

Meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee

Date:	4 November 2024	Room number	Boardroom
Present	Natalie Davison (Principal/CEO), Akeel Ahmed (AA), Andy Forbes (AF), Samuel Nelson (SN), Esther Thompson (ET)		
Via Teams	Alex Keay (Chair), Katharina De Vita (KDV)		
In attendance	Victoria Eastwood (Chief Governance Officer) Jason Turton (Deputy Principal – Curriculum & Quality) (JT) Michael Smith (Faculty Director – Excellence in Learning and the Learner Experience) (MS) Tulay Rashid-Grant (Executive Director (HE & ELIOT) (TRG) – Agenda Item 8 only Lynne O’Meara (Faculty Director English & Maths/Adult Skills) – Agenda Item 10 only		
Apologies	Charles Tennant (Vice-Chair), Forhad Altafi (Staff Governor)		
Circulation	Curriculum & Quality Committee, Corporation		

1.	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting of the Committee. Apologies for absence were received from Charles Tennant and Forhad Altafi. The Chair welcomed Akeel Ahmed to his first meeting of the Committee and introductions were made.</p>
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare an interest in relation to specific items on the Agenda if appropriate. The Chair declared an interest in agenda item 4.</p>
3.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 1 July 2024 and Notes from the C&Q Ofsted Meeting held on 23 September 2024</p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 July 2024 and Notes from the C&Q Ofsted Meeting held on 23 September 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Approved: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 July 2024 and Notes from the C&Q Ofsted Meeting held on 23 September 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>
4.	<p>Appointment of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the Chair did not need to leave for this agenda item. The Chief Governance Officer (CGO) advised that both the current Chair and Vice-Chair had expressed their agreement to continue in their respective roles. The Committee unanimously re-approved Alex Keay as Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee and Charles Tennant as Vice-Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee.</p> <p>Approved: That Alex Keay be re-appointed as Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee and Charles Tennant be re-appointed as Vice-Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee for 2024/25.</p>
5.	<p>Approval of Committee Terms of Reference 2024/25</p> <p>The Vice-Chair had provided comments in his absence from the meeting and had suggested that the HE Academic Board and proposed Task and Finish Groups be highlighted in the terms of reference to ensure clear links with the groups. This was agreed.</p> <p>Approved: Subject to the inclusion of the HE Academic Board and Task and Finish Groups, the Committee Terms of Reference for 2024/25 were approved.</p>

6. Matters arising

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
6.	Vision for Level 4+ and how ELIOT fits into this vision, P&L, impact/fee structure and cost provision to be provided for the next meeting (based on current information available at the time).	TRG	October C&Q Meeting (date to be confirmed)	Included in the agenda
10.	A special C&Q Ofsted ready meeting to be convened in either September/October – MS/CGO to agree dates.	CGO	Dates to be agreed by 12 July 2024	Meeting took place in September 2024
12.	Committee to be provided with 'you said/we did' feedback at the next formal meeting.	Principal/CEO	October 2024 C&Q Meeting	Included in the agenda
12.	All Governors to be invited to attend learner voice meetings with the Principal/CEO – dates to be shared once agreed.	Principal/CEO	September 2024	Dates to be confirmed
12.	Student Voice (for the Student Governor) to be included as a standing agenda item for 2024/25.	CGO	ASAP	Completed
AoB	A summary of Ofsted reports/benchmarking to be made available to the Committee to highlight what was Ofsted 'Good.'	MS	Prior to Ofsted Ready Meeting (September)	Completed

Actions from the C&Q Ofsted ready meeting had been addressed.

7. Check-In Discussion

The Chair introduced the check-in process and asked all in attendance to highlight one thing they were bringing to the meeting today.

