CORPORATION BOARD of RICHMOND UPON THAMES COLLEGE
Minutes of Curriculum Standards and Quality Committee Meeting
9 November 2016 at 5.30pm

Members Present: Barbara Gilgallon(Chair), Rob Pope, Ezra Smith, Mark Payton (Co-opted Member – arrived 5.50pm)

In attendance: Clare Thornes, John O'Shea, Theresa Bray, Rosh Sellahewa

Apologies: Shannon White-Reeves, Sally Newton, Robin Ghurbhurun

A	Procedural
1	**Welcome and Apologies for Absence** The Chair welcomed new governor Rosh Sellahewa, who is not a CQS committee member, but a member of the Audit Committee.
2	**Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items** None.
3	i. **Minutes of the CQS Committee Meetings held on 11th May 2016 and 27th September 2016** The two sets of Minutes were agreed to be accurate records of the meetings. i. **Matters arising** Action Point A – Explanation of the change to linear A levels to be posted to the Parents and Employers tabs on the college website. JOS said that the explanation has just been added to the Parents and Employers tabs (although it had been place on the 16-18 year olds tab in August) i. **Requests for Discussion of Grey Box Items** None.

B	STRATEGIC/RISK ISSUES
1	**College Risk Register** *(An extract of the College Risk Register was circulated in advance)* The CQS Committee oversees 6 risks. Three of the risks were briefly discussed: Risk No 2 – 'Declining achievement rates in A and AS level programmes': actions are underway to address this, as presented to CQS on 27th September. Risk No 3 – 'No improvement in Ofsted Grade': The Ofsted Support and Challenge Inspector's letter will be discussed under Agenda item C7.

	Risk No 10 – 'Area Review outcome recommends out of borough merger': It was noted that Training Solutions and RACC will work together to provide a shared 'Joint Business Development Unit'.
2	**College KPIs** *(The College KPIs were circulated in advance)* A few of the rows were picked out as follows: • Row A - Retention figure will be adjusted, post Census. Attendance is higher than indicated, at >90%. • Row C – the Induction Survey response rate has improved. • Row K – (GSCE English / Maths – high grades pass rate) the actual Success Rates for A to C grades in the summer was 65%. The target has been reduced, because the overall pass rate was much lower.
3	**Response to Internal Audit Report on ILPs** *(Internal Audit Report on ILPs and the 'Policy – Tracking and Monitoring Student and Apprentice Progress' were circulated in advance)* The Internal Audit was conducted in January 2016. However, the Audit Committee only received the internal audit ILP Report in mid-June. An action point from the Audit Committee meeting was to refer the report on to the Chair of the CQS Committee. Following that referral, the Chair of CQS and Cathy Bird met with Theresa Bray in June, to find out what actions were being taken to address the issues raised. TB provided some background; historically, no SMART targets were set on ProMonitor. Now, SMART targets are being incorporated into the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) section on ProMonitor. The minimum targets are: ➢ 1 pastoral target, set by the personal tutor. ➢ At least 1 academic target, set within the first five weeks of the autumn term. ➢ At least 1 academic target following Assessment Point 1. Tutors may not use the same target for a whole group; the targets must be individualised. The initial diagnostic and assessments carried out in English and Maths will be used to set targets in the first instance. The quality of SMART target setting is very improved, and it may even become a strength of the college. *Q: What is a pastoral target?* Tutors set the pastoral targets, for example, around bursary / finances / attendance / social action (RAG week). They cover the wraparound support that is provided to students. *Q: How can bursary be a target for students? It's not in their control.* Sometimes students are not even registered for a bursary, even though they are entitled. The personal tutor teams have also worked on risk indicators for students. Students are now RAG-rated, the measurement being against Attendance, Achievement, Attitude/Behaviour, and Ambition. This will lead to the border on the student's photo on ProMonitor showing red / amber / green / blue. Blue is for outstanding students.

TB gave a live demonstration of ProMonitor, looking at several students. She explained the meaning of the badges (for example, out of sync, on disciplinary procedure, ALS etc).

ES said that he does not have any SMART targets yet. He has been working on UCAS applications in his classes this term. TB said that A Level and Level 3 students are expected to set their own targets.

