

East Coast College Corporation

MINUTES of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held at 9am on Tuesday 12th December 2023 Lowestoft Sixth Form College Board Room

Present:	Kirk Lower (Chair KL) Tina Ellis (TE) Rachel Kirk (RK) Amy Rust (AR) and Tia Beresford (Student Governor TB)	
In attendance:	Paul Padda (Deputy Principal, Curriculum, Quality and Learner Experience PP) Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance WS) Paula Ottaway (Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND PO) and for items 1-6 Kerry Payne (Principal Lowestoft Sixth Form / Assistant Principal (Higher Education and Access))	
S/23/12/1	Apologies and Membership	
The Director of Governance advised that Malcolm Goodwin (MG) had resigned from the Board.		
Apologies were received from Stuart Rimmer (CEO/Principal SR) and Sue Willgoss (SW)		
S/23/12/2	Declarations of Interest	
Declarations of interest were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Rust as an employee of Into University, which the College were looking to work with. • Kirk Lower re BPP University (consultancy). 		
The Committee agreed that these didn't preclude full participation in the meeting.		
S/23/12/3	Students discussion - Maritime	
The Committee were joined by Maritime students and a question and answer session was held.		
The students advised that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the students had previously studied at the College and some at other UK Colleges. • Reasons for choosing to study at the College included - previous experience of studying at the College, facilities and tutors, the College's environment, visa and extended stay and safety of campus. • The College provided excellent classrooms and the schedule was well organised. • Energy Centre's facilities such as the simulator were excellent and were just like being on a ship's bridge. • Tutors were good and were always available to help and advice. • Exams were hard and included both written and oral – Governors noted that the pass rates, as seen in the SAR was above the national average. • Due to the work required for the course there wasn't much time to socialise but they did organise some social activities. • Only negatives were the living accommodation – pre-covid there used to be more choice and the time the University took to administer and arrange the Visas. • An area for improvement would be a maritime library 		
The Assistant Principal (Higher Education and Access) advised that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the University worked to set dates which weren't that flexible and accommodation was a national challenge. • The students wanted to live in Lowestoft so there was a restricted market, and it would not be feasible for the College to manage. The College had now sourced some more accommodation. • The provision was outside Ofsted's scope but is subject to Audit. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is scope for growth and in group size. • The Cadet Programme had struggled and the College had not been able to recruit a marine engineer or had yet been given approval for this course which it was hoped would help the Cadet Programme. <p>A governor noted that they had recently attended the maritime celebration event which had been a very positive and inspiring event.</p>	
S/23/12/4	To approve the minutes of the last meeting 10 10 23 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda	
	The minutes of the meeting of 10 10 23 were approved as a true record	
S/23/12/5	Rolling Action Log	
	The Action Log was reviewed it was noted where actions were complete and that the open actions were in progress.	
S/23/12/6	HE Quality Update	
	<p>The Assistant Principal (Higher Education and Access) presented the report and advised that the provision had self-assessed as good. Quality monitoring is through the Academic Committee, chaired by the Assistant Principal supported by 3 sub-committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Curriculum Group • Student Committee • HE Academic Support Committee. <p>Governors discussed the positive National Student Survey (NSS) results and how these were 'best in region' for the majority of areas and queried the reasons for this. The Assistant Principal advised that the reasons for this included the small group sizes, the inclusive and personal bespoke approach with supportive progression routes. If the College grew it wouldn't get to the size where this would be lost. An area the College didn't perform as well on was the Library resources, even though the students had access to all the University's online library resources. The Deputy Principal commented that the groups needed to be of sufficient size to enable a rich student experience.</p> <p>Governors discussed that there would be a need to grow to make the new HE Centre cost effective. It was important that the students also felt part of the College even when the provision was based at the HE Centre as this had been seen as a positive by the students. The Assistant Principal advised that students would still have access to the main campus and its facilities. The Deputy Principal commented that the HE Centre would raise the profile of locally based Higher Education and the College's offer as it will be in the city centre with the library. If the College's offer is to grow there is the need to provide an attractive offer for the younger as well as the adult market and a separate centre could help this. The Director of Governance advised that the Curriculum Growth and Development Committee were looking at the HE offer and the growth required.</p>	
S/23/12/7	Quality Update	
S/23/12/7.1	Quality Improvement Plan 2023/24 (QIP)	
S/23/12/7.2	Governor Visits	
	<p>The Deputy Principal, Curriculum, Quality and Learner Experience presented the term one update. The update covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key performance indicators to date in relation to attendance and retention • Progression heat maps • Achievement and progression comparisons between learners with support needs and their peers • Deep dives into curriculum areas • Update on work and progress from the quality team • Analysis of the impact of the tuition fund 	

