

## East Coast College Corporation

### MINUTES of the Quality and Curriculum Committee held at 9am on Tuesday 1 April Lowestoft Sixth Form College Board Room

<b>Present:</b>	Peter Lavender (Chair PL) Tina Ellis (TE) Vicki Paterson (VP) Robin Jackson (RJ) Paul Padda (Principal and CEO PP) Madeleine Moretta (MM) Rachel Kirk (RK) and Amy Rust (Associate Governor AR)
<b>In attendance:</b>	Gary Jefferson (Deputy Principal) Wendy Stanger (Director of Governance WS) Paula Ottaway (Assistant Principal Student Services & SEND PO) Kerry Payne (Principal Lowestoft Sixth Form/Assistant Principal (Higher Education and Access) Tom Roberts (Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality) Holly Chase (Assistant Principal) Lee Nevill (Teaching and Learning Manager).
<b>QC/25/04/1</b>	<b>Apologies and Membership</b>
Apologies Kirk Lower and Mark Buckton	
<b>QC/25/04/2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
The Director of Governance declared an interest as a Rockborn Associate Consultant, monitoring and supporting the Unloc Changemaker Programme in item 10. It was agreed that this didn't exclude full participation in the item.	
<b>QC/25/04/3</b>	<b>Student discussion – Engineering level two, three, and T Levels</b>
<p>The Committee welcomed engineering students to the meeting and discussed with them the College and their course.</p> <p>The students commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport - They had chosen the course as it was local with easy access. Others commented that from areas such as Beccles, transport to the College was an issue.</li> <li>• Course - The course, facilities on offer, and the time in the workshop were the reasons for choosing it. Others had progressed from level two, which they had enjoyed.</li> <li>• Workshop – Time in the workshop, which is all day Wednesday, is the best part about the course, as it is the practical side that is enjoyable.</li> <li>• Progression – students had or were looking to progress from level 2 to level 3, and were also looking for apprenticeships, but there were not many of these available. Several students aimed to work overseas or offshore and commented that the College had a good reputation in offshore training.</li> <li>• T Levels – students on the T Level commented that they found the work placement positive, as it provided valuable experience of the working environment and its demands. They have also received career advice regarding next steps, including apprenticeships and university options.</li> <li>• Additionality – Students have gained additional qualifications in working at height and in confined spaces. They also participated in the RWE event, where they had the opportunity to try on the equipment and use VR headsets to experience simulated ship-to-shore operations, and some were taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme.</li> <li>• Specialisms – Various sectors are explored and taught before students choose a specialisation at Level 3</li> <li>• Improvements – need more social space both inside and outside, and better and faster computers. The Course and the College are really good, and these are the only minor improvements needed.</li> <li>• Support – the tutor makes us feel welcome and can talk to him about anything. he is very supportive. At the start of the course, there were activities to help students get to know each other and make friends.</li> </ul> <p>The students were thanked, and they left the meeting.</p>	

<b>QC/25/04/4</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Quality and Curriculum 11 3 2025, and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda.</b>	
The minutes of the last meeting of the Quality and Curriculum 11 3 2025 were agreed as a true record.		
<b>QC/25/04/5</b>	<b>Rolling Action Log</b>	
The Action Log was reviewed, and it was noted where the actions were in progress or not yet due.		
<b>QC/25/04/6</b>	<b>Quality Update</b>	
<b>QC/25/04/6.1</b>	<b>College Data Summary</b>	
<p>The Deputy Principal presented the update and referred to the data summary, which informed the report. The Principal advised that a governor and senior team dashboard was being developed to include the key metrics.</p> <p>Governors commented that the report was clear and concise and provided them with the assurance needed. The Deputy Principal thanked his team for their contributions to the report.</p> <p>The Teaching and Learning Manager updated on the work of the Advanced Teaching Practitioners (ATPs). They have supported trainees, new staff, and those identified through quality assurance. Encouragingly, there have also been a few self-referrals for support. They have also been supporting managers with Learning Visits. Governors commented that it was positive to see the work of the ATPs and their impact. The Principal advised that the ATP role was to be continued and embedded as a permanent role.</p> <p>Governors discussed the support for new teachers and the 'Licence to teach' induction programme. It was good to see the support that the College provided to new teachers and their development. New teachers could also make a positive impact on the College's culture and staff rooms. The Assistant Principal commented that Heads of Department were also critical to changing the culture and helping the College to develop. The Deputy Principal advised that he was meeting all teaching teams to discuss their area and to set the classroom standards expected.</p> <p>Governors discussed retention and were pleased to see improvements across all areas. They emphasised the need for inspiring teaching and learning to keep students engaged and motivated to continue. One governor remarked, 'Students learn from the teacher's smiling eyes.' The Deputy Principal commented that this was evident from the engineering students, who shared with the Committee that their tutor always made them feel welcome.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal commented that apprenticeship improvements were a credit to the Assistant Principal and the apprenticeship team. There is still work to do, but confident that the provision will grow and develop.</p> <p>Governor's noted that attendance and punctuality remain an issue across the college and challenged what action was being taken to address this. The Deputy Principal advised that this is an issue nationally as well as at the College, as evidenced in the recent FE Weekly article. The College has introduced changes such as timetabling adjustments for 2025/26 and Success Coaches for all areas, whose role will include supporting students and querying at the start of the day when students are not in attendance. Inductions will also be used to set out expectations for students. The Principal commented that part of the Heads of Department's role is also to walk the floor to check on their area and ensure that, as well as students, staff are in their lessons on time, ready to welcome their students. The College was also reviewing transport, and this showed that for some areas the buses would not get the student to College at the current start time, and this is one of the reasons that the timetables for L6 have been changed.</p>		

