

QUALITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: 25th JANUARY 2024

MINUTES

PRESENT

Anthony Smith (Chair), Amelia Sussman, Angela Herbert, Simon Horne, Mark Isherwood, Nicole Morgan, Asfa Sohail, Praful Nargund, Mary Stiasny, Rowda Ali (Student Governor), Jamal Mahamud (Student Governor), JJ Sulaiman (Student Governor)

IN ATTENDANCE

Angela Joyce (CEO), Kurt Hintz (Executive Principal), David Dangana (Director of Quality and Compliance), Jackie Chapman (CCCT Managing Director), Graham Drummond (Director of Governance), Graham Cooper (Clerk)
For item 3: (Student Voice): Anthony Robinson (Head of Learner Experience, CONEL), Rahma Hussein (Student Liaison Officer, CIC).
For items 1-4: Colleen Marshall (CIC Vice Principal), Robin Hindley (CONEL Vice Principal), Jasbir Sondhi (WKC Vice Principal).

APOLOGIES

Nana Brew (Staff Governor), Antony Moss

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

The Chair welcomed and introduced Angela Joyce, CCCG's new CEO to the meeting, and also Praful Nargund and Mary Stiasny to their first meeting as members of the committee. He also noted the recent appointment of Professor Antony Moss as a co-opted member of the committee, although Antony was unable to attend this meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2023 AND 24TH NOVEMBER 2023 **Action**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 10th October 2023, and of the SAR validation meeting with members of the academic leadership team on 24th November 2023, were agreed as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

The committee noted that all matters arising have been completed.

With respect to keeping the committee aware of education sector developments, it was noted that the Director of Governance now circulates the AoC Chief Executive's briefings to members of the committee, rather than the FE week publication, following concerns regarding the lack of inclusivity of the latter that were expressed at the previous meeting.

3. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT REPORTS

3.1 CONEL

The committee received the CONEL student engagement report presented by Jamal Mahamud. The committee noted the following highlights:

- GCSE's Creative Writing Workshop: All 16-18 GCSE students actively engaged in a captivating creative writing workshop. This session primarily focused on refining the skills essential for addressing question 5 in the GCSE English exams. Participants gained valuable insights and practical strategies to excel in this specific aspect of their examinations. The workshop had contributed to an improvement in outcomes relating to this question.
- Communities Countering Hate (Student Prevent Workshops) A total of 40 interactive face-to-face student prevent workshops, titled "Communities Countering Hate," were conducted. Facilitated by the Groundswell Project and funded by the Mayor of London, these workshops aimed to provide students with a deep understanding of extremism on an emotional level. Topics covered included the reasons and mechanisms behind radicalized behaviour, promoting empathy, resilience, and digital literacy. Discussions explored various extremist narratives,

such as the use of conflicts and conspiracy theories. Over 1,000 students participated, contributing to a comprehensive exploration of these critical issues.

- c) Deloitte Employability Workshop. Deloitte employees delivered an Interview Skills workshop tailored for AAT students. The workshop focused on key skills essential for successful interviews and included insights into what students can expect during an interview. Utilising the STAR Technique (a structured approach to responding to behavioural-based interview questions) students were guided through discussing specific situations, tasks, actions, and results.
- d) Careers Insight Talk NHS: The NHS Trust Whittington Hospital Pharmacy department presented a career insight talk to science students at both centres. This enlightening session covered diverse pathways into Pharmacy, including roles as a Pharmacist, Technician, or through apprenticeships. The initiative aimed to provide students with valuable insights into salary scales, years of study, and other relevant aspects of these career paths.
- e) Safer Internet Day Workshop: As part of the ongoing commitment to online safety, the enrichment service organised an online workshop focusing on critical areas such as consent to share personal information, cyberbullying, digital identity, and social networks.
- f) Careers Insight Talk Met Police. Public Service students had the privilege of a career insight talk delivered by the Met Police. The presentation covered various roles within the Met Police, offering students valuable insights into potential career paths within law enforcement.
- g) Additionally, since the last report, a series of workshops have been delivered, covering Stop and Search, First Aid, Mental Health, VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls), Online Safety, Drugs, and Alcohol awareness. These sessions contribute to a holistic enrichment program aimed at equipping students with essential life skills and knowledge.

