

Colchester Institute Corporation

Minutes of a Meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee
held on 20th March 2018
at the Sheepen Road Campus

Present

David Gask, in the Chair	Martin Fordham
Alison Andreas	David Gronland
Christopher Bridge	

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	Executive Vice Principal: Curriculum, Planning and Quality

Apologies for absence were received from Christopher-Alan Churley

Part I

1. **Declaration of any conflicts of interest**

None.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2017 (CIC/CQ/18/1/1) were received and confirmed. The Chair signed the minute book.

3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The College Executive was asked what progress had been made in identifying a potential new validating body for the College's higher education provision. It was reported that meetings had been scheduled with two universities who had expressed an interest in working the College.

4. **January 2018 Performance Tables**

CIC/18/1/2, Performance Tables Summary 2017 (published Jan/Mar 2018), was received and presented by the Vice Principal: Curriculum Delivery and Performance. It was noted that the College's performance in Level 3 Applied (largely delivered in the classroom) and Level 3 Technical (workshop based) provision had improved over the previous year, suggesting that the work the College has been doing in respect of teaching and learning and improving the overall student experience is leading to better outcomes. The College's performance was comparable to regional FE Colleges, some of whom had recently be revalidated as Ofsted Grade 2 (Good).

In the context that nationally it is a challenge to get students in FE to achieve in English and maths, the College's performance in maths is good, but English is still a weakness. It was reported that data from Midas provides the first evidence that students who do badly at English and maths post 16 are in vocational subject areas such as Construction where the students have a weaker academic profile. It is believed that Colchester Institute has a larger Construction area than the average general further education college, and attracts more learners who find English and maths difficult.

For the first time Level 2 data has been published, and it shows that the College is above the average point score for its Level 2 provision. Governors asked if the grades in the College's Self-Assessment Report would have been different had this data been available at the time the report was completed. It was reported that the SAR reflected the downturn in vocational success rates.

It was noted that there were significant improvements in retention at Level 3 and retention at Level 2 was 5% above the national average.

Governors asked how the data on student destinations is collected and how accurate it is. It was reported that the published destination data was for students finishing 16 to 18 study who either stayed in education or went into employment from October to March the following year. The destination data that had just been published (March 2018) is for students who finished 16 to 18 study in 2015. The Government cross references the destination data provided by the College through the ILR return against other government data sets, for example HESA (Higher Education Statistics Authority) and HM Revenue and Customs. It is important that the College does more to improve the quality of its own information on destinations. The Senior Management Team need to do more to explain to staff the importance of the final destination survey.

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

The Vice Principal: Curriculum, Delivery and Performance reported on the findings of the Area Outcome Review meetings held at the end of January 2018. It was a positive position with areas that were weak last year showing improvement. In the last week Health and Social Care had produced some strong examination results.

The overall standard of teaching is good. The biggest risk remains retention. Attendance data by curriculum area, with comparative data for the previous year, was noted and discussed. The attendance pattern at GCSE lessons is the same as last year. Factors impacting on attendance and plans to address attendance issues were discussed as part of the Area Outcome Review meeting. Governors asked how retention rates compare to other colleges were advised that retention is not as good overall. The attendance of Level 1 learners, many of whom will have had issues at school, including attendance issues, is more variable than other learners. A significant improvement in attendance in motor vehicle compared to the previous year was noted.

The Principal reported that the student performance data is looked at in detail every Monday morning. The current retention rate was 94.28% and attendance was 87.95%. Final predicted grades will be added after Easter and Area Heads will be asked to undertake a health check of the data prior to it being received at the summer meeting of this Committee.

6. **Observation of Teaching and Learning 2017/18**

CIC/CQ/18/1/3, Observation of Teaching and Learning 2017/18 February Update, was received and noted. Observations are being carried out later than in previous years and less than one third of the expected observations have been carried out to date. A further fortnight of observations had commenced on 16th March and the outcomes will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee. It was reported that staff are becoming familiar with the process of being observed and there are not as concerned about observations as previously.

