

Meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee

Date:	30 June 2025	Room number	Boardroom
Present	Alex Keay (Chair), Andy Forbes (AF), Samuel Nelson (SNe), Esther Thompson (ET), Paige Summers (Student Governor) (PS), Natalie Davison (Principal/CEO), Sarah Noble (SNo)		
Present via Teams:	Charles Tennant (Vice-Chair), Akeel Ahmed (AA), Katharina De Vita (KDV), Forhad Altafi (FA), Mina Rehman (Student Governor) (MR)		
In attendance	Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) (CGO) Michael Smith (Faculty Director – Excellence in Learning and the Learner Experience) (FDEL) Jason Turton (Deputy Principal – Curriculum & Quality) (DPCQ)		
Apologies	There were no apologies.		
Circulation	Curriculum & Quality Committee, Corporation		

1.	Welcome and apologies for absence The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting of the Committee. There were no apologies for absence.																		
2.	Declarations of Interest Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. None were anticipated.																		
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 17 March 2025 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 March 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record. Approved: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 March 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.																		
4.	Matters arising <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Actions</th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>12.</td><td>A summary reminding Governors what could be asked from a process point of view from Ofsted to be provided asap.</td><td>MS/CGO</td><td>ASAP</td><td>Complete</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> In response to a query from AF concerning the Multiply project, the Deputy Principal – Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ) confirmed that the project had now ended.				Actions					12.	A summary reminding Governors what could be asked from a process point of view from Ofsted to be provided asap.	MS/CGO	ASAP	Complete					
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5.	Check-In Discussion The Chair introduced the check-in process and asked all in attendance to highlight one reflection on the Ofsted College result.																		

6.	C&Q – Strategic Risk Register The DPCQ highlighted the following: - Two risks identified around curriculum – high quality teaching and learning and stakeholder experience. - Mapped Ofsted report to the risks and updated actions. - Distance travelled – risks will need to remain - Development of some of the risk actions, communication and the core of the quality of teaching and learning through Monitoring and Performance (MAP) meetings and Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs). The Chair questioned whether there was a particular step change/theme for next year where the focus needed to be. The DPCQ replied that the data could improve by becoming a live data source. There was a need to invest in teaching and learning and to continue to improve stakeholder engagement internally and externally to shape the curriculum offer. AF stated that staffing issues were still a concern to recruit the right calibre of lecturer in some areas and this remained a strategic risk for both this Committee and the Policy & Resources Committee. MR advised that there had been lots of staffing problems during her course this academic year, a lack of consistency with students and lot of students impacted on how the course ended which had caused dissatisfaction for the student experience as an adult. AF stated that, overall the College has improved, however it was acknowledged there were pockets that still needed work. SNo queried whether the same staffing issue were affecting apprenticeships. The Faculty Director – Excellence in Learning and the Learner Experience (FDEL) replied that staffing in apprenticeships was the same challenge as across the College. There had been vacancies but the staffing picture had improved in recruiting management but there were two vacancies outstanding. Consolidating would help with the staffing picture. AA stated that a proportion of English and Maths (E&M) tutors requiring support was previously raised and this needed to be supported. He added that the recent Ofsted outcome should help attract talent. Agreed: that the current update be received.
7.	Ofsted Debrief – What next? The DPCQ referred to the points raised during the check-in discussion. The FDEL focused on areas for improvement, highlighting: - Five areas has been noted for improvement - Apprenticeship recommendations would be discussed later in the agenda - Attendance in E&M and ESOL – would always be a challenge and had been a long standing area for improvement. IT was anticipated that attendance would improve with the new procedures for 2025/26. - Moved to a new platform for work experience which would capture this more easily. It was clarified that the - L2 reference referred to by Ofsted was in relation to a deep dive. AF stated that the College was focussed on the right areas and everyone was on the same page and that essence needed to be kept. There was a need to listen to the difficult messages and react appropriately – cannot allow ourselves to be distracted from the right format which included the appropriate feedback loops. The current Ofsted framework was changing and the College needed to keep a close eye on developments and consider early reports to see what emphasis was being made. The Chair stated that a lot of work had taken place to try to achieve better coordination between committees