	<p>Governors commented that it was disappointing to see that there had been poor take-up of professional learning. The Deputy Principal advised that this was a symptom of the cultural shift needed. The professional learning day after Easter was vocational training with tutors going out into the industry they taught in, as well as additional sessions on the use of Promonitor and Markbook.</p> <p>Governors queried about how tutors learn from each other and from other colleges. The Deputy Principal explained that ideas are being shared with other colleges, and tutors share their learning internally, such as through the RED projects and the work of the ATPs. The Principal commented that this is an area that could be further developed, and tutors could also learn from the College's specialist subcontractors, especially around managing challenging behaviour.</p> <p>Governors queried if progress had been made with the new proposed partnership for maritime. The Deputy Principal advised that the memorandum of understanding has been signed, and discussions have now progressed to the partnership agreement. Additionally, the College's provision had successfully passed the MCA Audit.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/6.2</b>	<b>Ofsted Consultation</b>	
	<p>The Deputy Principal advised that the Ofsted consultation, including the draft toolkit, and advised that as a College, the report card would be complex due to the nature of the provision. This would not be more accessible to stakeholders, including students and parents, and could lead to a more stressful inspection.</p> <p>Governors noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed scorecard was too complex for Further Education, with too many sections and grades.</li> <li>• Colours are too confusing and will lead to a complex scorecard.</li> <li>• The toolkit is too vague, with grading criteria not distinctive enough, and it is all about 'passing.' Will result in time spent arguing about the multitude of grades and a focus on 'game playing.'</li> <li>• Toolkit written from an inspector's viewpoint and not from those that are being inspected.</li> <li>• It will be difficult to identify where improvements are needed.</li> <li>• Comparison with other colleges and providers will be difficult for those working in the sector, let alone students and parents.</li> <li>• It is not clear which grades will be used for areas such as funding applications and FEC intervention.</li> </ul> <p>The Director of Governance advised that Ofsted has stated that they will review the proposals if they are rejected by the sector and reminded the Committee that they also had the opportunity to respond individually to the Ofsted consultation.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed the following action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Deputy Principal to respond on behalf of the College to the Ofsted consultation.</b></li> </ul>	
<b>QC/25/04/6.3</b>	<b>Apprenticeship Government Changes</b>	
	<p>The Assistant Principal with responsibility for apprenticeships advised that the final details regarding the apprenticeship changes have yet to be received, with more details around changes such as the Foundation Apprenticeships expected in the summer. The College could benefit by providing shorter apprenticeships in areas such as business administration, but the majority of the College's offer was for more extended apprenticeships.</p> <p>Governors discussed the proposed changes to End-Point Assessments (EPA) and how this could mean an additional cost to the College. Virtual invigilation for assessments was</p>	

