

Colchester Institute Corporation

Minutes of a Meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee
held on 6th December 2016
at the Sheepen Road Campus

Present

David Gask, in the Chair
Alison Andreas

Christopher Bridge
Tyler-James Collinson

In Attendance

Caroline Fritz	Assistant Principal: Quality, Teaching and Learning
Hazel Paton	Clerk to the Governors
Jason Peters	Vice Principal: Curriculum, Delivery and Performance
Jill Wognum	Vice Principal: Curriculum, Planning and Quality

Apologies for absence were received from Bryn Morris.

1. Declaration of any conflicts of interest

None.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2016 (CIC/CQ/16/4/1) were received and confirmed. The Chair signed the minute book.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

3.1. College Processes for monitoring apprentices

The Assistant Principal: Quality, Teaching and Learning outlined the processes for monitoring apprentices. It was reported that the College had looked at developing a scorecard for apprentices but apprenticeships do not easily fit the scorecard model of reporting. As an example, it is difficult to report on attendance when a number of apprentices never come into the College. Apprenticeship outcome review meetings are held to look at quality (success rates for last year's frameworks; actions taken; progress with frameworks; overall completion). The meetings are closely structured and aligned to Study Programme reviews. In addition the Head of Apprenticeships chairs monthly apprenticeship review meetings with each faculty which look at all aspects of attendance and retention and drills down to individual learner level.

It was agreed to ask the link governor for apprentices to have oversight of this process.

4. Update on In-Year Learner Progress

The Vice Principal: Curriculum, Delivery and Performance updated the Committee on in year learner progress using the live data in Scorecard. An area that needs to be addressed is the accuracy of the data. It was reported that last year the estimates for 23 subjects were good (within 3% of the final position). The estimates for 10 subjects were not so good with some of the College's larger areas (Public Services, Sport, and Learning for Living and Work) over estimating the final outcome. An analysis of the students who were predicted to succeed but did not shows that it was not that the student failed but that they did not complete the year. This was an issue across the College.

The main focus for the year is going to be on retention. Governors asked if the College has an understanding of the factors causing students to drop out and were advised that whilst the withdrawal system records the reason for withdrawal the most commonly selected reason is 'other'. The second most common reason is 'financial'. Work is being done to improve the withdrawals report. An analysis of when students leave has provided useful data. For example last year Hair and Beauty had their worst year ever for retention with a big dip in November/December; this coincided with the loss of a number of staff in that area. That has not been repeated this year. The data also shows that in May last year Early Years lost 4% of students when they had an examination (some students came in for the examination, some did not). This shows that there is work to be done in building students' confidence.

The College's Functional Skills results declined last year, but data suggests that this is part of a national decline. The College appears to be comparable with other FE colleges at Level 1 and better than other FE colleges at Level 2.

GCSE results are still not good enough. Governors noted that the Ofsted Inspectors had identified that the College had good staff and processes in this area and asked why outcomes were not better. It was reported that the problem is that there are too many students whose attendance is intermittent which is impacting on their chances of success. In English the College has moved to the new GCSE which will be graded 1 to 9 (4 is equivalent to a C). The College is aiming for 4. In maths, adult learners have been put on the new GCSE; all other students are still on the old GCSE whilst the College builds up experience of the new specification. The focus in meetings with Area Heads is on literacy and numeracy. The Vice Principal: Curriculum, Delivery and Performance reported that he now meeting weekly with all Functional Skills Managers and teachers and it is clear that the rigour of the assessments needs to be improved.

5. **New Accountability Measures 2015-16**

The Vice Principal: Curriculum, Delivery and Performance reported on the new accountability measures 2015-16. Measures will include performance and value added for Level 3 applied. There will not be a measure for Level 3 technical because almost all technical qualifications are still just pass/ fail; this will change over the next couple of years. The value added measure for Level 2 qualifications might not show in this year's performance tables. At level 3 if the student does not pass the examination they will fail the qualification. This will be tested in Health and Social Care where if a student has completed year 12 but failed their examination the College will have to decide whether to take them into the second year of the course. The student can resit the examination in January but if they fail in January they will not be allowed to resit again and will not pass whatever work they do for the last six months of the course. The College will need to have clear criteria for deciding whether to let students continue.