	and deciding the topics to be focussed on in C&Q/raised to the Corporation as appropriate. Robust discussions had taken a while to achieve the right tone but authenticity and transparency had been gained and there was now a need to keep this momentum. FA stated that one of the key themes from a staffing perspective was purpose and motivation. A lot of transitioning had taken place to improve things from the previous inspection and it was pleasing to see the changes that had been made, however, there were still staff who needed a boost or helping hand. It was noted that HR were working on talent management but the College needed to continue to ensure quality of staff and wellbeing. KDV queried what measures had been put in place for recruitment across challenging areas eg network of alumni or engaging people closer to retirement who did not want to continue in a practical based career. The Principal/CEO replied that a multi-channel staff recruitment campaign was taking place, targeting universities for new graduates and HR were undertaking targeted recruitment. The College did not have the alumni element at present but this would be considered. The Chair requested that recruitment across challenging areas be included as an action in the risk register. This was agreed. ET asked for clarity on the position with work experience for Level 2 learners. The Principal/CEO responded that a dual effort was taking place between the central team which sat in student support and curriculum staff. Ofsted had stated that too many of the Level 2 placements were internal or simulated work-related learning whereas at Level 3 more external placements were taking place. Level of employer engagement was mixed across the College. The FDEL stated that, looking ahead, the Ofsted framework was changing but the College should hopefully have a few years to understand the framework in context which would need to be drawn out in this Committee. Action: recruitment across challenging areas to be included in the C&Q risk register.
8.	Overview of C&Q Performance (Data Pack) The DPCQ highlighted the following: - Focus to drive achievement rates - 16-18 retention at 93% against a target of 91% - 19+ retention was c95% however 57 withdrawals were in the pipeline - All age retention expected to hit target 94% - 16-18 vocational pass rate 93% - 19+ predicted pass rate 92% - Work experience and Employability, Enrichment and Pastoral (EEP) data being collated into the new software - All ages vocational achievement 87% - last year 84% - All ages including E&M – 85% predicted at present, last year 81% - Accuracy in data SNo asked whether data within curriculum areas was also available. The DPCQ replied that curriculum data was provided for Maths and English but headline data was provided for other areas. The Principal/CEO added that moving forward this would be provided through the data visualisations. The Vice-Chair referred to the dip in 16-18 work experience and asked whether there would be changes coming through for this. The Principal/CEO replied that this was a data issue. The College was using a new system and input into this was currently at 50%, however the Heads of Division (HoDs) were focussing on getting the data completed. 86% of learners were planned to have work experience for mainstream. The Vice-Chair suggested that the colour coding for the RAG ratings been amended to remove the margin from within the target eg the rating should only be green when the target was met not when a 5% margin was included.

