

# MINUTES

**Directorate:** Governance

**Minutes of:** Quality Curriculum and Student Committee

**Date:** 13 March 2019      **Time:** 4.00

**Venue:** Executive Meeting Room, Uxbridge Campus

**Present:**

Mariann Rand-Weaver (MRW)	Governor (Chair)
Lucy Khennache (LK)	Staff Governor
Karen Tyerman (KT)	Governor
Laraine Smith (LS)	CEO/ Principal and Governor

**Apologies:** Paul Walker (PW)      Governor

**In attendance:**

Pat Carvalho (PC)	Deputy CEO/ Principal
Darrell De Souza (DDS)	Vice Principal Curriculum and Standards UC
Dylan McTaggart (DMcT)	Vice Principal Curriculum and Standards HC
Tracy Reeve (TR)	Clerk to the Corporation

**Part attendance:** Jo Withers (JW)      Exec Dir, Employer Services & Partnerships  
(item 6 only)

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Paul Walker.

2. **Notification of any urgent items members may wish to raise under Any Other Business**

There were no other items notified.

3. **Notification of Interests Members may wish to declare relating to any item**

There were no interests declared.

4. **Minutes of the TL&A Committee meeting held on 28 November 2018 at Uxbridge College**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. **Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting, 28 November 2018, not on the agenda**

There were no matters arising that were not already on the agenda.

6. **HCUC Work Based Learning Update including West Met Skills**

JW confirmed that the College's Apprenticeship teams remained highly active in recruitment and engagement. Recruitment had been good, particularly in Engineering, Early Years, Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools, Electrical Installation, Plumbing, Management, HR and Accounting. 19+ enrolments continued to increase due to the higher number of levy paying employers and the demands of the new apprenticeships Standards. The meeting noted the new starts and recruitment data for each of the individual colleges and for HCUC combined. Year to date in 2018/19 there had been 120 levy apprenticeship starts at 63 employers and 187 non-levy apprentices at 158 employers. This total of 307 new learners compared with 278 at the same point in the prior year.

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Current vacancies were noted as largely being within Business Admin, Early Years, with a few in, IT, Engineering and Plumbing. The levy paying employer vacancies were from a variety of employers. Governors noted that the majority of the 54 candidates at the current time were interested in Business Admin, Engineering, HR and IT. JW highlighted that the Business Development Consultants (BDCs) continued to recruit to the non-levy allocation, but were focusing on levy paying employers promoting the management qualifications from Level 3 to Level 5 and HR. The number of starts on each of the four new apprenticeship standards were noted; 40 in total during 2018/19 year to date (YTD).

**2018/19 Predictions:** Current predictions for WBL success data 2018/19 were noted as:

- Harrow: overall achievement in range 64.3% - 82.1% and timely within 40.9% - 86.4%.
- Uxbridge: overall achievement in range 67.2% - 77.0% and timely within 48.1% - 63.5%.
- HCUC: overall achievement in range 67.3% - 77.7% and timely within 47.6% - 65.1%.

The likely position at year-end would be the 'mid-point' predictions. The meeting noted the following detail:

- The all age overall mid/max predictions for 2018/19 were above national averages, 2017/18 QAR and the same period in 2017/18 mid figures; (+2.9% for UC & HCUC and +10% for HC).
- Of the 163 total live learners (143 UC, 20 HC), Uxbridge had 22 and Harrow 6 high risk learners included in the mid and max data with detailed actions in place to drive achievements.
- Of the 22 Uxbridge high risk learners (10 were in relation to Functional Skills (FS) achievement); 7 had a likelihood of becoming less of a risk with 15 that may remain a concern, 4 of these already had no achievement predicted. This would result in an outcome of 72.7%
- Of the 6 Harrow high risk learners (4 FS related); achievement was currently a risk for all, but 3 had a likelihood of moving to no achievement at all which would result in 76.4% achievement, +4.6% in the same period last year.
- At this time, the HCUC refined predictions as detailed above would equal 73% overall achievement.

Detailed areas of concern where retention was above the national average but non-achievement of the at risk learners would result in below average QAR were noted as: Uxbridge- Activity Leadership, Plumbing and Heating and Electrical Installation; and Harrow- Level 2 Business Administration and Level 3 Early Years. Areas of concern for qualifications with below the national average and a number of at risk learners; Uxbridge- Engineering, Level 2 Motor Vehicle, L2 Health and Social Care and Accounting; and Harrow - Level 3 Business Administration and Accounting

The detail of the predictions was also considered by age group of learner. Governors sought, and were given confirmation that the risks around 16-18 WBL had decreased due to the removal of the legacy issues from the prior year. The meeting noted the possibility of ESFA intervention due to the 2017/18 outcomes being below the minimum standard threshold of 62%. DDS confirmed that the college had been in dialogue with the ESFA account manager as the statistics now showed the College was above this level at 64% (66% after the admin error was corrected). However, the meeting noted that a notice to improve could be triggered by the 2017/18 WBL QAR. The Chair sought confirmation on what would happen to an apprentice who had not achieved at the end of their programme. JW confirmed that if an apprentice was still engaged in the programme and was showing progress then the College would support them to continue.