There will be a points per entry score, a retention score, and a destination score. They are struggling to come up with a scoring system for destinations, so this score will not be available when the tables are published in January; they hope to publish this data in March. Colchester Institute does well on destinations. The results will be for the cohort which finished in 2016, except for destinations, which will be for the cohort which finished in 2015.

6. **Student Enrolments 2016**

The Principal reported the latest position with regard to student enrolments:

- **16-18 students** – currently 4073 funded enrolments; slightly short of allocation (4105). This number could go up if students joined late and have not yet been here for 42 days. It was hoped to recruit more to generate a higher level of funding in future years. The College Executive need

to discuss whether to look to recruit additional groups of students, particularly Skills to Succeed and possibly on engineering programmes at Harwich.

- **Adults** – recruitment was strong and the College has already earned over £2.1m against an allocation of £2.4m with a lot more work still to deliver in the Learning Shops. The College is in discussion with another provider with surplus adult education budget to see if they wish to sub-contract some of their work to Colchester Institute. The number of young adults enrolled on full time programmes with a cohort of 16-18 learners is larger than normal.
- **Apprenticeships** – by the end of the previous week the College had signed up 451 apprentices with another 30 in the pipeline. The College has a challenging target this year (968 compared to 649 recruited last year) and various actions are underway to recruit more. The target for Construction and Engineering has been increased in year from 340 to 380. Business and Services is the worst performing area and is suffering from a large target in a market that is very saturated, with competition from as far away as West Notts. Another issue is that a number of companies, particularly the larger ones, are waiting until the levy comes into force before taking on apprentices. The College is looking internally to see if it can transfer suitable students from study programmes to apprenticeships.
- **Advanced Learning Loans** – the College has earned £567k against a target of £627k, a considerable increase on last year. Some new courses are being put on in the New Year. Nationally less than 50% of funding is used each year; the College has always achieved 50%.
- **HE** – the College has enrolled 764 students against a target of 755, and 262 part time students against a target of 244. These have not necessary generated the funding the College would have liked. The College is looking to start courses in February in Counselling, PGCE and possibly an MA in Education.
- **Full Cost** – the challenging target of £1.2m has been adjusted down to £1.1m. Additional marketing is planned, including doorstep marketing over Christmas to try to get some interest in carefully selected courses.

7. **Principal's Report December 2016**

CIC/CQ/16/4/3, Principal's Report December 2016, was received and noted. It was reported that student attendance was currently 86 % (FE) and 84% (HE). Retention was currently 98%. The College needs to work on improving attendance at GCSE English and maths which is negatively impacting FE student attendance.

8. **High Level Targets 2015-16 and 2016-17**

CIC/CQ/16/4/4, Performance against high level targets 2015-16 and targets 2016-17, was received and considered. The curriculum and quality targets for 2016-17 were approved at the last meeting of this Committee; the tabled paper had been updated to include the Financial and Human Resources KPIs.

The performance against targets 2015-16 was considered. For the first time, the targets set were based on what the College needed to aspire to to be a Good college, rather than previous performance, and were challenging. Unfortunately in the vast majority of cases the targets were not achieved.

9. **Draft SAR 2015-16**

CIC/CQ/16/4/5, draft SAR 2015-16, was received and considered. The overview of grades awarded was considered, and it was noted that all areas had been graded Good. The grades awarded for provision type are also Good, with the exception of 16-19 Study Programmes, which requires improvement. However, outcomes for learners in general are still believed to be Good. Aspects of provision, such as apprenticeships, dropped slightly in 2015-16 but are still above national average. Outcomes were negatively impacted by English and maths, and some areas were worse than others.