	This was agreed. Action: Colour coding for RAG ratings to be amended to remove margins within targets.
9.	English and Maths – Update The DPCQ informed the Committee of the following key points: - Staffing remained a key issue – recruited two managers in the area, HOD Maths and Curriculum Manager (CM) English but vacancies remained - Business planning – working closely with other departments - PET-XI – supporting to work with smaller groups - Higher Technical Learning assistants (HTL's) in place - Ofsted recognised distance travelled - Exams, assessment and work with the Digital Innovation team have taken time to work across college but there has been an increase in attendance and the use of AI for exam preparations is having an impact The Chair asked whether there was increased consistency around other HoDs including English and Maths (E&M) in their results. The DPCQ replied that this had improved. HoDs had been supporting on a rota in the E&M hub but this needed to continue. The Chair stated that the College needed to be vigilant on this and encouraged Governors to visit E&M and reinforce the whole College approach. SNe added that it was key for curriculum areas to cross reference to E&M. The Vice-Chair stated that this was a really good report with clear data and asked for clarity on why the Attendance gap between papers 1-2 in English had widened from 2023/24. The Principal/CEO responded that the issue was when students felt they had not done well in the first paper therefore did not want to continue. A huge amount of work takes place to communicate with students before exams and this would continue. AF referred to the high proportion of students who needed additional support with exams. The FDEL confirmed that all the required support was in place but resources were an issue. A third of learners for the English exam had required additional support. PS added that the reading app provided on the computers had been beneficial. KDV questioned what work was taking place to ensure students could adequately act on feedback in order to improve. The FDEL replied that this was an issue for students - the College had undertaken work on the auto marking tool for AI and staff were undertaking walking/talking mocks (talking to students about the exam, simulating the exam and providing feedback) but this could be grown and developed. The Committee recorded their thanks to the Head of English and Maths for the work undertaken and the comprehensive update. Agreed: that the current position be noted.
10.	Apprenticeships – Update The FDEL highlighted the following: - Ofsted feedback, predicted achievement profile and looking ahead to shape the department going forward - Ofsted – two critical improvements were to ensure employers were involved in progress reviews; employer involvement in the curriculum (standards need to have a direct link to what employers need) - Target for this year is 60% - DfE accountability raised the standard for apprenticeship QAR (mid level prediction is 52.4%; higher end prediction 57%) - Difficult to estimate where the College will finish – 26 pending achievements before 31 July 2025 – 6 have passed and another 20 taking End Point Assessment (EPA) over the next month – this was a modest forecast as not all apprentices will pass (c60% estimated and some will need to be withdrawn) - Redundancy consultation - 10 roles at risk but hoping to redeploy staff - Need to refine offer, make sure department can tackle risks and provide quality, lower reliance on agency

staff needed

- Restructure to consolidate team to focus on fewer things to ensure these are done well
- Potentially looking to recruit apprentices next year in electrical, plumbing, rail engineering, property maintenance and teaching – these are skills needs and can recruit viable numbers
- 4 years ago the College was recruiting to 28 standards, last year there were 45 standards – consolidation was key!

AF stated that this was a tangible process, agreeing that consolidation was key. He noted that the College had a problem with legacy as some Apprentices had been recruited over several years and questioned what impact this was having. The FDEL responded that plumbing and electrical apprentices were on four-year programmes and this was the first year there would be completers in this area (relatively positive they would pass EPA). If the College was continuing to run these standards then it was key to ensure that these four years of study were good quality. An Apprenticeship Manager with plumbing and electrical expertise had been employed this year and played a pivotal role.

AA questioned the cost benefit of the restructure and whether there were any quality or continuity risks. The FDEL advised that the motivator behind the restructure was to make the area more solvent. It was forecasted that the curriculum plan would put the area in a much more favourable position. The College would work with any apprentices still active at the end of the programme affected by redundancies to see them through the programme.

The Vice-Chair stated that issues between staff and employers had been highlighted within electrical and plumbing and asked how these were being addressed if the College intended to continue in these areas. The FDEL replied that, historically, the delivery for plumbing and electrical had been managed by the curriculum Teams. The challenge had been a capacity and expertise issue to marry the apprenticeships and Curriculum team but the new staff in place now had the capacity to do this. Ofsted spoke with apprentices that had historic issues and issues were foreseen going forward.

The Vice-Chair asked for clarity on how knowledge of British Values would be incorporated into the new structure. The FDEL advised that British Values were not endemic across the department. Office staff would oversee apprentices programme on the standard but the role needed to be refreshed including delivering tutorials which would improve consistency and quality.

The Chair stated that the strategic intent and reset for apprenticeships was to have a smaller higher quality unit. There was a 16% gap between the worst- and best-case scenario but the best case was still below target, therefore how was progressed assured next academic year. The College needed to make sure that the Policy & Resources Committee monitored staffing and resources to ensure the correct decisions were made to deliver this which would not happen in one year. This was a strong plan but would require a long journey.