- Update on preparations on Ofsted preparations

Governors challenged what action was being taken to improve attendance. The Deputy Principal advised that attendance continued to be a challenge and a focus of the Quality Improvement Plan with actions in place for the teaching and support teams. There had been some improvement but currently attendance was slightly below the previous academic year. Staff's time was impacted as they were attendance checking and providing related pastoral work. The College's more inclusive offer also brought attendance challenges. The College was looking to review roles and responsibilities across curriculum and support services to support not only attendance but the changing needs and behaviours of the learners to help enable targeted allocations of resources and intervention. The College was also working with the College of West Anglia on a research project into poor attendance and risks of failure.

Governors challenged what resources were required. The Deputy Principal advised that resources were being reviewed and the business case considered as part of the Curriculum Plan. The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND advised that support needs were also being reviewed, including working with the Counties and how support could be funded through roles such as job coaches by connecting to employability skills.

The Student Governor commented that the Sixth Form focussed on behaviour and expectations and as it was more like a school environment the students tended to be more receptive. Students however did not see the benefit of the tutorials and did not always attend as the information could be accessed elsewhere. Students were juggling commitments including work and tutorials were the easier one to not attend. The Deputy Principal advised that the Sixth Form tutorial system had been reviewed to reflect previous student feedback.

Governors challenged if attendance was lower since Covid. The Deputy Principal advised that students priorities have changed since Covid and the College needed to provide quality teaching and learning that inspired and which students wanted to attend.

The Deputy Principal updated the Committee on the deep dives. These confirmed the good assessments and what was needed to progress to outstanding. The report highlighted that there was a large proportion of new teachers and that they were being supported through the quality team. Governors noted the support being provided to new teachers and the resources that the College had invested in this.

Governors discussed the comparison of achievement and progression for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and SEND. The Deputy Principal advised the College is working on developing the analysis and data. This will enable the College to fully report on and take actions to address any shortfalls. High needs attendance was better and this was affected by the support and flexibility to be able to change where it was not working.

Governors discussed apprenticeships and challenged if the College could continue to provide the provision in areas with skills shortages. The Deputy Principal advised that the provision was moving in the right direction but there was still the challenge with staffing. A pragmatic approach was being used and Progress Coaches were being used where Assessors couldn't be recruited. The College needed to continue providing the provision as there was an employer, student and regional demand and without the College there wouldn't be a local offer.

Governors discussed the Governor visits and how these were important to triangulate and learn about the College. The Director of Governance advised that opportunities to visit would be advertised to governors and this would include a mix of provision and type of visit. The Deputy Principal commented that these visits should also include areas such as the College's subcontracting, Boot Camps and Internships.

S/23/12/8	Advanced Teacher Practitioners - Supporting Teaching, Learning and Assessment	
<p>The Deputy Principal presented the update which provided an overview of the work and development of the Advanced Teacher Practitioner (ATP) roles. These roles work cross college to support continuous improvement, staff development, and a proactive approach to evolving educational landscapes. The team now consisted of four ATPs and their remission had been increased to 0.5.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the College had provided sufficient resources for the ATPs. The Deputy Principal commented that the remission time had been increased, there was a need to ensure that this was properly remitted and that the work was focussed on the priorities set. This Quality Team was led by a very proactive Teaching and Learning Manager and would continue to be developed as it can be demonstrated that it was making a difference to the College's quality development including in supporting current and new staff's development.</p> <p>Governors commented that to develop the quality team further there would need to be a clear detailed business case.</p>		
S/23/12/9	Termly Safeguarding and Prevent Update	
S/23/12/9.1	Visits By Safeguarding Lead Governor	
<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND presented the report and updated the Committee on reporting changes. These changes had been made following, as requested by the Committee, a review of how other College's reported. Changes made included Safeguarding and Prevent reporting separately reported from Mental Health and Wellbeing; multiple referrals for same student under one referral; MyLink referral form to clearly ask staff to indicate if the referral is Safeguarding; Wellbeing or Bullying; to Log all safeguarding files transferred from other providers but only record active cases once the students have started at college. These changes should give a clearer and more accurate picture of the different areas and enable targeted support including where the issue should be dealt with by the curriculum team.</p> <p>Governors discussed and agreed with the changes. There was a need for the Committee to keep oversight over both Safeguarding and Prevent and Wellbeing and these split reports should be considered at each Committee. There was a need for the college to focus support from the Safeguarding Team and other support such as for disciplinary matters should be provided by the curriculum teams. The Assistant Principal advised that the College was also looking at other opportunities to source additional support for students.</p> <p>Governors commented that the changes in logging and reporting needed to help improve the support the College offered and help ensure that this support was focussed. This also linked back to the support provided around attendance discussed earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>The Governor Lead for Safeguarding commented that it was concerning that all Colleges recorded and reported differently and that there should be consistency across the sector. The Assistant Principal confirmed that there was not a national standard for recording or reporting. Colleges needed to demonstrate that they were complying with KCSIE and keeping students safe.</p> <p>Governors discussed the changing support needs and increases in areas such as mental health and whether there was a need to consider the resources allocated to the support teams. The Deputy Principal advised that this would be reviewed as part of the College's curriculum planning and budgeting. A more inclusive College offer required consideration of the support services provided and this would be considered at the Committee's next meetings.</p>		