Construction and Engineering did quite poorly in English and maths. Achievement in vocational qualifications was in the high 80s/90% in the majority of areas, but a few areas, such as Public Services, and some of the Learning for Living and Preparation for Work areas did not do as well. The results have been benchmarked against national achievement rates for 2014-15, which are the most recently published. The judgements will be reviewed when 2015-16 national achievement rates are published.

Apprenticeships dropped slightly last year. In areas such as Construction a number of learners did not achieve because although they completed the main vocational part of the apprenticeship they did not pass functional skills.

A Quality Improvement Plan covering the period December 2016 to July 2018 is currently being developed, based on the following key College priorities:

- i. Improve the effectiveness of feedback in order to maximise progress made by learners, including on HE programmes
- ii. Improve progression through levels of study, including to, and within, HE, to meet College targets
- iii. Improve action planning and target-setting with learners, staff, and through management meetings and quality processes, in order to improve outcomes.
- iv. Improve learners outcomes in English and maths
- v. Improve the quality and content of apprentice reviews to ensure they focus on improving apprenticeship outcomes
- vi. Establish a culture of solution-focussed management to create a resilient and responsive College

It was agreed to recommend the draft SAR 2015-16 to the Board for approval.

10. **Compliments and Complaints 2015-16**

CIC/CQ/16/4/6, outline of Compliments and Complaints received 2015-16, was received and noted. The number of complaints is reducing overall, but those that are received are more complex and difficult to deal with. One HE complaint has been referred the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

11. **Teaching and Learning Observations 2016-17**

CIC/CQ/16/4/7, Teaching and Learning Observations 2016-17, was received and noted. It was reported that it was too early in the year to draw any conclusions. The second observation week has only just been completed and the forms are awaited.

12. **Learner Surveys**

12.1. **UCC Module Evaluation Surveys 2015-16**

CIC/CQ/16/4/8, Module Evaluation Surveys 2015-16, was received and noted. In 2015-16 the module evaluation surveys were carried out on-line and the response rate was low. This is being looked at for 2016-17. Of the feedback received, overall student satisfaction was 89% against a target of 95%. There was quite a lot of inconsistency between areas. Construction and Engineering (a very small area) scored highest with 97% and Art and Design (a very large and varied area) scored the lowest at 84%.

12.2. National Student Survey (NSS) 2016 – Summary

CIC/CQ/16/4/9, National Student Survey 2015-16, was received and noted. The College scored well against teaching, academic support and personal development, but did not do so well against organisation and management and learning resources and overall scored worse than other providers.

12.3. Induction Survey

CIC/CQ/16/4/10, Learner Induction Survey, was received and noted. The analysis indicates that students are happy but have not been made aware of all the support offered by the College. High scores are evident in areas concerning the high expectation learners feel tutors have of them.

13. HEFCE Annual Quality Assessment Report

CIC/CQ/16/4/11, HEFCE Annual Quality Assessment Return for the year ended July 2016, was received and noted. As part of the new system to ensure quality for HE, governing bodies are required to sign a statement to say that they are happy with the quality in their organisation and that the monitoring of quality is robust. The College has provided a partial assurance statement for 2015-16 because the Board will not have full oversight until it receives the institutional level review of courses (ARC) (required by the University of Essex by 1 February 2017) at its next meeting. School level ARCs, which feed into the institutional ARC, have been added to the Portal with the papers for this meeting.

14. Annual Report to the Board

It was reported that this Committee's Annual Report to the Board 2015-16 will be drafted, taking into account papers received at this meeting, and circulated to members for approval prior to submission to the February Board meeting.

15. Link Governor Scheme – proposals for 2017

CIC/CQ/16/4/12, Link Governor Scheme proposals for 2017, was received, considered and approved.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 21st March 2017 at 4.30pm.

17. Any Other Urgent Business

PART II – these minutes are not confidential but the supporting papers are confidential

18. Safeguarding

The Committee received and noted:

- CIC/CQ/16/4/13, Safeguarding Report June 2016, and
- CIC/CQ/16/4/14, Single Central Record Report.