Q: Can governors see a sample of SMART targets?
ACTION: TB to provide some samples.

Q: Is it possible to review targets at a higher level?
Yes. The targets can be reviewed at course level, but currently, there is no curriculum level view.

Q: Are statistics available on the use of ProPortal?
Yes. ProPortal is accessible to parents, though the percentage use is low. The parents are not very engaged, and only 74 parents came to parents evening.

MP offered to look at the communications that go out to parents.
ACTION: JOS to provide a parent communication programme to MP, who will brainstorm ideas with his marketing team.

Q: How much training do tutors receive on how to set SMART targets?
Tutors were provided with two days training during the summer. A set of exemplar targets was made available. There was a further CPD day in October. The biggest challenge is for tutors to find time to upload the targets onto the system.

Q: Do tutors and teachers have to follow their own SMART targets? Yes.

ES noted that, from a student's point of view, using the ProMonitor system is relatively easy. Last year however, it was not available from home for months. It is useful that timetables are available on ProMonitor this year.

Student Progress Boards have been introduced. These look at risk indicators for all students, three times a year.

This year there will be four Key Assessment Points.

- o KAP1 – This was completed in October
- o KAP2 – This is the mock exam in December. It should be possible to make grade predictions, as the mock exam is based on real exam questions.
- o KAP3 – February
- o KAP4 – April

Curriculum Performance Reviews follow the Key Assessment Points. Grading will be 1-4, but it will not be possible to make outcome predictions following KA1

Q: For the mock exams results, is there any danger of grade inflation occurring?
There will always be grade inflation. However, this year, SLT have insisted on specific exam questions with marking schemes.

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	The Curriculum Performance Board meetings are attended by the CD, CMs, JOS and TB. ProMonitor and live data are used, and the format is a direct challenge to the CM. The level of scrutiny is high, and the discussion is around individual students.

Q: Will this tough approach work?
Yes. For vocational courses, intervention has already taken place, and now that College Census date has passed, there should be a 100% pass rate. However, for A Level courses, the effort is directed at improving T&L.

Governors noted that managing the course performance review is a fine balance between carrot and stick. JOS said that the best approach is to encourage CMs to take ownership of individual students.

TB observed that the process is quite difficult at the moment. However, the CMs do feel that they are being listened to.

SAR validation panels were held last week, and the tone was softer. Most curriculum areas have done a good job of self-assessment. |
| **4** | **College Self-Assessment Summary**
(The 'Summary of Judgements' was circulated in advance, and the 'Curriculum Area Grades – Post Validation 2015/16 compared to 2014/15' was tabled to the meeting)

TB ran through the tabled Curriculum Area Grades, looking particularly at the Overall Effectiveness. She noted that Science/Computing is still a Grade 4, and Performing Arts and Media have gone from a Grade 2 down to 3. Richard Pemble (the Ofsted Support and Challenge Inspector) has validated the self-assessed grades.

Q: (to the Student Governor) Has there been an improvement in assessment and feedback? [as a result of efforts in T&L development].
ES responded that assessment had definitely been better this year, and also that there is more feedback. |
| **5** | **College Quality Improvement Plan**
(The 'College Quality Improvement Plan – 2016/17' was tabled to the meeting)

TB said that the tabled version of the QIP is an early draft. It will be populated once the SAR is complete.

Members observed that some of the Issues for Improvement/Development do not contain any actions. For example, 2g 'Improve the value we add …' contains goals rather than actions. TB responded that overall, section 2 is about improving retention, attendance, and outcomes, which will all feed into improved VA. The 'action' for 2g is about setting a target to work towards.

RP stated that in section 4 (Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare) there is no reference to British Values and PREVENT Agenda. This is a current OFSTED concern, and during recent inspections, inspectors have been asking students questions around this. |

	The college has quite strong filters to prevent students logging onto inappropriate content. However, the student governor said that the filters are sometimes excessive. For example, access to important LGBT information is denied.