The Head of Learner Experience confirmed that the programme of workshops had been put together in consultation with students, on subjects that they expressed they would find most useful. This included workshops focused on developing skills for the future that are outside the scope of the curriculum. With respect to employability/careers workshops, these are organised to cover a breadth of curriculum areas. Students are asked to complete questionnaires after all workshops, to help assess impact and to gather feedback on what students have found most helpful or what can be improved when planning future events.

In relation to the Stop and Search workshop, the committee asked about the proportion of students that are from the black community and the Head of Learner Experience agreed to provide this information. He also advised that workshops on this subject are provided on an ongoing basis. The aim is to teach students about their rights and responsibilities in relations to Stop and Search and Stop and Account, equipping them with the knowledge of what to expect and how to conduct themselves responsibly in these situations. As well as working with the Met Police, collaboration takes place with Haringey and Enfield Stop and Search Monitoring Group. Feedback from students is very positive. The Head of Learner Experience undertook to pass on details of a future workshop, which Angela Herbert confirmed she would like to attend on behalf of the committee.

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3.2 CIC

The committee received the CIC Student Union Report presented by JJ Sulaiman, Student union President, who highlighted the following:

- a) Student Union Elections: The elections, held in November, had one of the largest turnouts in recent years, with c. 570 students voting. In addition to the Student President and Vice President, the student body elects Class Representatives and Centre Representatives. Together, these work with the college's Student Engagement Officer and Centre management. A summary of the responsibilities of these roles and the mechanisms through which the student voice is raised and activities are organised was provided.
- b) A survey was undertaken, to which 350 students responded, the purpose of which was to gauge how well students understand the role of the Student Union and to find out what students would like to see included in the programme of workshops and events that are organised. 49% of respondents stated that they understand the role of Student Union but 39% stated that they do not. 59% of respondents did not vote in the elections. 28% rated the knowledge of the committee members as 1 out of 10, with only 15% rating this as 5 out of 10.
- c) Events are currently being planned based on responses to the survey, to make best use of the budget available.

The committee asked about the challenges that the Student Union Committee intends to work on in response to the survey. Promoting a greater awareness of who the student representatives are and what they do was noted as being a key priority.

The committee also asked about the budget, which was noted as being £500. The Student Liaison Officer explained her role working closely with the Student Union Committee in managing the budget on behalf of the Student Union, with the latter making the decisions on how the budget is spent.

3.3 WKC

Rowda Ali, WKC Student Governor, presented the WKC Student Executive Report. She provided an overview of WKC's enrichment activities and student clubs, and advised that it had been a busy year so far, with an array of events, activities and workshops that were organised on subjects that students had requested. These had been well received, with a generally high level of engagement. Of particular note were the following:

- a) Sexual Harassment workshop: This subject had been covered as part of Safe Month campaign. Learners engaged in workshops focusing on understanding healthy relationships, consent, and recognising the signs of harassment. These discussions aimed to promote a culture of respect and to help learners navigate the complexities of relationships safely. Other related events included talks on violence against women and girls. Feedback from students after these workshops was that they felt more confident in how to act in certain situations.
- b) Sexual Health /Body Image workshop: Posters were displayed around the college for students to write on to express their feelings, anonymously. The college also teamed up with Rethink Mental Health and Cult Beauty to deliver interactive workshops and displays to raise awareness about health body image and tackling social media stereotypes.
- c) Knife Crime and Gang Violence workshops. These workshops were delivered by external organisations (Growing Against Violence (GAV) and Steel Warriors), highlighting the dangers of these activities and providing guidance on strategies to stay safe. The Student Governor reported that these events were not open to attendance by all students, but by students whose teachers had put forward their classes to attend, although they were also supported by wider discussions. The workshops were timely in relation to an incident that had occurred at the college. There are further plans for a student-led knife crime initiative and hopes of engaging with other organisations that help to tackle knife crime. The committee asked about the method selection and the demographic breakdown of attendance.
- d) Warming the Community for Christmas: Learners and staff were encouraged to donate clothing and tinned food to helping those in need in the community and within the college community to keep warm over the festive period. This was a highly visible campaign supplemented by discussions.

Other events included Mental Health Day, E-Safety, International Men's Day Zero Male Suicide, Armistice Day Remembering Loved Ones, Alcohol Addiction Awareness, Celebrating Culture and Save the Children Campaign.

The committee noted the various student clubs and that these include a LBBTQ+ Club, but asked to be provided with a greater insight into the decision-making process on what groups are established.

