

CORPORATION BOARD of RICHMOND UPON THAMES COLLEGE
Minutes of Curriculum Standards and Quality Committee Meeting
8 February 2017 at 5.30pm

Members Present: Barbara Gilgallon(Chair), Rob Pope, Mark Payton, Sally Newton, Robin Ghurbhurun,

In attendance: Zoë Lawrence, John O’Shea, Theresa Bray, Neal Hook (Staff member designate), Grant Martindale*, Janna Cooper*, Nilar Zaw*

Apologies: Shannon White-Reeves, Ezra Smith

*For agenda item C only

A	Procedural
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies for Absence The Chair welcomed Neal Hook (staff governor designate) to the committee.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items None.</p>
3	<p>I.Approve minutes of CQS Committee 9 November 2016 The minutes were approved pending the correction of date of the future meeting from February 2016 to 2017.</p> <p>II.Review CQS Terms of Reference Members asked that a further point be included under quality to monitor the achievement of the Equality and Diversity Plan, and that job titles referred to in the ToR be updated. The revised ToR would then be recommended to the Corporation. ACTION: Clerk to revise the TOR and recommend to the Corporation</p> <p>III.Actions and matters arising B3 – TB tabled a document containing samples of the targets, many of which had been set by students. There were over 12,000 recorded on the system which was being audited during February. B3/D1 – JOS and MP reported that the documents had been reviewed and feedback was being provided to the College’s marketing team. E1 – JOS reassured the committee that the fundraising was legitimate to support refugees.</p>

B	STRATEGIC/RISK ISSUES
1	<p>College Risk Register <i>(An extract of the College Risk Register was tabled at the meeting)</i></p> <p>The CQS Committee oversees 6 risks. JOS drew the committee’s attention to:</p> <p>Risk No 2 – Declining achievement rates in A and AS level programmes. JOS said that the results of the mock exams conducted before Christmas were indicating higher results. It was suggested that in the light of this and progress being made on improvements in each curriculum area that the RAG rating could be changed from red to amber. This was agreed.</p>

	<p>Risk No 3 – No improvement in Ofsted Grade. Despite the higher results of the mock exams it was considered too early to change the RAG rating for this from red. A further visit from the Ofsted Support and Challenge Inspector was due in April.</p> <p>Risk No 10 – Area Review outcome recommends out of borough merger. JOS reported that discussions with RACC concerning adult and apprenticeship courses was underway.</p> <p>Risk No 18 – Poor Student Experience. JOS reported that the initial student survey showed an increase of 2% on last year of students recommending the college.</p>
2	<p>College KPIs <i>(The College KPIs were circulated in advance)</i></p> <p>The following were noted:</p> <p>In year retention – This was currently at 98.7% which was 1-2% higher than the previous year.</p> <p>Attendance - It was noted that there had been changes to how absence was recorded for incidents such as rail strikes. This showed attendance to be 2% lower than recorded. Members suggested that this be noted as a foot note on the KPIs. ACTION: Footnote to be included on the attendance KPI</p> <p>Quality Improvement - JOS highlighted some changes for A and AS levels and Basic Skills. He commented that all predictions were conservative. In addition to the data shared at this meeting from CDs, AP3 data would be available for the March CQS meeting.</p> <p>Allocations and Finance - RG explained that 16-18 student numbers had fallen which had impacted on the forecast surplus/ deficit which was now more likely to break even than be in surplus. The January financial management report would soon be available for Governors to review in more detail.</p>

C	TEACHING AND LEARNING
1	<p>Presentations from the Curriculum Directors <i>(Data from these presentations was circulated in advance. The full presentations were sent to members following the meeting and further comment was invited).</i></p> <p>The Committee received three detailed presentations from each of the Curriculum Directors. Members noted the alternative options available to students who were currently struggling on their existing study programme. Different routes including alternative study programmes, work experience or employment were available to these students from the Summer term. This was ensuring improved learner retention, and that they left the college with a qualification. These flexibilities were being used in numerous areas following a detailed review of individual learners.</p> <p>Q – Given that Business was a weaker area for the college, was the introduction of a business apprenticeship an additional risk on that part of the curriculum? A – the apprenticeship was being managed separately to mitigate that potential risk.</p>

