

**Minutes of the Learning and Quality Committee meeting  
held 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 4:30pm  
Virtual meeting**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**Present** Lynn Morgan (Chair)  
Heather Du Quesnay  
Mark Robertson  
Mike Cole  
Bradley Dorrington  
Lesley Deacon  
Theresa van Ruth  
Mason Friars

**In attendance** Michelle Dowse, Kate Da Costa, Corrin Hoyes

**Clerk** Emily Baldwin

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| <b>1.1</b> | Declarations of Interest                                   | There were apologies for absence from Hannah Mizzen and Michael Killick.   |
| <b>1.2</b> | Apologies for absence                                      | There were no declarations of interest.  |
| <b>1.3</b> | Minutes of the meeting held on 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 | The minutes of the meeting on 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.  |
| <b>2.1</b> | Termly performance report                                  | <p>K Da Costa introduced the termly performance report.</p> <p>Attendance has dipped largely due to the impact of Covid and was in line with national trends. This followed improvements in attendance prior to the pandemic and was below college target. Students were reporting anxiety over returning to the classroom. Apprenticeship attendance was back at pre-COVID levels.</p> <p>Governors noted the data table, which showed that retention at college level was above the national rate for adults and young people. Student and apprentice satisfaction was also above target.</p> <p>English/Maths attendance had dipped slightly in line with attendance levels for vocational courses. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment had continued to improve, with more consistent planning and assessment. GCSE English and maths resits in November were much improved on the previous year, particularly for maths. An update on the DfE funded project Centre of Excellence for Maths was also provided.</p> |

Governors asked for more information on the work the College was doing to address the attendance issues. The College had changed its approach to one of support, rather than just a disciplinary approach. There was more engagement with personal development coaches to explore the reasons for non-attendance. Management check regularly that attendance was being followed up and this was logged on the system. Students were still able to participate in lessons virtually even if they were isolating.

K Da Costa reported good levels of high-grade achievement for apprenticeships year to date, with 51% apprentices achieving a distinction or a merit. The College had strengthened its work with employers on raising awareness and understanding of End Point Assessments (EPAs).

C Hoyes reported on the findings and progress against three Internal Quality Reviews (IQRs) (online programmes, maths/English, developmental feedback). Good progress was being made against the areas identified for improvement.

K Da Costa explained the work the College had been undertaking to embed sustainability into the curriculum. The report also included a number of areas that had been identified for further development by department. Governors asked if these development areas were being undertaken this year. K Da Costa explained that some of the actions were more long-term, but all activities would be started in-year. The College was also looking at developing a sustainability logo.

Governors discussed the range of employer engagement activities being undertaken. Despite the impact of Covid, the College had continued to have extensive employer engagement in curriculum areas.

C Hoyes gave an update on the College's sub-contracted provision. The College sub-contracted to six training providers to deliver part of its adult education provision. The report set out more detail on the sub-contractors including the monitoring arrangements and achievement levels which were strong. She confirmed that the sub-contractors were all delivering to identified skills needs, and were close to the College's core area. All sub-contractors were subject to due diligence and had a dedicated quality manager. C Hoyes gave the example of Cambridge Community Arts which delivered arts courses for students who were not yet in a position to attend College. The College's stated aim was to reduce its use of sub-contractors.

Governors asked for more information on the management fee, and it was confirmed that this was capped at 20% which was lower than the College's usual contribution rates. From a financial perspective, it was logical to move to more internal delivery. However, in all cases sub-contractors were being used to address an identified regional skills need where the College was not able to deliver itself.

M Dowse reported on her action to explore the careers advice issue raised at the last meeting by the Student Governor. She confirmed that they had had a useful conversation, and she had investigated her particular case to see if there were broader lessons. She had concluded that the issues were specific to her area. However, H Mizzen had been helpful in looking at how to raise the profile of careers advice including better use of T-mail.

