

COLCHESTER INSTITUTE CORPORATION

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

**held on Thursday 26 June 2025,
4.30pm at the Colchester campus**

Present

Caroline Williams - Chair
Alison Andreas - Principal & CE
Marco Iciek - Governor (Safeguarding link)
Angela O'Donoghue -Co-opted Governor
Lisa Blake, Corporation Chair
Adam Fair – Staff Governor
Nicola Jay – Staff Governor

In attendance:

Ali Davies – Deputy Principal
Yvonne Walpole – Executive Assistant
Mark Emerson – Vice Principal
Suzanne Kinsey – Assistant Principal

MINUTES

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and **APPROVED** from Sally Messenger and Lee Bingham. Tim Triffitt and Sanjeev Arya were not present.

2. Declaration of any conflicts of interest

No committee of staff member declared any financial, or other interests, in the business to be discussed.

3. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 3 April 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2025 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record. Chair noted that under 'Apprenticeships at R08' they had identified the achievement rate for checking which has not been reviewed. Deputy Principal confirmed figure of 78.1% and minutes will be amended accordingly.

Prevent policy was approved with required changes and recommended to the Board for approval.

Paragraph 6 (QIP) - references made to the QIP do not match with the QIP version presented to Governors. Deputy Principal confirmed that a summary style QIP will be presented at Full Board, a copy of which is being presented at this meeting for approval of style and content. Chair noted that it is important the minutes and papers match.

No other points raised.

ACTION: Chair to confirm apprenticeship figure with Head of Governance, minutes were approved in lieu of this.

Nothing further to note.

5. Action Sheet and Matters Arising from the Minutes

CIC/CQ/25/4/2, Action sheet, was received.

30.01.25, CIC/CQC/25/1/3 - Supported experiments to be reported back to the committee at a subsequent meeting.

Supported experiment marketplace took place today (26th June). A lot of hard work and energy went into not only the experiments themselves but also the presentation of such at the marketplace by staff, to staff. The event was well attended, with good engagement ~~by most~~. A full report will be presented to CQC in the autumn term.

No other items.

6. Curriculum and Quality Update Report

CIC/CQ/25/4/3, Curriculum and Quality Update Report, was received and discussed. It was reported that:

Performance data: front page £120K target needs to be amended

Chair asked for clarification of anticipated outcomes for apprenticeships – Deputy Principal confirmed these will be ahead of target although there are no exact figures yet. Governors all agreed that this is a very impressive increase on last year, even if the final figure drops by up to 5%.

Governors agreed that they would like future reporting to include figures for the number of students that pass their GCSEs at grades 4-9, in addition to the numbers participating in resits. Principal and CEO confirmed that target pass rates for grades 4-9 were set earlier in the year and will be reviewed in the autumn update after results have been received. Deputy Principal confirmed that the data and how it is presented will change from September 2025.

Governors noted that they would like figures for overall attendance, including English and maths for FE students. The data shown at present does not include attendance rates of students at GCSE English and mathematics classes, which is not what was previously agreed. Deputy Principal confirmed that this will be incorporated in the future. Governors agreed that attendance is looking positive overall. Governors were informed that HE provision numbers have decreased– it was confirmed that the total number of HE students on non-apprenticeship routes has decreased. – Governors questioned why predicted achievement figures are not available for these courses. Principal and CEO was not sure but can make sure they are included moving forward.

Governor noted they would find it useful to review performance data against the most recent national rates.

Adult learning programmes – the gap between retention, attendance and predicted achievement rates is noticeable and governors questioned why. Deputy Principal confirmed the nature of short programmes can make it difficult to make reliable projections, particularly at this time of year. Predictions were low this time last year and final figures ended up being higher. It is anticipated that we will see an increase and the final outcome will be in the region of 80.3%.

Governors reviewed predicted achievement for 2024-25 and requested that actual achievement figures are also included alongside moving forward. Deputy Principal confirmed that the style of data presentation will be changed for next year (September 2025).

Governors reviewed the low performance of care leavers and questioned if it is likely that the number of care leavers would increase. They considered the impact on the overall outcomes and discussed how this could be mitigated. Deputy Principal confirmed that there is a dedicated member of staff who looks after care leavers and is available to provide help and support. Unfortunately, many do not want to engage with the support on offer. If numbers increase, we will review resources and strategies to mitigate the impact. It was confirmed to governors that attendance figures do reflect non-attenders, who pull-down overall attendance figures.

Apprenticeship Provision: The governors agreed that the projected overall achievement and timely achievement reported is fantastic news. The projected reduction in the achievement gap for apprentices with declared learning difficulties and disabilities is a huge achievement.

Teaching & Learning: The Deputy Principal clarified the restructure referred to in the report as follows:

Applications for Head of Quality and UCC Education Programmes are still open.

Roles that have now been filled: Teacher Development Manager, Quality Manager, Expert Practitioners X 2.4, Teacher Development and Quality Officer.