The committee also suggested that it would be helpful for a structured approach to sharing and cross-fertilisation of ideas between the student representative groups across the CCCG colleges.

4. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

4.1 SPORT ACADEMIES

The Executive Principal presented the Sport Academies paper. The following was noted:

- Jonathan Silman, Head of School for Sport has had a positive impact on the development of the sports curriculum.
- The progress of the Sport Academies has been significant, expanding across the Group and across an increasingly wide range of sports as detailed in the report. They have also served to enhance the Group's overall reputation and appeal as a place to study and have been a contributing factor in the growth in student enrolments.
- Team CCCG Sport is currently top of the AoC Sport London Region league table, well ahead of other colleges, as shown in the league table data provided. The committee recognised this

as an outstanding achievement in itself, with the bigger goal to be not just London's leading college for sport, but also a leading national provider.

- The report provides an overview of activities taking place and the significant number of students involved.

The committee asked about student destinations, although it was noted that the sport academies' students are predominantly students studying in other curriculum areas, progressing on to jobs in those fields.

With regard to demographics, it was noted that 64% of students on sports programmes are of Black or mixed ethnicity, which compares with 37% for the Group's overall student population. Achievement rates are 3-4% above the average for the Group, so the Sport Academies have a positive overall impact on students of black and mixed backgrounds.

4.2 MULTIPLY

Jackie Chapman, in her role as Head of Multiply, presented the update. The following was noted:

- Multiply is a 3-year GLA contract. The aim of the project is to address the maths skills gap in the community via interventions on raising confidence, money management and parents supporting their children and improving their own ability. Targeting the hard to reach and disenfranchised, the project focuses on improving practical numeracy skills, and therefore aims to help people to combat challenges of managing the cost-of-living. It involves supporting groups through community-based delivery as well as internal cross-curricular activity.
- The programme divides into two: 'non-substantive', comprising engagement of less than 2 hours looking at how to start to engage with numeracy and to build confidence, with the aim of participants progressing onto 'substantive' sessions of 2-10 hours.
- Aligned to the GLA grant funding, the project is based on financial years rather than academic years and is currently midway through Year 2. So far, 1747 participants have accessed Multiply being 433 non-substantive and 539 substantive in Year 1, with growth to 268 non-substantive and 643 substantive in the first 6 months of the current year.
- Participants are encouraged to progress from Multiply to more formal qualifications, ultimately Level 2 Maths, and the programme also aims to support progression into employment opportunities. The committee requested further data relating to progression to further learning and it was agreed that this would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.
- The project will continue to March 2025, with over 90% of delivery being community-based.
- Having already reached 80 % of current year target on substantive programmes, 100% is likely will be reached in February and the full year's funding requirements will be met. As the Group is confident in its ability to do more, the GLA has been approached regarding the possibility of additional funding.

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4.3 TENDER AND BID OPPORTUNITIES

The committee received a report. It was noted that:

- The Group continues to keep a watching brief of bid opportunities as they arise and the executive makes decisions on whether to pursue these, based on their fit with current strategy, financial viability and whether these relate to activities that it is believed the Group can do well and are in the Group's best interests.
- The Tender activity report summarises bids that have been approved and submitted and others that are in the pipeline. Successful bids include the GLA Mayors Skills Academies Hub Extension, Taking Teaching First and bids for Local Skills Improvement Funds for the Wind Turbine training operations and to pay for some of the IT development at the Soho Centre.

The committee asked whether an application has been submitted for additional funding for Free Courses for Jobs provision, in light of additional funding that was understood to be available, but was advised that this had not been pursued due to difficulties recruiting to those courses and therefore being unable to demonstrate a case for growth. The possibility of additional AEB funding had been pursued, although the allocation of further funding for AEB was less likely.

With respect to the conversion rate on bids, this was running at c. 90%, only one bid for less than £50k of funding having been unsuccessful. A comparison with prior year data on bids was requested and is to be provided to the committee.

