



THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2023

MEMBERSHIP

Alison Morris (Chair), Janet Gardner (Principal), Andrew Hall (Vice Chair), Susannah Hume, Bryan Johnston

In Attendance:

Hassan Rizvi - Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)

Jack McCabe – Director of TLA (DoTLA)

Amir Ahmed - Director of Learner Services, Marketing & Communications (DoLS)

Stella Hawkins – Director of Curriculum

Michael Burgoyne – Quality Consultant

Elton D’Souza – EBR Consultant

Clerk to the Corporation

Naomi Shoffman - Director of Governance (DoGov)

68. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Mr Johnston, the new Member, Ms Hume who had returned from family leave, Mr Burgoyne, Quality Consultant and Mr D’Souza, the EBR consultant. Introductions were made all round. There were no apologies

69. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no issues included on the agenda for the meeting in which they had a personal interest relative to the College.

70. MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2023 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023 were agreed as a correct record. It was confirmed that all follow up Actions were completed.

71. DRAFT COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT – SAR – 2022/23 AND QIP 23/24

The DPCQ introduced the draft SAR The DPCQ then gave an overview of the SAR and the process for both area and whole SARs and validation of the grades. The panel included external validators including the Chair of this Committee, Mr Burgoyne, an external quality consultant and an external Ofsted inspector. As a result of suggestions put forward at that session the SAR has been updated with increased outcomes. There is a set format for the SAR which has been sectioned in line with Ofsted educational inspection framework. The DPCQ then highlighted the following:

- The ‘Overall Effectiveness’ is ‘Good.’
- The arrangements for safeguarding are **effective**.
- Waltham Forest College makes a **strong contribution** to meeting the skills needs.
- All Key judgements and judgements of provision types are ‘Good’
- Governors are highly ambitious for the College. They possess extensive experience in specialist skilled areas such as education, policy, governance, finance, audit and risk which enables them to provide appropriate challenge and support to the senior leadership team.

- Leaders, managers, and governors have a strong vision and direction for the College which is understood and supported by staff.
- The curriculum is coherently planned which prepares learners for their next stage of education and/or employment. As a result, 96% of study programme learners had positive destinations on completion of their study programme, overall, the positive destinations figure is 93%.
- Leaders adopted, developed, and implemented a curriculum that was ambitious, appropriately relevant to the local, regional and national skills needs and, as a result, had a positive impact on learner outcomes which are overall at 90.6% which is 7.0% above NR and 6.8% above Provider Group average. This demonstrates the robustness of the predicted outcomes.
- In a small minority of areas, some courses achieve below national rates and therefore require improvement.
- Attendance and punctuality to timetabled sessions, including English and maths, is not consistently high across the College.
- Pass rate on GCSE English and maths require improvement.
- The College QIP 2023-24 details areas for improvements and ongoing actions.

Members congratulated the team on a really good report

Questions/comments were raised, and discussions ensued around:

- How the College sets high standards and targets for attendance, expectations of learners around this and other issues that may be impacted by low attendance rates
- The improvement in Apprenticeships and the challenge to maintain quality with the growing the numbers
- Plans for growth which the Principal outlined
- The number of actions taken as a direct result of feedback from this committee such as feeling part of and belonging to the college which has been shared as good practice in other colleges.
- Piloting the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support teachers with prep and planning. The next CPD day will be centred around AI in the classroom and how it can be used effectively to support (not replace) teachers.
- How students are using AI and how it helps them express their thoughts knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes.
- The support given to withdrawing learners with poor attendance – the DPCQ explained the reasons why some students withdraw and reassured the Committee that such students are engaged with throughout the process. Sometimes they are reinstated once the issues are known, and an action plan is put in place to support their return. From a safeguarding point of view the Collge has very transparent protocols in place with such withdrawals being managed in a supportive way, and with vulnerable learners this would be in collaboration with other college staff.
- T Levels and the risks around its delivery. The DPCQ reported that according to the latest Midas report the progression from transition programme to actual T Levels is 9%. The Principal advised that the delivery of T Levels along with apprenticeships and boot camps will be discussed with the ESFA at the next termly review meeting.

The Committee:

- **Agreed the key judgements and recommended approval of the College’s Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022-23to the Corporation.**
- **Noted the strengths and areas for improvement.**
- **Noted the Quality Improvement Plan for 2023- 24.**

72. CURRICULUM AND QUALITY UPDATE - TERM 1

The DPCQ introduced the report which provides a summary of the start to the year. He highlighted progress against key performance indicators including an update to the report that went to November Corporation meeting.

- The College has had a positive start for learners for the academic year 2023-24 while learners benefitted from an extensive and extended Induction process which facilitated their settling down on the courses and learner behaviour is overall very good.
- The overall college attendance and punctuality to the timetabled sessions, requires improvement. The next challenge starts next term when we are likely to see attendance and punctuality rates drop.
- There has been a positive start to curriculum and course short qualifications.
- RUSSELL group placements and HNL progression has improved but overall, there has been a decline in progression to university due to loan issues and more learners choosing alternative pathways. Where there is a gap between applicants and eventual placements the College has the details why they have not progressed to university.
- An increased number of learners were entered for November GCSE English and maths exams, attendance was very positive, and results will be out in January. Additional workshops were delivered to support learners with their preparation.

