Colchester Institute Corporation

Minutes of a Meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee
held on 14 June 2016
at the Sheepen Road Campus

Present

David Gask, in the Chair   Christopher Bridge
Alison Andreas   Tyler-James Collinson

In Attendance

Caroline Fritz   Assistant Principal: Quality and Teaching and Learning Improvement
Hazel Paton   Clerk to the Governors
Jason Peters   Acting Vice Principal: Curriculum and Delivery
Tom Toolan   Dean of Higher Education (item 7.2 only)
Jill Wognum   Vice Principal: Curriculum 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 15 March 2016 (CIC/CQ/16/3/1) were received and confirmed.
        The Chair signed the minute book.

3.   **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

        3.1.   **Scorecard**

                The Committee asked for an update on plans to extend Scorecard to include apprenticeship
                programmes. It was reported that this is not something that can be progressed at this time
                because apprentices are not registered in the normal way and many are in the workplace. A
                lot of work would need to done with the College systems before it would be possible to draw
                data from them.   Governors asked about best practice in other colleges in monitoring
                apprentices and were advised that the College is looking at two other systems, one of which is
                an in-house enhancement to the EBS system.   An example of how the College monitors
                apprentices will be brought to the autumn meeting of this Committee.

                It was reported that a second version of Scorecard for vulnerable students was now
                completed, enabling the College to look at how particular groups, such as looked after
                students, are performing compared to College averages.

4.   **Update on In-Year Learner Progress**

        The Assistant Principal: Curriculum updated the Committee on learner progress using the data in
        Scorecard. It was reported that the current predictions in Scorecard had been input in the second
        week of May, and that the live data on attendance and retention would be closed down at the end of
        the following week. Following the update of predictions in May the Acting Vice Principal: Curriculum
        and Delivery and Assistant Principal: Quality and Teaching and Learning Improvement had met with
        every area head at FE Boards of Studies meetings to review the data. Most area heads felt that the

data was an accurate reflection of where they were at and they did not expect the outcomes to be worse than predicted.

It was reported that retention would end at 91%. Attendance (16-18 learners) dropped to 79.09% in term 3 and the final attendance figure will be round 84.18%; attendance remains the College's biggest challenge. It was reported that the College is making some fundamental changes for next year and will be piloting a new guidance and support system in a number of areas including Construction and Engineering to try and address this. The difficulty with attendance is that there are no benchmarks. The Ofsted Inspectors recognised that attendance is heavily impacted by English and maths attendance.

The predicted outcomes for English and maths were discussed. It was reported that this year the levels which students were studying at were much higher than previously. If a student came with Grade E GCSE they were put on Level 2 Function Skills. If they are successful they will progress to the GCSE. Last year these students would have been on Level 1 or Entry Level. If the predicted grades are achieved, the College will have done much better than last year. The Acting Vice Principal: Curriculum and Delivery suggested that predictions for GCSE English were high based on the controlled assessments that the students had done. It was reported that the College has chosen to move to the new English GCSE in September because the controlled assessments have been removed. The College will wait a year before moving to the new maths GCSE to give the leadership time to phase in the new syllabuses over a two year period.

The College should see an improvement in its ALP from 6 last year to 5, putting it in the top half of all schools and colleges for that measure in the national tables.

5. **Principal's Report**

    CIC/CQ/16/3/2, Principal's Report June 2016, was received and noted.

    5.1. British Council Inspection

        The British Council inspects providers who are licensed to offer English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to international students. The College underwent a three day British Council inspection in May. It was reported that the College has about 120 full cost students studying EFL. Feedback from the visit was positive. The written report is awaited.

    5.2. Progress against Key Performance Targets

        Progress against the annual high level performance targets (May 2016) was discussed. It was noted that a number of the targets had been RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated red or amber, indicating the likelihood at this stage of the year of reaching the forecasted target. This reflected the aspirational targets approved by the Board.

        Governors asked about recruitment and were advised that applications were up nearly 30% on the same time last year. The College is approaching the figures with caution but if the conversion rate is the same as in the previous year recruitment in September will be good.

        Governors asked if there was evidence of any impact on careers advice since the announcement by the Secretary of State that college staff should be able to visit schools. It was reported that a new careers enterprise had been launched by Essex, Southend and Thurrock local authorities, and two posts were going to be funded in Essex to work with schools.

6. **Quality Improvement Plan April 2015 – December 2016**

CIC/CQ/16/3/3, Quality Improvement Plan April 2015 - December 2016, was received and considered. As requested at the last meeting, relevant actions had been updated to include higher education. It was reported that the majority of HE improvements are quite specific and included in a separate HE document. Governors considered whether to include the HE action plan as an appendix to the Quality Improvement Plan or retain as a separate document. In response to questions it was reported that the HE action plan is taken forward at local level and followed up and updated as part of the institutional annual review. It was agreed to put in place a more frequent monitoring timescale for the HE action plan in line with that for the Quality Improvement Plan.

7. **Learner Surveys**

7.1. **Teaching and Learning Survey**

CIC/CQ/16/3/4, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Survey 2015/16 results at whole College and Faculty level, was received and considered. It was noted that the response rate (3798) was slightly down on the previous year (3949).

It was reported that the results provided to individual areas included student comments as well as the quantitative data and Managers have provided feedback at the FE Boards of Studies meetings on the action that has been taken. A lot of the comments related to irregular staffing which has now been partially resolved.