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|            |                     | <p>Governors also asked for more information on the users of online courses. 75% were employed, with a high proportion in the health and social care sectors. Looking at additional skills to support them in existing roles. 20% are unemployed. Other 5% have general interest or parents that are teaching autistic child in lockdown.</p>   |
| <b>2.2</b> | Impact of COVID     | <p>Although the College has not been subject to lockdowns in 2021/22, the impact of COVID had still been apparent in the College.</p> <p>The report detailed the main issues and the ways in which the College has taken actions to mitigate against the issues raised. The issues highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lower student attendance that previous years</li> <li>○ Short-term staff absences</li> <li>○ Increase in mental health issues</li> <li>○ Ongoing impact of Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) on student performance levels</li> <li>○ Poor student behavior</li> <li>○ Access to work experience</li> </ul> <p>Governors noted the range of actions that were being taken to mitigate against the issues raised.</p> <p>Governors asked for more clarity on how the COVID catch-up funding had been used. It was confirmed that this had been used for small group tuition in certain areas, such as English/Maths and in high needs provision where it was particularly needed to develop students' independent skills. It had also been used in some vocational areas such as construction, where student skills were underdeveloped due to limited opportunities to undertake certain practical courses in the pandemic before arriving at the College.</p> |
| <b>2.3</b> | Destinations report | <p>C Hoyes introduced the Destinations Report.</p> <p>She explained that the survey was carried out at the end of the autumn term. The destinations report included all students who left college or completed a study programme or qualification in the previous academic year. Destinations covered both destinations to work and progression to further training (whether at CRC or other educational institutions).</p> <p>Governors noted the key findings of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Overall, the percentage of leavers with a known destination improved by 1.7% in comparison to last year.</li> <li>● Of those leavers with a known destination, 93.8% had a positive destination to work or further training.</li> <li>● The percentage of 16-18 leavers progressing to full time work increased by around 9.4% compared to last year. Those progressing to further education reduced. This was in part due to more job opportunities following COVID.</li> <li>● The percentage of students who progressed to a course at CRC at a higher level was above that of comparator colleges.</li> <li>● The percentage of adults unemployed after a CRC courses was low at 5.4% and below the benchmark provided by our destinations survey company.</li> </ul>         |

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|     |                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most full-time adults progressed to another full time FE course; most part time adults progress to full time employment</li> <li>• The percentage of full-time leavers of all ages progressing to HE was largely the same as the previous year</li> <li>• Of the population of 16-18 students who didn't progress to CRC, 89.3% had a positive destination</li> </ul> <p>C Hoyes said that it was particularly pleasing to see the high number of students reporting positively that they were prepared for the workplace. This demonstrated good implementation of the College's Personal Development Strategy.</p> <p>Governors noted the detail in the report, including the analysis of apprentices and of sub-contractors.</p> <p>M Cole welcomed the report which was extremely comprehensive. He said that future reports would benefit from a clearer summary for governors that interpreted the data so it could be clear about those areas that were positive and areas to work on. C Hoyes said that where there was benchmark data, this was included in the report.</p> <p>Governors also asked for clarity on how the data was used. C Hoyes confirmed that the data by department was used extensively in the curriculum planning process to assess whether the curriculum was leading to positive progression or employment. It was also used for marketing purposes.</p> <p>L Deacon asked about longer-term destination data, as students sometimes took time to secure their preferred job. This was particularly the case in some areas like Uniformed Services, where there was a current delay in processing medicals. C Hoyes agreed that longitudinal studies could be appropriate in specific areas. The College made good use of case studies.</p> <p>The Committee received the report.</p> |
| 2.4 | Curriculum strategy | <p>M Robertson introduced the updated Curriculum Strategy.</p> <p>Key changes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New focus on post pandemic rather than during the pandemic</li> <li>• Inclusion of the support of and work done with regards to Skills Bootcamps, in partnership with the Combined Authority</li> <li>• Updated reference to regional collaborations, particularly to include reference to Oxford-Cambridge Arc and London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor</li> <li>• Inclusion of green tech and green agenda at the College</li> <li>• Updates to the guiding principles by provision type where appropriate</li> </ul> <p>The Committee welcomed the Strategy, and felt that the amendments reflected the current situation. Governors discussed the part of the strategy on sub-contractors and whether the intent was clear. M Robertson confirmed that there was a positive social impact using sub-contractors, but that the College was looking to reduce its reliance on them.</p>  |