There followed a lengthy discussion around the GCSE high grades for 16–18-year-olds and some of the challenges surround this.

The Chair asked what are the key things that need to be improved? The DoTLA explained it is a combination of many variables and explained what barriers some students face and advised that attendance on the GCSE courses are lower than in other courses. The headline achievement rates have increased but the high grades need to improve. He reiterated that the switch to GCSEs was partly due to FS not being valued or understood by most employers. The DPCQ added that the staff predominantly teaching GCSE produce better TLA outcomes as they can focus on one subject.

A member asked whether the resources expended on this should be reviewed to check the correct decision was made. The Principal said that after this academic year we will conduct a review. She reminded the Committee why this decision was made and that it was the right decision for our learners. There is a decline in rates nationally and due to our growth, we have 30% more people resitting their GCSE this year which is an increased risk. Actions were discussed and agreed.

A member commented that the numbers are very striking in terms of trends, and it was good to see the deep dive to understand what is going in underneath and understanding what can be done.

The Committee noted the progress on the key aspects of curriculum and quality

73. TEACHING LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT REPORT

The DoTLA presented the report and highlighted the following key points:

- The number of lessons at the College last year that met the expected standard, exceeded the set KPI.
- There has been progress from last academic year, with the majority of the staff in a key area of concern now teaching at the expected standard, and those still not at this standard will be supported with teaching and learning coaches.
- Those staff new to teaching in construction are being supported intensively by an external teacher trainer who is providing direct instruction in the classroom.
- The majority of learners say that they are satisfied with their experience at the College, know the expectations re attendance and state that they feel safe.
- CPD continues to be positively received by the teaching colleagues, with almost all staff surveyed stating that CPD is improving their practice.

The Committee noted the report.

74. A LEVELS AND GCSES PROPOSAL

The DoTLA presented the report and discussed the proposal in line with the agreed strategy following on from the Governors' Strategy Day highlighted the following key points:

- The College is seeking to add a GCSE and A Level study programme to mitigate the changes caused by the qualification reforms.
- Two GCSE pathways will be offered. Only the most popular subjects will run if either cohort underrecruits.
- The A Level offer consists of facilitating subjects, and other subjects within the top 10 most chosen A Levels in London. We believe this offer to be competitive.
- A minimum in-year investment of £46,855 will need to be made this academic year, which could rise depending on our staff recruitment strategy.
- There is a significant risk in not introducing new qualifications given qualification reforms are taking place around us, and there are several subjects set to be defunded for which there is not a T Level available.

A member asked for more detail around the contact time what students will be doing and the recruitment strategy for teachers. The DoTLA explained that contact time will depend on which subjects are being taken. Also, what staff are recruited will be dependent on how recruitment to the courses have gone.

There followed a discussion around the importance of conducting due diligence and assessing the risks. The DoTLA went through the various identified risks of both offering and not offering this provision. A paper is due to go to Corporation with all the financial data, and if approved we plan to invest ahead of next year to ensure so we can recruit the expertise required.

The Committee agreed to recommend for approval to the Corporation the change to educational characteristics of the curriculum offer with the introduction of A levels and expansion of GCSEs

75. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT

The DPCQ presented the report which updates Governors on the range and number of complaints and compliments received by the College between September 2022 and August 2023. The Governors discussed trends.

The Committee noted the report.

76. RISK REGISTER REVIEW

The DPCQ presented the Risk Register showing pre and post mitigation scorings and controls in place to mitigate risks identified for curriculum and quality. All key risk areas have been updated with recent controls and management activities.

The Committee confirmed they were satisfied with the scores and the actions being taken to mitigate risk. The Chair thanked the DPCQ for the report.

The Committee received and noted the updated College Risk Register.

77. COMMITTEE SELF ASSESSMENT 2022-23

The DoGov presented the report which details the areas of impact the Committee had made through its work in the last twelve months and those that require improvements.

The main area identified for improvement was the need for the membership to have the skill sets and experience to meet the planned business needs going forward. The DoGov said she believes this should be addressed for this year through the recruitment of a new Governor, who has the skills and expertise in the college's planned areas of growth and new qualifications on offer.

The work carried out by the Committee in the year clearly demonstrates a good level of impact and effectiveness.

The Committee discussed the responses and the proposed grade of– 2 – Good and what it needs to do to get to Outstanding

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Corporation a grade of Good for its performance and effectiveness during 2022-23.

78. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 12 March 2024**
- 18 June 2024**

The Chair thanked everyone for the high quality papers and good discussions and there being no further business closed the meeting at **19.42**.

These minutes have been approved by the Curriculum and Quality Committee and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

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.....A Morris26 March 2024.....
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