The new structure will be in place for September 2025, and it is anticipated that it will have a very positive impact on teaching, learning and assessment as well as the coaching and mentoring available to support new and existing teachers.

AMM's and APMM's: Nothing to note.

Professional Development: The Deputy Principal confirmed that professional development for June had focused around CI values. Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th June have been training days for all staff with an extensive number of training options available. Verbal feedback from staff so far, both internal and from external presenters, indicates a positive uptake and good engagement. External providers have stated that they have enjoyed coming into the College and staff have made a point of going out of their way to say how useful they have found sessions. Friday 27th June is the College wellbeing day, it will commence with the end of year Principal's address and award celebration followed by lunch for all staff and then team activities.

Learner experience: The Chair noted they had heard about the new Head of Learner Engagement and Progression, and that governors will be interested to see the impact of this new role over the coming year. They were pleased to see that new arrangements for learner voice had been planned for.

Nothing further to note.

ACTIONS: Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal to ensure that performance data requested by governors is included in the new performance data figures provided at future meetings.

7. Update on Progress against Quality Improvement Plan

CIC/CQ/25/4/4, Progress against Quality Improvement Plan, was received and discussed. The update reported that:

The chair acknowledged that it was good to see just how many actions had been completed but felt that the top-level information made it difficult to drill down further into the information. Governors noted that the objectives need to have more measurable targets, and information needs to be provided that sets out clearly how they know these have been met. Deputy Principal to ensure objectives have more measurable outcomes.

Governors confirmed that they really liked the report and as a board summary it is fit for purpose.

Governors commented that it conveys well, is dynamic and clearly shows progress. Governors requested updates for overdue actions or where there is no further action a statement clearly identifying why this is the case. -The Chair suggested an impact indicator might be useful.

ACTION: The Deputy Principal will take points made by governors into consideration and add to the future QIP where appropriate. The Chair confirmed they are happy to support the Deputy Principal with this at a future date if required.

8. Strategic Plan One Year Action Plan

CIC/CQ/25/4/5, Strategic Plan One Year Action Plan, was received with a focus on the Curriculum and Quality areas.

Feedback on this is based on each member of SLT owning one 'plan on a page' which are action plans to achieve the strategic goals of the College. The Principal and CEO requested feedback on this style and approach – if it is successful and governors like it, they may look at using a similar format for Finance and Resources.

Governors discussed the format and agreed that they liked it.

Governors noted 2.6 - achievement gaps for discussion and questioned how this will be linked back to learner voice, and if it is planned to be linked back at all. If the College is creating an action plan to

eliminate the gaps in achievement, how do we know/make sure learner voice is included? Deputy Principal confirmed that this sort of qualitative data is not needed for this exercise, but it could be done through learner voice if required.

Governors questioned if it is realistic to use the word 'eliminate' - no college has been able to achieve this to date and likely won't. It would be more realistic to set an aim instead to reduce rather than eliminate. Governors noted 1.4 - learners' preparedness for discussion and governors questioned how this is measured as there is no supporting data. Assistant Principal confirmed that positive destination data is used to support this assumption.

Governors noted 3.6 - work experience for discussion and questioned whether there is an opportunity to highlight the efforts which are made to incorporate work experience in programmes and to refer to opportunities for students to take part in skills competitions. Governors further questioned the measures in place to support learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal will review and report back at the autumn CQC meeting.

Governors agreed that overall, the document meets needs as a summative paper and reflects what they already know and feel about the College. They noted that numerical targets would be a useful aspiration to work towards.

Nothing further to note.

ACTION: Points made by governors will be noted for the document moving forward. It was agreed and recommended that the format of the document would be a suitable approach to use for Finance and Resources.

9. Outcome of English and Maths Audit

CIC/CQ/25/4/6, Outcome of English and Maths Audit, was received. It was reported that:

Assistant Principal reported that it was the Acting Area Head at the time who supported the audit. The auditor worked remotely and looked at the curriculum, data, schemes of work, spoke to Head of Funding and Information and looked at national benchmarks. The auditor identified 4 areas of focus, graded as amber:

The English and maths range is different to standard GCSEs. This is because the breadth of the curriculum as a resit is more selective in maths than English and this was explained to the auditor. The report recommended that the College look at engaging a specialist English and maths auditor, which in view of this audit the College will not be undertaking. November resit rates are above national averages. The impact of the audit has led to a revision of the English and maths curriculum. The offer will be written completely differently next year with 2 different routes, and classes will start in the first week of the academic year. The first route is a fast track to November resits and is aimed at all grade 3 learners. Second route is the more traditional resit route for June exams. This has been communicated to all areas who are happy with the changes.

Governors noted that they felt the audit was disappointing as it only told the College what it already knew. The changes to the mathematics scheme of work to come out of the audit however, was really positive and these changes were welcomed.

Nothing further to note.