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| 2.5 | Student voice strategy                | <p>M Dowse introduced the Student Voice Strategy. The strategy set out how the College encouraged and enabled student involvement and described the actions being taken to further develop and improve this framework.</p> <p>Governors noted and approved the six objectives in the Strategy. M Dowse explained that the apprentice voice was particularly difficult to engage and therefore there was a separate objective related to apprenticeships.</p> <p>The College had been rolling out a series of student focus groups, starting with girls in STEM, and LGBTQ+.</p> <p>M Dowse was also exploring the idea of asking a local MP or councillor to talk to the students about engagement as part of student development.</p> <p>M Miles, Student Governor, welcomed the idea of training on student engagement. In his view, the College had well engaged students but there were still some gaps where the College needed to focus, such as in HE. Not all students had the same experience or skills before coming to the College to be confident about making their voice heard.</p> <p>L Morgan recommended an informal governor/staff session in the Park Restaurant over tea and cake where views could be easily exchanged.</p> <p>B Dorrington offered to help with any student voice sessions.</p> <p>H Du Quesnay suggested tweaking the first objective of the Student Voice Strategy to make sure that any reference to outstanding was in relation to training and college provision, rather than to the students themselves. M Dowse agreed to make the change.</p> <p>On that basis, the Committee <b>approved</b> the Strategy.</p> |
| 3.2 | Safeguarding sexual harassment report | <p>M Dowse introduced the report on sexual harassment. The College had developed an action plan which was included in the report.</p> <p>A deep dive was undertaken by Marina Gaze in January 2022. Progress was reported on the 9 recommendations included in the report.</p> <p>A new termly peer on peer abuse report including sexual harassment and sexual violence had been produced and highlighted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns around sexual violence and harassment had increased significantly compared to the same time last year.</li> <li>• Cases were complex, but it was positive that students felt able to report incidents</li> <li>• There was a split in reported concerns by campus; for example reported sexual harassment cases were disproportionately high at the Huntingdon Campus.</li> <li>• A call it out campaign would be implemented to address group incidents.</li> <li>• Often perpetrators needed support and personal development, rather than exclusion.</li> </ul> <p>Governors were also reminded of the recorded presentation by M Dowse for Governors that was available on the Governor portal.</p>  |

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|            |   | <p>L Deacon agreed that this was a very important issue nationally. She agreed to speak to M Dowse outside of the meeting regarding initiatives being taken forward by the NHS and other sectors.</p> <p>M Cole agree it was a very comprehensive report. The College should consider using language that was less binary and to consider the use of pronouns. M Dowse drew attention to a student request for staff to use pronouns on their badges. Governors noted that ESFA requirements were only to offer binary sex choice on the enrolment forms. It was suggested that it was flagged on the forms that this was an ESFA requirement and that gender identity was included as an additional option. Gender identity was already included on Pro-Monitor.</p> <p>L Morgan suggested the word 'reported' was used for concerns as more incidents at one campus could be indicative of students feeling more empowered to report, rather than an indication of actual incidents.</p> <p>It was important that male students did not feel unduly targeted. Governors agreed that it was a complex issue. T van Ruth said that the College were right to acknowledge that the majority of perpetrators were male, but it was important to make the whole community feel safe. She particularly supported the attention to pronouns and for staff to include these on their badges.</p> <p>M Dowse asked to talk to M Miles outside the College on the messaging to students in such a complex area.</p> |
| <b>2.7</b> | Student success                           | <p>K Da Costa gave Governors a presentation on highlights of the curriculum by department. The presentation included examples of individual student success stories, student awards, community outreach projects and department trips.</p> <p>The Committee thanked K Da Costa for an informative presentation, which demonstrated the positive work being carried out by the College.</p>  |
| <b>2.8</b> | Risk Register                             | <p>E Baldwin introduced the revised Risk Register which had also been presented to the Audit and Risk Committee. The number of risks had been reduced so that attention could be focused on the key areas of concern from a corporate perspective.</p> <p>Governors also noted the separate safeguarding risk register which would be taken to all L&amp;Q Committee meetings, and to Corporation on an annual basis as part of the Annual Safeguarding Report.</p>   |
| <b>3.1</b> | Any other business - Safeguarding         | <p>M Dowse gave a verbal update on safeguarding concerns. The College had over 800 safeguarding concerns to date, 70% higher than the same point as last year. The number of welfare concerns was also much higher, particularly in the areas of mental health and financial concerns. M Dowse gave assurance to the Committee on the level of resourcing that was being put into the safeguarding team in order to deal with the number of concerns. M Cole as Governor Lead for Safeguarding confirmed his support for the work of the Safeguarding Team.</p>   |
| <b>3.2</b> | Self-assessment of Governors' Performance | <p>Governors agreed that it had been a useful meeting.</p>  |

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 6:45 pm.