8. HE Update – Impact on BDC Strategy

The Executive Director – HE & ELIOT (EDHE) updated the Committee on the following key points:

- Interested parties to join the IoT going forward – WF and Ravensbourne
- MOA signed with Ravensbourne – key areas to work going forward
- Successful in small bids – hydrogen courses; Eastbrook film studios for student work experience
- Micro credentials courses in Engineering and motor vehicle
- Successful employer networking event and cyber security event
- Few data issues – unforeseen issue with Coventry University (CU) data being addressed
- KPI's – Currently higher percentage of learners at Level 3 –discussion taking place with the Department for Education (DfE) re categories of numbers to improve this
- Intending to extend the licence – Ofsted Grade 2 required

- CU London not running Level 4
- Vision – aim is to focus mainly on Level 4 and Level 5 – HTQ's, HNC's and HND's where the skills gaps are in terms of the LSIP and the local area (current focus: Engineering, Construction, Health & Social Care, Digital). The College would need Office for Students (OfS) licence to run HNC's and HND's – Expansion, improved progression routes and investment in marketing was needed.

In response to a query from AF requesting clarity re the hydrogen course, the EDHE advised that this course was focussed around the green economy, safety, engineering etc. It was noted that CEME had a depot where they used hydrogen but this was at the next stage.

The Chair questioned the position in terms of expectations and asked whether there were particular areas of key concern. The EDHE replied that the key issues were low recruitment and that the College did not have enough Level 4 learners in terms of the IOT.

AF queried the risk around relicensing the IOT. The EDHE responded that the College needed to convince the DfE that it could re-establish or reengage core partners and a five-year strategy would be needed. The College was one of the smallest IoTs and needed to ensure targets were realistic.

ET asked whether recruitment would be focussed internally. The EDHE advised that the College would meet its target but Barking & Dagenham was a HE cold spot. Access to HE students, BTEC students and T-level students were the audience and a concentrated effort would be needed to impact on these learners.

In response to a query from AF, the EDHE clarified that the College could not directly deliver L4 plus courses with the OfS registration but could deliver micro-credentials and FE Level 4 programmes eg L4 counselling or through partnerships. Levy funding should also allow flexibility to run shorter programmes. Behind the vision, a lot of people from low income backgrounds were not attracted to the fees of universities but the College needed to be in the best position to accommodate this.

AA stated that recruitment and social mobility were key to suit learners to progress and the vision needed to inspire learners and asked the vision fed through the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) process. The EDHE replied that micro credentials was being offered as additionality for students on study programmes (taster sessions of what they could achieve at higher levels) and student engagement had been good.

The Vice-Chair had submitted questions prior to the meeting and these were addressed in his absence:

The Vice-Chair queried why some of the data in the KPI table was expressed as figures, some as %. E.g., 321 of 3715 learners were at level 4 – which was less than 10%, whereas the target was 85%? Then Actual against target stated 9%? The EDHE advised that the data was accurate. The College was only reaching 9% of target for Level 4. This was largely because the College could not run its own Level 4 (no OFS) and was reliant on Coventry (CU) in meeting this target. Unfortunately, as advised earlier in the report, all CU data had been registered as Level 6 because of the way they registered their students on HESA.

In response to a second query from the Vice-Chair concerning completion rates below 65% (OfS threshold was 65%), the EDHE advised that this was primarily Coventry data and Level 3 – this would not count for OfS for the College. Work was taking place with the CIS department to provide data broken down into the required categories. It was noted that completion rates would be broken down by subject level for future reports.

The Chair thanked the EDHE for her report.

Action: Data to be broken down by subject level for future reports.

The EDHE left the meeting.

9. C&Q – Strategic Risk Register

The Deputy Principal – Curriculum & Quality provided the following update:

- Updated column included in the register - risk score remain unchanged
- Early days for some of the mitigations
- Enrichment being embedded – areas not moved forward
- Risk areas discussed later within the agenda

The Chair stated that the risk register was a lot more granular than previous versions and it was good to see progress which would hopefully continue to ensure an increase in green areas.

Agreed: that the current position be noted.

The Faculty Director - English, Maths and Adult Skills (FDEMA) joined the meeting.

