

Waltham Forest College

THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2024

MEMBERSHIP

Governors:

Alison Morris (Chair), Andrew Hall (Vice Chair), Susannah Hume (SEND lead), Bryan Johnston, Janet Gardner (Principal)

In Attendance:

Hassan Rizvi – Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)

Jack McCabe – Director of TLA (DoTLA)

Amir Ahmed - Director of Learner Services, Marketing & Communications (DoLS)

Rochelle Sanaria – Director of Curriculum (DoC)

Michael Burgoyne – Director of HE (DoHE)

Clerk to the Corporation

Naomi Shoffman - Director of Governance (DoGov)

110. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Hall, due to illness. Mr Johnston advised he would have to leave at 5.50pm due to a clash with another meeting.

111. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no issues included on the agenda for the meeting in which they had a personal interest relative to the College.

112. MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 JUNE 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2024 were agreed as a correct record. It was confirmed that all follow up actions were completed.

113. GOVERNORS HE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Governors HE Oversight Committee meeting was held earlier in the day. Ms Hume invited the DoHE to present the key points. The DoHE provided an update on the ongoing application for OfS registration, which is critical for the College to offer Higher Education (HE) qualifications with access to Student Loan Company (SLC) funding. Several policies were reviewed and approved at the Higher Education Deliberative Committee, ensuring compliance with governance standards.

Ms Hume reported that the HE Oversight Committee had discussed broader trends and potential changes in the HE regulatory landscape as follows:

- Discussions within the Further Education (FE) sector suggest that Level 4 and Level 5 Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) may transition from OfS oversight to Skills England or other technical education bodies.

- This change could reduce regulatory burdens for the College, as HTQs would no longer require OfS registration and could be funded through alternative mechanisms such as Advanced Learner Loans.
- The LLE's start date has been postponed to January 2026, allowing the College additional time to prepare its HE provision for modular delivery under this framework.

The Curriculum and Quality Committee commended the College's thorough preparation and strategic planning in navigating the complex HE regulatory environment.

The Committee agreed to:

- **Continue monitoring OfS engagement and policy developments.**
- **Ensure proactive updates to mitigate any recruitment or operational risks.**

114. DRAFT COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) 2023/24 AND QIP 2024/25

The Deputy Principal for Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ) presented the Draft College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2023/24 and the accompanying Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2024/25. The documents provided a comprehensive overview of the College's performance during the academic year, its alignment with Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework, and its strategic priorities for the upcoming year.

The SAR highlights several key achievements for 2023/24:

- Retention rates exceeded the national average, reflecting the College's effective student engagement strategies.
- Achievement rates were significantly above national benchmarks across most curriculum areas.
- 935 of learners progressed to employment, apprenticeships, or further/higher education, showcasing the effectiveness of career-focused support and partnerships.
- The curriculum was commended for being ambitious and aligned with local and national skills needs.
- .
- Governors were recognized as highly ambitious and effective, providing robust oversight and challenge to senior leadership.

The DPCQ emphasised the robust alignment of the SAR with Ofsted's key judgements. The College has self-assessed its provision as 'Outstanding' in overall effectiveness and also across all key provisions except apprenticeships which is self-assessed as 'Good'. The contribution to skills need is 'Strong' and Safeguarding is 'Effective'.

The DPCQ reported that while progress was evident across most areas, the SAR identified several challenges requiring focused attention and these were discussed in detail

The QIP outlines strategic actions to address the areas identified for improvement:

- Improvement plan for apprenticeship provision is in place and regularly monitored.
- Continued focus on learner engagement through initiatives such as extended induction programmes, real-time attendance monitoring, and targeted interventions.
- Enhanced teaching methodologies, better use of data to track learner progress, and additional staff development in key subject areas.

Committee members commended the thoroughness of the SAR and QIP and discussed key focus areas:

- **Apprenticeships:** Members asked for updates on the specific actions being taken to improve success rates and their anticipated timeline for impact.
- **GCSE Resits:** Governors supported the decision to prioritise GCSE pathways over functional skills but stressed the need for continued review.
- **Data Transparency:** The Chair emphasised the continued use of trend analysis to demonstrate progress.