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4.4 CCCG PRIORITY THEMES AND LEAD RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SENIOR MANAGERS 2023/24

The committee received a report. The following was noted:

- A number of Senior Managers, Assistant Principals and Assistant Directors across the Group have taken on lead responsibilities in relation to themes that have been identified as strategically important to CCCG.
- The themes have been collectively determined through meetings with managers across the Group over a number of months and taken into consideration London's skills priorities, Labour Market Information (LMI), quality considerations and wider business growth priorities for the Group.
- An initial 11 priority themes, including 9 curriculum areas, have been allocated. Those senior managers responsible are expected to lead on and drive their priority for the organisation and regularly report on the progress they are making. This responsibility is expected to continue for up to 2 years, so that it allows leads to deliver on their plans and objectives, but will be subject to review to ensure best use of resources. To date, plans have been produced and are being implemented, including through a number of working groups that have been established.
- Each of the Vice Principals in attendance, to whom the senior managers with lead responsibility report, summarised the progress as set out in the report in relation to each of the priority themes, as follows:
 - Colleen Marshall provided the updates on the following:
 - HE Growth (led by Katie Pike): Plans for renewed growth are being implemented, following on from a period of consolidation over recent years. The Group applied for Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ) funding, although this was unsuccessful, but the working group is developing proposals to grow the Group's wider Level 4 provision.
 - A Level Growth (led by Matt Wojtyniak): A range of measures have been implemented to address the recent fall in A Level student numbers, including the Schools Liaison Team targeting and developing stronger relationships with schools, along with open days and events, and inviting careers advisers from schools and local authorities into the college. The underlying aim is to attract students by promoting the benefits and advantages of attending the college compared with staying at school. Whilst record numbers are attending open days, conversions are less successful, with applications at the Angel campus significantly down on prior year. Intense activity is therefore taking place to reach out to those who have attended open day events.
 - Personal Development and Behaviour & Attitudes (led by Seval Fadil): This is already a strength across the Group. A wellbeing committee has now been established to explore ways and resources to aid and support learners. A dedicated PDBA group has been formed to devise a strategy to drive this from good to great.
 - Robin Hindley provided updates on the following:
 - Safeguarding (Led by Hilary Moore): Thanks were expressed to Nicole Morgan for her support as Link Governor for Safeguarding. Already an area of strength, actions include looking at ways to increase support for care experienced learners and developing external links to ensure that the Group is at the forefront of thinking and best practice.
 - English and Maths (Led by Sheila Rai): Various initiatives include looking at ways to support students to overcome barriers such as maths anxiety, and also developing and reinforcing maths mastery skills. Alongside these, there is a focus on developing and encouraging a positive experience for adult learning to improve social mobility and to promote Multiply to improve adult numeracy in Greater London. In English, the focus is on developing creative writing skills and collaboration with local schools.
 - Green Economy Growth (led by Marcia Summers): Investment has enabled the Group to offer a range of provision in this area, including the launch of the Wind Turbine Centre. Additionally, Sustainability in Education sessions are being delivered as part of Personal development days, supporting staff to understand the impact of net zero in their sectors and how to share this understanding with their students. Resources have been developed for tutorial sessions, and a wider enrichment plan of activities is being developed. There are however barriers that need to be overcome, including a change in societal attitudes in order to lead to more people coming forward to be retrained.
 - Sales and Admissions (Led by Theo Ellis): Changes implemented this year have included starting the application process earlier, automating the interview booking process, establishing more/improved school links, and updates to the website aimed at improving

the applicant experience. These measures are having a positive impact on application numbers for September 2024 entry.

- Jasbir Sondhi provided updates on the following:
 - Digital and Technical Skills Growth (led by Carl Boyd): Good progress has been made against the four key objectives: Curriculum Development, Training and Development, Industry Partnerships and Student Enrolment and Engagement. Curriculum growth has been particularly marked by the addition of 90 new courses, predominantly under the Mayors' Skills Academy but also including an expansion in the 16-18yrs offer through a new A Level in Computer Science and a Social Media and Branding Entrepreneurial course. Further growth is planned in 2024-25, encompassing adult provision, the launch of a new T Level and other new courses. Staff training has included AI workshops for teaching staff. The Digital Skills Advisory Board is to be relaunched shortly and committee members will be invited to attend the launch event.
 - JCP Growth (led by Terry Tinton): The priority has been on refocusing and building longer term sustainable relationships with employers. There has been a lot of work with other FE providers to look at best practice, as well as exploration of opportunities for geographical growth into areas including Watford and Milton Keynes.
 - Science and Technology Growth (led by Toby Clark): Significant progress has been made in defining the focus area for science and technology. Through a thorough examination of definitions and engagement with LMI data, internal discussions, and interactions with employers and stakeholders, a strategic adjustment in programme marketing has been implemented. Notably, a focus on healthcare and technology roles has emerged, including around use of AI in medicine. A number of new programmes have also been launched this year, including Level 1 programmes and the T Level in Science, with further growth planned for next year including new pathways in robotics and aeronautics. An employer dinner is to be held, to which committee members have been invited.
 - Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) led by Paul Nee: The work on this priority involves ensuring consistency of approach and practice across the Group, with the Alexandra Centre being a model of best practice. Additional Learning Support and Exam access arrangements and processes have been standardised.