10. English and Maths – Vision and Support Required

The FDEMA highlighted the following:

- Huge piece of work around timetabling had taken place focussed on accuracy, meeting needs of learners and curriculum areas
- Changed format of the start of academic year – considered wellbeing, mindset training, introduction to maths and English
- Stronger start than previous years – learners in classes and engaged, timetabling was accurate
- Staffing – six new members of staff- three in each area – full complement of staff – looking to convert to full time once completed the quality cycle
- Staffing had been the biggest concern – team were not where they needed to be, training taking place with HR and the Quality team to review the staffing needs

AA questioned the proportion of staff that were currently under concern. The FDEMA replied that this was at least 80% (20 teachers in place at present) and a cultural change was needed to improve learner feedback and attendance.

The Chair stated that the FDEMA had taken on a big challenge and was clearly making head way but this required a whole college approach and it was important to understand what support was needed. The FDEMA replied that changing mindsets and how Maths and English was reported was key – there needed to be one figure and one representation of the truth therefore attendance figures for each curriculum area should also include Maths and English. It was important for curriculum to take responsibility for attendance and put measures in place to change the culture. It was noted that, going forward, the narrative around the Monitoring and Progress (MAP) meetings would change to be reflect attendance as one figure.

AF advised that a whole College approach ensuring all teachers were motivated around English and Maths and the impact on each course was needed. The EDME stated that a new project had commenced to bring bricklayers and employers into the Maths and English hub and for learners to visit the industry to understand how Maths and English were integrated into these areas.

SN queried how Maths and English was considered in terms of ALS learners. The FDEMA replied that the Maths and English team worked closely with the ALS team and ALS learners were usually engaged. SN added that it should be ensured that ALS learners were not singled out in terms of additional Maths and English needs and that ALS was available to everyone in the classroom.

AF stated that when you walked into the College it was not immediately apparent that this was a Maths and English College, and this needed to be highlighted in every department to normalise and embed Maths and English. The Faculty Director – Apprenticeships & Quality (FDAQ) added that the space where Maths and English took place had been transformed over the last few months, but further work needed to take place across the campus.

In response to a query from ET, the FDEMA advised that entry requirements had been changed but there was a need to remain conscious of the demographics and undertake work to educate parents to be able to change the mindset.

Discussion took place around English as an additional language and it was noted that second language speakers outperformed others in Maths and English. AA advised that language acquisition for young people around the ages of 13-15 resulted in them being a proficient speaker of English by their late teens.

The Chair enquired whether there was any further support needed from Governors. The FDEMA responded that Governor visits in the area, speaking with students would be useful alongside questioning curriculum areas on Maths and English to make it second nature.

The Chair thanked the FDEMA for an inspiring update.

The FDEMA left the meeting.

Agreed: that the current position be noted.

11. Apprenticeships – Beyond Ofsted

The FDAQ highlighted the following:

- Paper in two parts – performance of last academic year and section on improvement actions
- Originally forecasting 55-58% achievement rate – posted 51.7% as at ILR 14
- Processed some students as withdrawals that were predicted to pass
- Some learners were not ready to pass End Point Assessment (EPA) by the end of July and some already achieved this academic year
- Table of Subject Sector Areas (SSA) – actual QAR
- Number of SSA's have performed quite well – DfE BM is 60% or above and 6 SSA's above that but some have underperformed
- Students beyond planned end date – all learner records were reviewed to agree who could legitimately be carried over and who needed to be withdrawn
- Confidence and assurance that the active apprenticeships are engaged in learners, employers are engaged
- Recruitment has been halted on a number of standards eg Building and Construction
- Recruiting for some HR standards but a new approach to onboarding and monitoring
- Short term – consolidation

AA questioned whether the data cleansing would have an impact on next year's figures and how the importance of Maths and English was being made clear within Apprenticeships. The FDAQ replied that the data cleansing would initially impact but would ensure long term gain. Recruitment target for Apprenticeships had been adjusted to 55% to focus on intake points across the year to ensure the onboarding process was in line with the rest of the College instead of this being staggered.

In response to a query from AF, the FDAQ confirmed that Apprenticeship recruitment was led by the Business Development Manager.