The Committee recognized the College's commitment to self-assessment as a driver of continuous improvement and praised the ambitious targets set for the upcoming year.

The Committee:

- **Endorsed the SAR grades and QIP for submission to the Corporation, highlighting the importance of continued progress monitoring.**
- **Requested periodic updates on apprenticeship outcomes and GCSE resit performance.**
- **Recommended greater integration of learner voice feedback in the QIP to ensure student priorities are reflected in improvement plans.**

115. CURRICULUM AND QUALITY UPDATE

The DPCQ presented a comprehensive summary of the College's performance for the first term of the academic year. The following areas were highlighted:

- The College exceeded its 16–18 student allocation
- Attendance at November exams improved reflecting effective preparatory support such as targeted workshops and revised curricula.
- Results are expected in January 2025, and further analysis will guide ongoing improvement efforts.
- Apprenticeship Recruitment has increased, but challenges persist with retention in small cohorts where a single dropout significantly impacts success rates. The College has hired new team members and implemented an enhanced monitoring system.
- The A Level programme has attracted strong interest, particularly in sciences and facilitating subjects. Recruitment events are ongoing, with a focus on high-demand courses and resource planning.

The Committee praised the proactive approach to addressing attendance and recruitment challenges and noted the College's adaptability in offering new programmes.

The Committee noted the progress on the key aspects of curriculum and quality.

116. SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

The DoLS spoke to the report and highlighted the following points:

- Overall safeguarding referrals has increased marking an 8% increase year-on-year. The top concerns were mental health, domestic abuse, and sexual harassment.
- The introduction of mental health screening questions during enrolment contributed to the increase, providing earlier identification and support for at-risk learners.
- Prevent Strategy - The primary risks remain Islamic extremism and far-right radicalization. The College has updated its risk assessments and provided targeted training for staff.
- A new Mental Health Ambassador Programme is training 30 students to provide peer support.
- Additional staff training on trauma-informed practice is planned for January.

The Committee acknowledged the thoroughness of the safeguarding measures and the College's proactive approach to mental health and safety concerns

The Committee noted the report.

117. T LEVEL/A LEVEL UPDATE

The DoC and DoTLA presented the report updating the Committee on the implementation and progress of the current T Level and A Level programme, to give governors a more detailed picture to provide oversight and monitoring.

The Committee raised and discussed the need for continued monitoring of T Levels and A Levels, emphasising the need for quality assurance and effective learner support.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

118. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT

The DPCQ presented a summary of complaints and compliments for the 2023/24 academic year, and these were discussed with governors.

The Committee commended the balanced report and highlighted the importance of learning from complaints to drive improvements.

The Committee noted the report.

119. RISK REGISTER REVIEW

The DPCQ presented the Risk Register showing pre and post mitigation scorings, and controls in place to mitigate risks identified for curriculum and quality. All key risk areas have been updated with recent controls and management activities. The main areas of risk have been discussed previously in the meeting. No changes to risk scores were recommended at this stage, but updates will be reflected in the next Corporation report.

The Committee received and noted the updated College Risk Register.

120. COMMITTEE BUSINESS - COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2023/24

The DoGov presented the report which details the areas of impact the Committee had made through its work in 2023-24. The work carried out by the Committee in the year clearly demonstrates a good level of impact and effectiveness. This is evidenced by enhanced discussions and improved reporting, reflecting the College's commitment to continuous improvement and also the Committee's effective oversight of strategic priorities such as T Levels, A Levels, and safeguarding.

The Committee discussed the need to strengthen skill sets in emerging areas such as higher education regulation and apprenticeship growth.

The Committee then discussed the overall responses and the proposed grade of– 1 – Outstanding

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Corporation a grade of Outstanding for its performance and effectiveness during 2023-24.

121. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair formally acknowledged and thanked Hassan Rizvi's for his contributions as Deputy Principal, wishing him success in his future endeavours.

122. ITEMS TO BE ADDRESSED AT FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is asked to note that the agendas for future meetings will include items as per the agreed business cycle for 2024/25.

123. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 11 February 2025
- 17 June 2025

18.25 finish

These minutes have been approved by the Curriculum and Quality Committee and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

A Morris

.....
SIGNED

11 February 2025

.....
Date