10. Safeguarding Report

A verbal update was provided by the Deputy Principal on Safeguarding since the last meeting.

- DSL training refresh on-training took place on 25th June 2025.
- New member of safeguarding team will be joining CI ready for September 2025
- Responded to the MHST survey
- Attended Stay Safe conference (ESCB conference) information shared at the Safeguarding meeting on 19th June 2025
- Attended the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners conference on 18th June 2025 including workshops on ASB, knife crime and domestic abuse

- Signed up and receiving notifications from Op Encompass – National initiative where children who are in the house where domestic abuse occurs, when the Police attend medium-high risk event. An alert will be sent to the education provider so we can discreetly check in with the child. Have to do this discretely but we are not allowed to say to the young person that we received an alert, so we are just ‘checking in’. Reference to Op Encompass alerts will go into our updated Safeguarding Policy.
- Draft KCSIE is still not available
- Positive meeting with St Aubyn centre to strengthen arrangements for working together and information sharing for patients that are hoping to enrol at Ci

The Chair questioned if the Deputy Principal is confident that St Aubyn centre learners can be safely accommodated by the College? Deputy Principal confirmed that they will be attending a final meeting on Monday to finalise the sharing of information and feel confident that a good relationship will be in place moving forward.

Deputy Principal confirmed that since the last committee meeting there have been no more incidents of aggressive behaviour towards staff from parents and carers and there are no causes for concern.

Deputy Principal reported that in the last 2 days staff have had some training around bystander intervention offered which included how to de-escalate incidents and tips on how to safely intervene – the trainer has confirmed they are happy to give their training materials to the College to disseminate to staff. More measures have been put in place, such as screening phone calls, and a customer of the hair salon has had to be banned from campus for aggressive behaviour.

11. Accountability Statement 2025-26

CIC/CQ/25/4/1, Accountability Statement 2025-26 was not taken due having been discussed at an extra-ordinary meeting of the Corporation Board.

12. FE, HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2025-26

CIC/CQ/25/4/7, FE, HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2025-26, were received for review and for recommendation to the Board for approval.

Governors noted that some HE targets were missing.

Governors were informed that most outcomes for the current year 2024-25 are not known. Senior leaders have used national rates to inform targets, even though own targets were higher last year. The Chair noted it was pleasing to see a high target set for Apprenticeship achievement rates. As some apprentices are no longer required to achieve English and maths, targets need to be adjusted accordingly. The chair suggested considering the inclusion of a timely achievement rate (10a) which would show ambition and setting a realistic target alongside national rates. Vice Principal informed governors that this would have to be an internal target as no longer set a national rate.

ACTION: No. 1(FE) – attendance needs to be amended to state it is excluding English and maths.

DECISION: The committee **AGREED** the FE, some HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2025-26 for recommendation to the 22 July Board meeting. The HE targets that that can be measured need to be slimmed down.

ACTION: FE, agreed HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2025-26 to be included on the 22 July Board agenda – Head of Governance.

13. Policy Review

The following policies were presented for approval:

16.1 CIC/CQ/25/4/8, Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (FE)

16.2 CIC/CQ/25/4/9, Further Education Quality Framework

16.3 CIC/CQ/25/4/10, UCC Research, Knowledge Transfer and Scholarly Activity Policy

DECISION: The committee **APPROVED** the following policies:

- Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (FE)

- Further Education Quality Framework
- UCC Research, Knowledge Transfer and Scholarly Activity Policy

14. Governor Link Scheme and Learning Walks 2025-26

CIC/CQ/25/4/11, Governor Link scheme and Learning Walks 2025-26 paper, was received for discussion and decision.

DECISION: The committee refreshed governors on voting options for the Governor Link Scheme and Learning Walks – there were three options to vote for. Governors suggested, with approval of the Chair, that the vote outcome is recommended to the board and not taken through GRSC but in future should be. Head of Governance sent out a survey asking governors to choose one of 3 options. Results are as follows: 3 governors voted for option 3 which is to undertake 1 or 2 governor days each year. There were no votes for the other two options; 1) the scheme should be stopped entirely and 2) the scheme should it be kept as it. Several ideas for the content of governor ‘days’ were discussed.

ACTION: Governors recommended that, based on what they had seen and who had voted, it would be sensible to go with option 3 but should be prepared to open to the Board on 22nd July. A firm and final decision needs to be reached.

15. Review of Meeting

The following was agreed:

Items/papers to be reported to the next Board meeting.

- Accountability Statement 2025-26
- FE, HE and Apprenticeships Academic Targets 2025-26
- Governor Link Scheme and Learning Walks 2025-26

Whether any matters discussed should be treated confidentially.

- None

16. 2025-26 Meeting dates

To be confirmed.

ACTION: Provisional dates outlined will be sent out to governors by Head of Governance.

The Chair thanked all governors and attendees for their contributions throughout the 2024/25 academic year.

Meeting closed 18:50.