The committee asked why EDI is not included as a priority area and the Executive Principal clarified that EDI is one of the core priorities in the Group's strategic plan monitored by the Group Board.

The Executive Principal agreed to provide a response to how the curriculum priorities align with the Accountability Agreement.

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5. QUALITY UPDATE

The Quality Update report was received and the following was noted:

- Attendance and Retention: Weekly attendance rates in term 1 were broadly in line with last year. Overall retention rates are strong and are higher than last year's at this time.
- Impact of Industrial Action: Strikes by teaching staff who are UCU members had taken place on 16-18th Jan. Notwithstanding the strike action, at CONEL 75% of courses ran as normal, at WKC 35% and at CIC 46%. The strike did not affect the Sixth Form college as staff there are members of a different union. Where classes did not run, mitigation strategies included merging groups of students together and giving students directed study, so there were opportunities to keep learners engaged. Exams were not impacted by the strikes.
- Recruitment: Improvements have been made to the application process, with the aim of improving the learner onboarding journey. There has been increased marketing activity, including digital marketing, mail drops, open days and increased engagement with schools using the school liaison officers. For CCCG, the overall number of applicants is currently 491 higher than the same time last year, booked interviews are 2,152 higher and offers are 535 up. A breakdown by 16-18 year-olds and 19+ learners, including prior year comparisons, was provided.
- Student autumn survey: The survey took place between 6th November and 8th December covering the 5 areas of Teaching & Learning, Assessment, Support & Services, Safeguarding and Overall Satisfaction. Although most of the satisfaction rates were above the target of 90%, and also higher than the previous year in most areas, there was a slight decline in a few of the satisfaction rates. In areas where the rate was below 90%, additional student feedback was sought to understand the reasons why and to inform actions to address issues. Each

curriculum area will also incorporate issues arising from the survey in their quality improvement plan. A 'You Said, We Did' poster campaign will also follow, along with a straw poll in late January/February to obtain feedback on issues that were not covered by the autumn survey. It was noted as significant that the autumn survey took place during the period of industrial action, which may have affected responses. A breakdown of the survey results by student ethnicity was also provided.

- Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) outcome: The outcome of the Group's TEF representation has been released by the OfS. The initial outcome was 'Requires Improvement'. However, following an appeal, this has been raised from Requires Improvement to Bronze.

The committee asked what areas the executive are most worried about and the Executive Principal highlighted the concern about application volumes for A Levels, arising from the very tough competition from schools.

6. APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

The Executive Director for Growth and Partnerships provided an update. The following was noted:

- Following lower than expected timely achievement rates in 2023, the apprenticeship provision has been placed into a Rapid Improvement Action Plan (RIAP) with a focus on ensuring staff compliance with the use of systems and processes to ensure that management intervention can be targeted at the right place, at the right time and that progress of individual students is tracked to ensure that they become timely.
- An analysis of 23/24 apprenticeships progress was provided. The current retention rate is 78.2% (compared to 77.4% last year) and there are 440 continuers out of the 695 who are expected to complete this year.
- For Black and mixed ethnic background students, the retention rate is 1.9% lower than overall, mainly because of the areas of study that they are in. Those in healthcare are on a par with their counterparts. There are only 79 black male students in the cohort but total black and mixed is 23% of the cohort.
- Working specifically on timely completion, key areas of focus currently are Construction (for engagement) and Engineering (for recording of evidence). Retention within CCCT is slightly higher, and for chefs this has recovered to its pre-covid level.
- This year, the Group is struggling to attract new apprenticeship opportunities with employers, but apprentices remain at roughly the same percentage of FE starts across London, which demonstrates that is not an issue specific to apprenticeships, but a wider issue for the Group to address.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 19th March 2024 5:00pm

Tuesday 14th May 2024 5:00pm

Thursday 20th June 2024 5:00pm