7. **Mid-year Re-grading Exercise by Curriculum Area**

CIC/CQ/18/1/4, Mid-year Re-grading exercise February 2018, was received and the grades that would be expected to be achieved at the end of 2017/18 based on current performance (retention, attendance, how students are progressing) were noted. The re-grading exercise was based on the February 2018 predications and discussions with Area Heads.

All aspects of Study Programmes that would be looked at by Ofsted had been given indicative grades. It was reported that a range of actions were being undertaken to improve the position in Motor Vehicle, including fast tracking some of the teaching and learning so that many of the learners complete their main vocational qualification by the end of April, enabling staff to concentrate on students needing more support. Students who complete in April will carry on with English and maths and some work towards the next level.

Adult Learning is still Good. Outcomes in recent examinations in ESOLs were positive (around 80% pass rate).

The position in Apprenticeships is variable. There are retention issues in some of the areas, and there have been issues in respect of not having Assessors that could go into the workplace. A lot of work is being done to put actions into place to address this. It was noted that some areas are starting to bring apprentices into the College once a month, enabling more students to be assessed. The students benefit from making new contacts and a support network, which may help with retention. The only available comparative data for Apprenticeships is the national achievement rates from two years ago. The College is waiting for the 2016/17 data to be published in May, but it is thought success rates could fluctuate dramatically, particularly because of recent changes.

8. **Update on One Year Strategic Action Plan**

CIC/CQ/18/1/5, Progress against One Year Acton 2017-18 (sections 1-2) – updated March 2018, was received and discussed. It was noted that the College was making good progress against the majority of actions.

9. **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Survey 2017/18**

CIC/CQ/18/1/6, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Survey 2017/18, was received and considered. The Assistant Principal: Quality, Teaching and Learning reported that it was disappointing to see a slight dip in the overall trend in satisfaction. A lot of the scores are high. Areas where there is some dissatisfaction are areas where staffing has been a concern. Governors asked how the data is disseminated and were advised that headline data had been circulated and class level data and student comments will now be circulated for discussion within teams. Some of the comments are very positive. Wi-Fi access is still a problem at all three campuses.

10. **Institutional Annual Review of Courses (ARC) 2016/17**

CIC/CQ/18/1/7, Institutional Annual Review, was received and noted. HE destinations continue to be good with just over 91% of students having a positive outcome (in employment or further study). This is very good for HE in an FE environment. Twenty six courses had 100% of students in positive destinations. The number of students achieving a good degree increased again following a dip the previous year. Governors' attention was drawn to the key themes for consideration over the coming academic year. These include streamlining a number of current programmes and developing new programmes. The Dean of Higher Education is completing a review of internal processes and documentation and two extra Assistant Head of School roles have been created. UCC is moving towards new validations arrangements, and a QAA review of provision could take place from Easter 2018 onwards.

11. **Annual Report to the Board**

CIC/CQ/18/1/8, Curriculum and Quality Committee Annual Report to the Board 2016/17, was received, considered and approved for submission to the Board.

The membership of the Committee was discussed. It was agreed to invite the Vice Chair to become a Member of the Committee, and that in due course it would be useful to appoint a member with HE expertise.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 26th June 2018 at 4.30pm.

13. **Any Other Urgent Business**

There were no items.

PART II – CONFIDENTIAL TO BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

14. Safeguarding

14.1 Safeguarding Report

CIC/CQ/18/1/9, Student Safeguarding Report March 2018, was received and noted.

14.2 SCR Report

CIC/CQ/18/1/10, Safeguarding Compliance Report 14 March 2018, was received and noted. Governors were very concerned at the level of compliance for completed DBS check; Safeguarding training completed within last 3 years; and prevent training, and asked for an update at the next meeting.

The Clerk was asked to check that all Governors had completed a DBS check, and to arrange for refresher training as a future Board briefing.