	<p>Concern was expressed about the low attendance of L2 maths, though strategies to improve this were being implemented. A clearer understanding of learner progress in maths was being achieved to allow earlier sitting of functional skills tests, and more incremental paths to learning. More management time was being given to A level maths and at risk students were being targeted to attend compulsory intervention sessions.</p> <p>Q – A letter was sent home from the Curriculum Director when attendance fell to 60% or below. Was this too late? A – the cross college policy on attendance was implemented which included numerous other measures to encourage attendance before the involvement of the CD. 60% attendance was the pivotal point at which success was unlikely if it fell further below that level, so at this point it was referred to the CD. The same process was in place for vocational subjects and there was communication across subject areas to monitor and improve attendance. Maths and English lessons were timetabled in the middle of the day between vocational subjects with the intention of improving attendance.</p> <p>Q – Was poorer attendance in English and maths linked to there being no specific employment outcome at the end of the course? A – This could be a consideration, but it was more likely a result of the policy requiring students who failed their GCSE to retake maths and English at college which was a condition of funding.</p> <p>Q – Was specific support provided for learners with Asperger’s syndrome or similar learning difficulties? A – Some students were supported through Learning Support. The Twilight Club provided a separate space for these students to do private study, plus mechanism were in place to enable continuity of support from tutors who were most familiar with their needs. Staff were also supported to spend sufficient time with these students.</p> <p>Q – Were students mis-enrolled onto the psychology A level? A – In previous years the course was very popular with a high volume of learners, though the outcomes had not been good. This has been addressed by increasing the entry requirements. The cohort was now smaller but the percentage success rate was set to improve.</p> <p>Q – How were British Values and the Prevent Agenda being incorporated in to the curriculum? A – This was delivered as part of the college curriculum and included in schemes of work using real examples as well as theoretical contexts. The College Values are consistent with the British Values. It was monitored through lesson observations and learning walks.</p> <p>Members thanked the Curriculum Directors for their helpful and detailed presentations and acknowledged the amount of work that had gone in to them.</p>
2	<p>Teaching and Learning Reports <i>(A report on Student Performance (Assessment point 2), and T&L Update was circulated in advance)</i></p>

Student Performance

Members noted the Report for Assessment Point 2, and how these figures from the recent assessments had been reviewed with other criteria to form at the CDs predictions for their presentations. TB added that bringing the mock exams forward 2 months to December had enabled the college to identify students for intervention support, and for parent reports to be prepared much sooner. This was a significant change on the previous year. The amount of information available to parents online via the portal had also increased. This had increased parent engagement which had impacted on tutors' workload, but was helpful for learner outcomes.

JOS explained he had not provided a Value Added report for this committee meeting due to the cost. This was challenged as it was considered to be an important data source to measure performance. JOS hoped that the data in the presentations and assessment report would be sufficient at this point.

T&L Update

TB explained that all lesson observations had been completed by curriculum area during the Autumn term. The process had moved away from an individual rating to a judgment on the effectiveness of the lesson and progress of learners. Areas identified for improvement were planning, and reviewing and evaluating learning. It should be noted that the lesson observations were planned and teachers were notified in advance and as such it was expected to see best teaching. The take up of CPD at this point was as expected, but this would continue to be monitored. As a result of the lesson observations 12 teachers were receiving support, 2 have left the college, and 3 were considered to be poor.

RG noted that the EFA were very impressed that 100% of lesson observations had been completed in the Autumn term.

Two externally validated quality reviews had taken place which would be shared with the committee at its March meeting. No actions had arisen from these reviews.

ACTION: Quality Review reports to be provided to the March CQS meeting

RP asked for more detail on how the cross college themes identified in the exercise were being addressed.

ACTION: To provide detail on the how the cross college themes are being addressed.

Q – This must have had an impact on teachers' morale – how would you describe it?

A – JOS said that staff were aware how important it was for the college performance to improve. RG felt that morale was middle to low given financial constraints the college was under, and the tight control of resources. In the short term this was unlikely to improve as some staff restructuring would be announced after half term. It was hoped that the construction of the new college buildings and a positive Ofsted in the longer term would improve morale. There was to be a staff well-being day the following week after half term.

D	OTHER
1	Any other business The safeguarding update from SN was deferred to the March meeting when there would be more time for a detailed discussion.
2	Future CQS Committee Meetings: Wednesday 15 th March 2017 Wednesday 7 th June 2017 The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

SIGNED: **Date:**

Barbara Gilgallon
Chair of Curriculum Quality and Standards Committee

Actions

Ref	Agenda Item	Task	Responsible
A3	ii	To revised the ToR for the CQS committee and recommend these to the Corporation	Clerk
B2	B2	To include a footnote on the KPIs to account for changes in absence recording	JOS
C2	C2	Two external quality review to be shared with the committee at the March meeting	TB
C2	C2	To provide a summary on how the cross college themes identified in the T&L update are being addressed	TB