomed the report, and asked for an update at the next L&Q meeting. They agreed it was important for Corporation as a whole to see how the sales strategy was linked to quality: growth should be supported only where quality could be guaranteed.</p> <p>The College needed to be realistic about the time required to see the improvements come through in achievement rates.</p>
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		The Committee <u>received</u> the report.
3.2	Student behaviour Annual report	<p>C Hoyes introduced the report on student behaviour. The report provided a summary overview of disciplinary warnings issued to students.</p> <p>It was noted that reporting at Huntingdon lagged behind the Cambridge campus and reporting was not aligned.</p> <p>A new disciplinary procedure had been introduced which was integrated into ProMonitor.</p> <p>Governors asked about the relatively high number of exclusions in the construction faculty. It was noted that this arose from a single issue that involved a number of students.</p> <p>Governors noted the high number of warnings issued in sports and uniformed services; it was noted that early and decisive action when students failed to meet expected standards had been effective in changing behaviour. This approach was being treated as best practice, and would be shared across the campus. It was important to set high expectations of behaviour early.</p> <p>Governors noted that behaviour had improved at Huntingdon campus. The underpass was still an issue involving non-students.</p> <p>The Committee <u>received</u> the report</p>
3.3	Quality update	<p>C Hoyes introduced the quality update.</p> <p>She explained how Internal Quality Reviews (IQRs) were carried out across the campuses. The most recent IQR focused on quality of learning support provided to students in class and had involved 55 learning walks over a 3 week period.</p> <p>An action plan had been developed focused on sharing good practice and delivering further training. This was in response to the report that showed much good practice, but some inconsistencies particularly at Level 3.</p> <p>Governors asked whether actions were already being taken forward given the time lag between the report being completed (June 2018) and the timing of the committee meeting. C Hoyes assured Governors that actions were already integrated into the SAR.</p> <p>C Hoyes went on to report on a recent issue with plumbing apprenticeships which had resulted in the College temporarily losing its direct claims status for plumbing. She explained the background to the issue. It was noted that the issue had come to the attention of Governors through a direct complaint to a Governor.</p>

		<p>Governors asked for reassurance that the issue was unlikely to arise again and asked whether the issue was isolated or systemic. C Hoyes pointed out that of the 234 City and Guilds qualifications delivered by the College, 180 were rated as low risk. 9 were rated as high risk, but of these 5 had no active students.</p> <p>The inspection by City and Guilds had concluded that there was no systematic malpractice at the College, but that the issue in question related to a particular individual. It was noted that the staff member had resigned and had not been provided with a reference.</p> <p>Governors expressed disappointment with the fact that students affected were not contacted in a timely manner. C Hoyes agreed that communication with students and employers should have been made more quickly and more frequently over the timescale.</p> <p>Governors recommended C Hoyes should try to contact the student who originally complained to the Governor to assess whether he had tried different routes to complain. It was important that lessons were learnt from the case.</p> <p>It was also important that Governors were informed of any such incident in a timely manner in the future.</p> <p>Governors went on to discuss the establishment of an alumni network which could help with the College's reputation and staff recruitment. They advised the use of social media, and to encourage existing students to register on LinkedIn before they left the College</p> <p>Governors <u>received</u> the report.</p>
3.4	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.</p> <p>Governors asked for clarification on the status of iMET.</p> <p>It was suggested that risks be taken at the start of meetings to ensure appropriate time was given to discussion.</p> <p>The Committee received the report.</p>
3.5	Students' Success Stories	<p>The Committee noted and welcomed the Student and College Success Stories.</p>
4. Committee business		

4.1	Any other business	There was no other business.
4.2	Self-assessment of Governors' Performance	Committee members felt that the quality of debate was good, and appreciated the work that had gone into the agenda. They asked that management thought about areas of duplication in the papers before presenting papers.

Summary of Actions

Outstanding actions from Committee meeting 7 th March 2018				
2.3	Draft Teaching and Learning Strategy	Committee members asked for a demonstration of the VLE at a future meeting.	C Hoyes	November 2018 (postponed to March 2019)
Actions from Committee meeting 13 th November 2018				
2.1	Safeguarding Report	The Committee recommended the report and updated policy to Corporation.	T McGuinness	Dec 2018
2.3	College SAR	The Committee received the report, noting that the full SAR would be presented to Corporation and agreed to discuss appropriate targets at the December Corporation meeting.	Principal	Dec 2018
2.4	English and Maths action plan	The Student Governor asked about communication on English and Maths requirements at enrolment, and stressed the need for clear guidance for staff. It was agreed he would meet M Doyle outside of the meeting to discuss further. Governors requested that an additional action on communication of English and Maths be introduced into the Action Plan.	N Kalniņš M Doyle	Dec 2018 Dec 2018
2.5	HE assurance statement	The Committee recommended the [HE assurance] statement to Corporation for signature.	C Hoyes	Dec 2018
2.7	Careers strategy	T Arthur asked for a copy of the College's structured careers programme. The Committee recommended the Strategy to Corporation for approval.	M Dowse M Dowse	Dec 2018 Dec 2018

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 7:45pm.

Signed
Chair