<p>The Safeguarding Lead Governor updated the Committee on her link visits. This included, as requested by the Board, a review of the Smoothwal IT system filter. Access to the confidential reports on potential at risk access is restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, her Deputy and the Head of People and Wellbeing. It is reviewed daily, as part of the normal work schedule, with appropriate follow up action taken. The Smoothwall system is nationally updated when new risks/sites were identified.</p> <p>Governors agreed the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding/Prevent and Wellbeing data to be included in the termly report to each Committee. 		PO
S/23/12/10	Careers Update	
<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND presented the report and updated the Committee on progress and difficulties with recruitment.</p> <p>Governors discussed the Careers role recruitment challenge and the qualification level expected. The Assistant Principal advised that qualified Careers Advisor recruitment was a difficulty regionally and nationally. The Ofsted Thematic Review on careers cited qualified careers advisors as best practise given their complex and important role. The College was looking to train staff at the appropriate level where unable to recruit already qualified staff.</p> <p>Governors agreed the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gatsby presentation to be shared with Governors through the governance update. 		PO
S/23/12/11	Student Voice Update	
<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services and SEND presented the report. There had been a higher response rate to the induction survey than in the previous year but a disappointing level of completion in some areas which was being followed up.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the results and the actions that were to be taken. It was positive to see that the Curriculum Areas had already acted on the issues highlighted with for example Services Industries producing a learner fact sheet covering common information gaps.</p> <p>The Student Governor commented that there was student apathy with students not wanting to get involved even with surveys.</p> <p>Governors agreed the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College and National Benchmark data to be added to survey result reporting. 		PO
S/23/12/11.1	Unloc Leadership Academy Programme	
<p>The Director of Governance presented the Unloc Leadership Academy which had been agreed to try and increase student involvement. This was to be funded for an initial 2 years and would be available to all those interested in or already in a student leader role.</p> <p>Governors discussed that there was a need to develop and grow the learner voice right across the College. There would need to be positive action taken to recruit students to be part of it and the proposed activation days. The Director of Governance advised that Unloc would support the College's marketing team to launch the Leadership Academy.</p> <p>Governors agreed the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation day to be used to review Student Inductions. 		WS
S/23/12/12	Annual Complaints and Compliments	
<p>The Annual Complaints and Compliments report was noted.</p>		

S/23/12/13	Annual Committee Report	
<p>The Director of Governance advised that Annual Reports had been produced by all Committees and that these were published on the College's website to help with the transparency</p> <p>The Committee reviewed and agreed the report.</p> <p>The Committee resolved to recommend to Corporation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Committee's annual report. 		
S/23/12/14	Agenda planning	
<p>Quality Update to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontracting • Attendance • EDI – data cuts and MIDES data considering deprivation <p>Safeguarding and Wellbeing to be reported separately and to include an update on bullying and the College's response.</p>		
S/23/12/15	Review of Meeting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential Items: None 2. Were Learners prominent in discussions: a focus of the Committee 3. Risk Management: any issues discussed which may require an additional Assessment None 4. Equality & Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment: Initial data cut in Quality Update and reporting of this to be developed further and included in the deep dives. 5. Health & Safety: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment: Safeguarding and wellbeing discussion. 6. Sustainability: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – new question added to the student survey and showed 77% actively participated in a sustainability initiative or project on their course 7. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media Unloc, as could be used as part of marketing the College. 8. How did the meeting go: A good meeting but did overrun 		