The Vice-Chair advised that the plan needed to be refined further and collaboration tested as soon as possible - listening to feedback from employers. The Principal/CEO advised that an Apprenticeship Adviser from the FE Commissioner team would be supporting with apprenticeships and an FE Commissioner Advisers would be working with the College on a curriculum review.

SNo questioned whether apprenticeships were a historic issue or an employer issue. The FDEL advised that some of the apprentices were enrolled during Covid and four year programmes had resulted in inaccurate data.

The Chair thanked the FDEL for a comprehensive report.

Agreed: that the current position be noted.

11.	Draft Curriculum Plan 2025/26 The DPCQ presented the Draft Curriculum Plan 2025/26, noting the following key points: - Curriculum planning process commenced before Christmas, further meetings took place in February/March and the Plan was developed from April - Plan is aligned with the strategic plan, industrial strategy - Developed engagement with employers, skills - Not included is the marketing strategy – need to consider how this is developed in terms of growth – 20% market share target - Plan includes enhancements and refinements from previous year AF questioned why the targets for next year were lower than the previous year. The DPCQ replied that some courses were up and some down in 16-18 and there would be small adjustments eg picking up a T-level but the target for 16-18 would be achieved. It was advised that some High Needs provision eg REACH and RISE had been moved into a different category. The Principal/CEO added that applications were strong and the demographic was going in the right direction. Growth expectation aligned to strategic intent areas would be confirmed. The Vice-Chair stated that the narrative referred to construction as an area of growth and the targets was 0. The DPCQ advised that the overall plan was the strategic plan. The figures were being refined but the College would achieve contract targets. AA advised that London was a challenging landscape. The curriculum plan would benefit from each directorate including an overarching statement of intent eg areas to grow/areas not looking to grow and why to provide assurance. The Chair questioned if an area was going to increase had the impact on staffing and budget already been included in the curriculum plan. AF added that it was unclear what was driving the decisions (space, staffing, lack of demand etc, new areas). After further detailed discussion the Committee requested the following additions to the Curriculum Plan: - Statement of intent to be included for each area focussed on potential growth areas, areas not looking to grow and the reasons behind these decisions - Clarity on the impact on staffing and budget for areas of growth etc - Further clarity on the driver behind decisions eg staffing, space, demand, new areas - Reference to London Growth Plan and LSIP to show partnerships, employer relations - HE provision – reference to timescale - things that may take a long time to build and how long would the financial benefits take to come through. - Inclusion of appropriate benchmarks Action: Draft Curriculum Plan 2025/26 to be revised based on the Committee's comments and suggestions before being presented to the Board.
12.	Check out Discussion/Bias for action/Governor Involvement The Chair asked the Committee to provide one reflection on what they had learnt from the meeting and a measure of commitment to next academic year. Two key points were noted: - Data to be at department level - Increase in student voice – (CGO to discuss with MR) The Chair thanked all in attendance for their contributions and highlighted the distance travelled by the Committee with a quote from the Ofsted report: 'leaders have suitable governance arrangements in place. Governors are knowledgeable about the FE sector. They scrutinise college data and conduct quality assurance Activities and so know well the strengths and weaknesses of their provision. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively to meet key objectives.'

	AF, as Chair of the Corporation, recorded his enormous thanks to the Chair of C&Q for his relentless commitment to the College, the impact he had made and his leadership of the Committee & Quality Committee. This was echoed by all in attendance. AF also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the DPCQ for his work and commitment to the College and wished him well for the future.
13.	AoB & Actions There was no further business. A self-assessment form would be issued after the meeting.
14.	Date and time of next meeting – TBC

The meeting closed at 19.02pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

Alex Keay (Chair)

Agenda Item	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress
7.	Recruitment across challenging areas to be included in the C&Q risk register.	CGO/DPFR	ASAP	Complete
8.	Colour coding for RAG ratings for the data pack to be amended to remove margins within targets.	DPCQ	ASAP	Complete
11.	Draft Curriculum Plan 2025/26 to be revised based on the Committee's comments and suggestions before being presented to the Board.	DPCQ	2 July 2025	Complete