The six highest and lowest courses according to satisfaction ratings were considered against their predicted Scorecard grade and attendance and retention data. It was noted that five of the six top courses in terms of satisfaction had retention rates higher than the College average and attendance rates above 85%. Of the six lowest courses in terms of satisfaction, three had retention rates higher than the College average, and only one had attendance near the College average. Governors asked if the results could be correlated to achievement and success and were advised that a secondary analysis would be carried out when reliable success rate data is available.

The Committee asked how useful the data was and how it was used by Area Heads. It was reported that the results were very useful but were not used as well as they should be. Faculty Heads need to look at the results in relation to the impact on performance and achievement of the overall targets. The new Self-Assessment Report format includes a section under student experience on strengths or weaknesses, which will draw on survey results.

7.2. **HE Student Satisfaction Survey**

CIC/CQ/16/3/5, University Centre Colchester (UCC) Student Satisfaction Survey March/April 2016, was received and presented by the Dean of Higher Education. The survey covered modules completed in semester one and reflected the students experience for that period. Specific comments from students, and the College's response had been included. It was noted that not all students take part in module evaluations and low response rates can skew results. There were a lot of comments about the library, which was in a transition period during the year moving from its old to new location. Student satisfaction in IT Systems and Applications was below 80% in a number of areas. It was reported that this was staff related and the member of staff had now left the College. In response to a question, it was confirmed that the results of the survey were as expected. It was reported that Course Leaders and tutors are encouraged to deal with complaints early rather than let them escalate which should be reflected in improved module evaluation and National Student Survey (NSS) results.

It was reported that the NSS had been completed and the results would be available at the end of July. The completion rate was 73.3%, 9% up on last year; the results are likely to better because more students participated.

Governors asked about HE student numbers for 2016-17 and were advised that offers were 20-30 down on last year and a significant number of students will need to be recruited through clearing. Governors asked about internal progression and were advised that a lot of work had been done over the last 12 months to work with area heads and tutors to persuade student to continue at Colchester Institute. The number of progression students from Early Years, Health and Social Care, Construction and Engineering and some of the art area are better than in previous years but in other areas the student are more likely to progress elsewhere. The College is looking at how it can improve its offer to attract internal students and market the new brand internally. This may include offering bursaries. It was noted that there is huge demand for FE programmes in digital and interactive media and that currently the College does not have any programmes for these students to progress to. The Dean of Higher Education confirmed that the Head of School is aware of these growth opportunities and there are plans to develop a degree programme.

The availability of feedback from apprentices and employers was discussed. It was reported that some external employer data is available from FE Choices. The College carries out its own employer survey but it is not benchmarked. It is more difficult with apprentices because of the different start and finish dates. The Colleges used to do an exit survey with apprentices which was analysed on a rolling basis. This will be considered further by the College.

8. **Teaching and Learning**

CIC/CQ/16/3/6, Teaching Observations - June 2016 Report, was received and presented by the Assistant Principal: Quality and Teaching and Learning Improvement. It was noted that the aspirational targets for teaching and learning observations had not been met in this cycle. Work needs to continue on the embedding of English and maths in sessions.

9. **Student Union**

9.1. **CISU Annual Report to the Board**

CIC/CQ/16/3/7, Colchester Institute Students' Union Annual Report 2015-16, was received and considered. It was noted that there had been two vacancies in the Students' Union Executive early in the year, resulting in a by-election. The budget 2015-16 and budget forecast 2016-17 were discussed. The largest area of expenditure is Freshers Week. The Report was accepted for recommendation to the Board.

9.2. **Student Union Constitution**

CIC/CQ/16/3/8, Colchester Institute Students' Union Constitution, was received, considered and approved for recommendation to the Board. The mains changes were to update the election regulations to include a new post in the Executive Team of Vice President of Higher Education, and to give the Union the right to co-opt a student to a vacancy on the Executive if no nominations are received within the nominations period.

10. **Curriculum and Quality Targets (FE and HE) 2016-17**

CIC/CQ/16/3/9, Curriculum and Quality Targets (FE and HE) 2016-17, was received and considered. Noting the difficulties associated with organising work experience, the Committee asked if it was realistic to increase the target for the percentage of Study Programme students achieving 30 hours of GAP activity including quality work experience. It was reported that Study Programmes are funded

on the basis that students undertake work experience and that the College has created good relationships which gives some scope for growth.

The Corporation Chair endorsed the Committee's decision to approve the targets for immediate implementation to support the PDR (Appraisal) process.

11. **Link Visit Reports 2015-16**

The Committee received and noted the following link visit reports:

- Apprenticeships - David Gronland   -   Business Services (CIC/CQ/16/3/10)
  - -   Engineering (CIC/CQ/16/3/11)
  - -   Hair and Beauty (CIC/CQ/16/3/12)
- Business Administration -Richard Wainwright (CIC/CQ/16/3/13)
- Early Years- David Kerridge (CIC/CQ/16/3/14)
- HE Digital Music and Performing Arts - David Gask (CIC/CQ/16/3/15)
- Hospitality - Christopher Bridge (CIC/CQ/16/3/16)
- Learning for Living and Work - David Gronland (CIC/CQ/16/3/17)
- Wood Technologies - John Baugh (CIC/CQ/16/3/18)

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

To be advised.

13. **Any Other Urgent Business**

PART II – these minutes are not confidential but the supporting paper is confidential

14. **Safeguarding**

CIC/CQ/16/3/19, Safeguarding Report June 2016, was received and considered. A member reminded the Committee that it had been agreed that all Governors would be subject to an Enhanced DBS Check and asked when this would progressed. This will be followed up outside the meeting.