C	TEACHING AND LEARNING
1	**Ofsted Support and Challenge Programme** Letter from Ofsted Support and Challenge Inspector
2	**Value Added Report** *(4 documents were tabled:* *Alps A Level – Alps Grading System* *Alps AS Level – Strategic Overview / Value added overview* *Alps BTEC – Strategic Overview / Value added overview* *Alps BTEC 90-credit Diploma – Strategic Overview / Value added overview)* JOS gave a broad explanation of how ALPS works. The grading system runs from 1 to 9. Grades 7, 8 and 9 are the bottom 25%. Grades 1, 2 and 3 are the top 25%. He drew members' attention to Rows E and G of the A level Overview: the number of student on mixed study programmes has increased (to 8.4%), and the proportion of the college's students entering college with the lowest band of grades (a point score of less than 5.5) has increased to 42.6%. The national average points score for A level students is 6.2. The only conclusion that can be drawn from the report is that the college has experienced three years of very poor value added. In 2010 VA was better. The BTEC VA is better than the VA for A levels, though there is still work to do. Q*: Art (Textiles) and PE were small courses. Would the VA be expected to be better (there was a sharp drop in VA between 2013/14 and 2015/16).* Yes, in theory, but unfortunately those areas experienced the loss of an excellent teacher. The PE A level course has now been closed. *Q: Can VA reports be generated in-year?* Yes, but there is a cost. Moreover, there is a danger of inaccuracy due to grade inflation. *Q: How then can VA be tracked in-year?* The MIDAS report gives some information. In addition, the Head of Information Systems is able to generate some limited data from the mock exam results.
3	**Teaching and Learning Reports** *(the 'Summary of TLA to date' was circulated in advance)*

TB reported that lesson observation 'weeks' are now underway. More than 60 teachers have been observed since the beginning of term, and every teacher will have been observed by 5th December. TB drew members' attention to the list of TLA judgments (page 55 of the meeting papers).

Members noted the comments in relation to Business, ie. that teaching is very mixed, and queried why best practice is not being shared. This is due to weak management of that curriculum area. Schemes of work should cover strategies for learning, and it appears that the leadership and management needs strengthening.

MP reported his recent experience of attending a lesson observation at college. He spoke to several students and was surprised that they did not have career aspirations. He expressed an interest in how discussions about careers are introduced at college.

Q: Are previous students invited back to speak to current students?
Only on an ad-hoc basis. RS noted that one ex-RuTC student is working at CERN in Switzerland.

D	THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE
1	**Student Surveys** Summary of Student Induction Survey 2016/17 This first survey of the year is a relatively brief one. The next survey (on-programme survey) is broken down by curriculum area. For the first time, this survey includes Year 2 students, so the outcomes are not directly comparable to last year's results. *Q: Does the college know how effective its marketing campaigns are in attracting students?* No. There is no accurate picture of return on investment. *Q: Do we understand the different paths students take to get to college?* Not specifically, only anecdotally. **ACTION: JOS to provide MP with a summary of the marketing strategies used to attract new students, and MP will run them by his marketing team.**
2	**Complaints** (Information Only – receive complaints report)

E	OTHER
1	**Any other business**

	1. **Islamic Society:** RP had read in the Student Weekly News that the College Islamic Society is fundraising for Syria. He would like reassurance that the fundraising is for legitimate purposes. JOS said that a staff member sits on the Islamic Society. <mark>**ACTION: JOS to check the aims/objectives of the fundraising and confirm that it is legitimate.**</mark> 2. **CQS Committee Annual Report** *(the 'CWS Annual Report 2015/16' was tabled)* The Chair tabled the annual report of the Committee. She noted that attendance at the committee has been good, and the terms of reference have been fulfilled.
2	**Future CQS Committee Meetings:** Wednesday 8th February 2017 Wednesday 15th March 2017 Wednesday 7th June 2017 The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

SIGNED: …………………………………….. **Date:**

Barbara Gilgallon
Chair of Curriculum Quality and Standards Committee

Actions

Ref	Agenda Item	Task	Responsible
A	B3	TB to supply governors with some samples of SMART targets	TB
B	B3	JOS to provide a parent communication programme to MP, who will ask for ideas from his marketing team.	JOS / MP
C	D1	JOS to provide MP with a summary of the marketing strategies used to attract new students, and MP will run them by his marketing team.	JOS / MP
D	E1	JOS to check the aims/objectives of the fundraising by the Islamic Society and confirm that it is legitimate.	JOS