	<p>becoming more available and had been provided by some for several years. Learners would still receive reasonable adjustments for this and may need additional suitable laptops.</p> <p>Governors concluded that the potential changes and the additional government funding for construction training could be exciting for the college and its development.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/6.4</b>	<b>Governor Walkthroughs and Link Visits</b>	
	<p>The Governor's walkthrough reports were noted.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/7</b>	<b>Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)</b>	
	<p>The Teaching and Learning Manager presented the QIP and reported that reasonable progress had been made with no areas showing regression. As was discussed in the Quality update, retention had improved across all provision, and apprenticeship quality continues to improve, with first-time pass rates up. Training is expected to be completed by the end of the academic year, while the cultural reset remains ongoing. The Deputy Principal commented that the cultural reset was crucial for the College's ongoing development.</p> <p>Governors challenged the reasons behind the continued poor compliance with the use of the Markbook. The Deputy Principal advised that Markbook had been previously removed as a mandatory tool, so this year was about reintroducing and training staff on its use, and it is part of the cultural reset. Markbook was also open to students for checking progress. The Teaching and Learning Manager advised that Markbook is accessible on mobile devices, with updates made to enhance its usability. This has improved access and is needed to enable students to take ownership of their progress. The company is also considering the long-term introduction of a dedicated app. The Assistant Principal advised that staff need to use Markbook consistently across the provision, and when utilised effectively, it provides comprehensive and useful tracking.</p> <p>Governors discussed the learning visits. The Teaching and Learning Manager advised that the introduction of the new reporting form has led to improved reporting. Learning visits during the first term identified a need for additional training on formative assessment, particularly questioning techniques. Although the training was arranged, attendance was unfortunately poor. The Deputy Principal advised that this issue will be addressed through further mandatory training events, where attendance registers will be taken. The August Professional Learning Day will be used as a reset so that all are clear of the College's expectations of its teachers.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/8</b>	<b>Termly Safeguarding and Prevent Update</b>	
<b>QC/25/04/8.1</b>	<b>Link Governor Reports</b>	
	<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services &amp; SEND presented the report and advised that, as requested by the Committee, the report now reflects the number of students instead of the number of referrals. Processes have been updated so that referrals are added to existing cases rather than opening new cases, each case has an action plan, and 'dip audits' are being carried out. The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team has faced challenges due to high sickness and absence rates within the team. Consequently, the Team Manager had to provide cover to help ensure continuous support for students. This position is now improving.</p> <p>Governors discussed the withdrawal rates of vulnerable students and explored ways to improve this situation. The Assistant Principal Student Services &amp; SEND advised that the most impact occurred when students received support immediately upon showing signs of disengagement. The Principal advised that the College was looking to realign its current resources with success coaches working as an integral part of the support offer.</p> <p>Governors commented that it was very disappointing to note that the Mental Health Trust was still not fit for purpose, placing additional stress on the College team, who are not mental health specialists, and failing to provide the necessary support to the students. The Assistant Principal</p>	

	<p>Student Services &amp; SEND that the College team has access to external supervision, regular one-on-one meetings with their manager, and peer support.</p> <p><b>Governors agreed the following action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Letter to the MP cc to the local councils, regarding the Mental Health Trust's poor service and the detrimental effect this had on the College Students and Staff.</b></li> <li>• <b>Gender split to include the gender individuals identify as.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Governor Link report was noted.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/9</b>	<b>Careers Update</b>	
	<p>The Assistant Principal Student Services &amp; SEND, presented the report and highlighted the success of the Skills Festival, which had seen 1100 learners, 9 schools, 45 employers, and 16 Universities attend. The event was a big success, with positive feedback from all parties, including teaching teams who utilised the networking opportunity.</p> <p>The Principal advised that the Skills Festival had been a Suffolk one, and the College was looking to run a Norfolk one as well as running the Suffolk one again.</p> <p>Governors congratulated the College on a positive event and suggested potential improvements for future events.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/10</b>	<b>Student Leadership Academy with Unloc</b>	
<b>QC/25/04/10.1</b>	<b>Governor Report</b>	
	<p>The Director of Governance presented the report. Those students who had completed the Leadership Academy with Unloc had benefited from it, and their project presentations had been impressive. However, despite extensive promotion, the opportunity saw limited student engagement. This lack of engagement with learner voice was a sector-wide issue, and the College was reviewing its learner voice to see if a revised system would engage more students. This proposal would be brought to the next Committee for review.</p> <p>Governors commented that student enrichment needed to make clear what is in it for students to help increase interest and engagement.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal Student Services &amp; SEND, commented that apathy towards learner voice was evident across the College. There had, though, been positive engagement with the current on-course survey.</p> <p>The Governor's report was noted, and the Governor advised that the presentations and discussion at the Leadership Academy had been impressive.</p>	
<b>QC/25/04/11</b>	<b>Agenda planning</b>	
	Learner Voice – On Course Survey results and proposed learner voice structure.	
<b>QC/25/04/12</b>	<b>Review of Meeting</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confidential Items: None</li> <li>2. Were Learners prominent in discussions: a focus of the Committee? Yes throughout</li> <li>3. Risk Management: any issues discussed that may require an additional Assessment Risk register to be reviewed following the Board breakout session.</li> <li>4. Equality &amp; Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment: Reporting by all gender identification.</li> <li>5. Health &amp; Safety: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services waiting time and lack of support, and the impact this had on students and staff supporting.</li> </ol>	

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. Sustainability: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – None</li><li>7. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media – there had been good coverage on the College's socials regarding Turing and recruitment.</li><li>8. How did the meeting go? Good. Need to use the set questions for the student session at the start of each meeting, with questions to be shared on the agenda.</li></ol> |  |
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