On behalf of the Vice-Chair, the Chair asked in which areas were the apprentices who had missed their EPA and what dictated the proliferation of apprenticeship standards. The FDAQ replied that Rail Technicians, Construction and HR were the specific areas involved. In terms of standards, the tables demonstrated trying to run too many standards and the College was now running a leaner provision with higher quality.

Discussion took place on Multiply support to bolster the maths apprenticeships and it was agreed that AA would connect with the FDAQ on this.

	<p>The Chair thanked the FDAQ for the report, acknowledging the good progress made.</p> <p>Action: AA to meet with FDAQ to discuss Multiply support.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Learner Voice Feedback including Next Steps</p> <p>The Principal/CEO updated the Committee on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of feedback from last year • Selection of the dominant themes • Difference in satisfaction levels between students at Rush Green and Barking and quality of facilities at TSA eg Hairdressing, IT – lot of investment made over summer at TSA • Next round of student focus groups to be scheduled in next couple of weeks (Governors to be invited to attend) • Course planning issues – teaching, worksheets • Comments re assessment planning • Triangulate information from curriculum teams <p>KDV questioned whether the previous themes had been completely addressed particularly around assessment, marking feedback etc. The Principal/CEO replied that it was important to follow the themes through and this would be confirmed after the next round of meetings. English and Maths would also be considered at the next student forums.</p> <p>Action: Governors to be invited to attend Student Focus Groups.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Ofsted Ready – C&Q call to action</p> <p>The FDAQ highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning before half-term • 6 day plan established • Practicalities discussed with Directors eg information requested as published on Ofsted website, staff concerns, timetables • Several lines re QA work • Governance – meetings took place before half-term for the Ofsted Q&A meetings • Briefing paper to be updated in due course • Data pack is final for last year <p>The Chair thanked the FDAQ for the update.</p> <p>Agreed: that the update be received.</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Overview of C&Q Performance</p> <p>The DPCQ discussed the below key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final data • Retention slightly above BM • Achievement rates improved – 5% overall on all ages including English and Maths; 10% 16-18 vocational • Improvement for English and Maths but high grades low • 85% for completed work experience/EEP – 99% <p>The Chair noted that the Maths GCSE achievement should be red at 2% under BM. This was agreed.</p> <p>The FDAQ reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Improvement Action Plan (QIAP) – near the end of QIAP cycle for 23-24 • Profile of progress made

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas that needed further work • Launched a new approach to attendance and behaviour – attendance was slightly up on last year but process still not fully embedded • Work taking place on enrichment • Leadership & Management training for staff to ensure they are Ofsted ready and well equipped to do their jobs • Staff survey taken place – preliminary results to be discussed at the Policy & Resources Meeting • Next step – review how leadership team has driven improvement and change and evaluate against descriptors in the EIF • Conclude the College SAR process by Friday 15 November 2024. • Governors to be invited to SAR validations – late November <p>AF stated that the College was at the boundary in terms of grades and there would be some difficult judgements. The Principal/CEO replied that there was a need to tactically make clear that last year was last year and this was a new year with lots of changes.</p> <p>In response to a query from AA concerning intervention strategies. The FDAQ advised that MAP meetings, centralising strategies were already in place to drive for a consistency around processes and ensuring good practice strategies were shared.</p> <p>Agreed: That the current position be noted.</p>
15.	<p>Check out Discussion/Bias for action/Governor Involvement</p> <p>The Chair asked the Committee to advise one thing they had learnt from the meeting and one thing that had inspired them.</p>
16.	<p>AoB & Actions</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>
17.	<p>Date and time of next meeting – 17 March 2025, 5pm</p>

The Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions. The meeting closed at 18.57pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

Alex Keay (Chair)

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
4.	Committee Terms of Reference to include specific reference to HE Academic Board and Task and Finish Groups.	CGO	ASAP	Complete
8.	Data to be broken down by subject level for future reports.	EDHE	ASAP	Agreed
11.	AA to meet with FDAQ to discuss Multiply support.	CGO/FDAQ	ASAP	Options considered - meeting not scheduled as Multiply funding ends in March 2025.
12.	Governors to be invited to attend Student Focus Groups.	CGO	ASAP	Complete