**WBL Developments:** JW gave the meeting a roundup of development work undertaken during 2018/19 YTD. The meeting noted that the College's predictor tool had now been finessed to more accurately predict achievements, particularly timely achievements. Extensive work had also been completed to develop a 'Docu Sign' enrolment process to improve the Apprenticeship sign ups and additionally to safeguard the recruitment process, with Heads of Schools required to validate the curriculum team recruitment decisions. Functional Skills delivery had also been reviewed, with more comprehensive front loaded delivery models in place; the meeting noted that of the 325 planned leavers for 2019/20, there were currently 34 learners at risk due to FS related issues. Current carry-forward learners were targeted to achieve at least a half term before their planned end dates.

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**Pre Inspection Brief Action Plan:** QCS Members were informed that a pre-inspection action plan had been developed against 11 specific lines of enquiry produced from an ex HMI taken from the whole college SAR in relation to Apprenticeship provision. This RAG rated plan at both College and qualification level dovetailed with the WBL Quality Improvement Plan to reinforce strengths and drive improvements unique to the provision and against the proposed new Education Inspection Framework.

**Employability:** The meeting noted that YTD 2018/19 HCUC had delivered 15 courses to 177 learners. Overall predicted achievement was 94% with the following breakdown by College: Uxbridge (116) = 95% and Harrow (61) = 93%.

**Partnerships and WBL Development work:**

- Referrals continued to come from local Jobcentres in Hayes, Uxbridge & Harrow, and relationships were strong.
- Additional sources of referrals that the College had engaged with over the past 6 months included: GRoW Project/ Botwell Green Library in Hayes, National Careers Service, Work & Health Programme/Shaw Trust/Northolt Library, and local community groups.
- Relationships had commenced with housing associations e.g. Catalyst in Ealing and Brent – mix of full-cost commercial (L2 Food Safety 1-day courses) and fully-funded provision.
- Significant referrals sourced from paid-for and free job fairs at Wembley Stadium, Ealing Old Town Hall, Harrow Civic Centre, and Hillingdon Civic Centre.
- New Entry 3 Award in Introduction to Customer Service and Level 1 Award in Retail Knowledge qualifications being offered as a package for Intu Retail Gold Programme in Hayes Campus from March 2019 with further cohort July, September and October 2019.
- Approval being sought from City & Guilds to deliver Level 1 Certificate in Business Administration in Uxbridge College from March 2019
- Demand from learners who have completed Entry 3 Basic ICT for a higher level ICT course; ITQ Level 1 being investigated for funding and viability, delivery possible after Easter break.
- WBL Marketing materials were currently being revised. This included hard copy course summary sheets and the Employability section of the West Met Skills/ HCUC website.
- For the last 3 months the College had been providing a member of the WBL team to co-locate at Hayes and Uxbridge Jobcentres 4 days a week to provide a “Digital Assist” service to help the most vulnerable benefit claimants open up new Universal Credit accounts. This had now been reviewed with the Jobcentre but there had been too few referrals to HCUC basic ICT courses to continue to provide HCUC staff resource at the same level. This had now been reduced to 1 day a week at both Jobcentres until the end of March 2019 when Citizens Advice Bureau’s contract to deliver Digital Assist would start.

**Uxbridge Wider Employability Projects:** The meeting received the following update on recent projects:

- Work Programme- there was now minimal activity ongoing, with less than 5 active clients remaining, the contract would end 31st March 2019.
- ESF- Basic ESOL for the Unemployed – delivery ended December 2018. Final funding claims being made.
- ESF GOLDD – project ends 31st March 2019
- Construction Training Centre (“Hard Hat Ready” programme) – approx. £12K remained in the College account from the original £84K from Hillingdon Council; work continued to support local Hillingdon residents to get their CSCS card and to link them up with job opportunities through Qualify Me.
- LBH S106 Logistics – the proposal for £50K for delivering training and job search support to local Hillingdon residents to find work in Logistics sector in and near to Heathrow was still to be confirmed by Hillingdon LA and SEGRO.

***The update report for West Met Skills was NOTED and RECEIVED***

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## 7. Progress on Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) 2018/19

The meeting noted progress against the QIPs for HCUC combined, Uxbridge College and Harrow College which had arisen as a result of the self-assessment reports 2017/18. QCS Members were reminded that the individual college Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees (SSCs) had received updates relating to the QIPs headlines specifically linked to Harrow College and Uxbridge College. QCS considered the overview HCUC in-year progress for the areas that had been identified for improvement (AFIs) within the HCUC SAR. These were noted as follows:

Consistency in Study Programme attendance & punctuality: currently RAG rated as 'amber'

FT 16-18 HCUC Attendance was at 87% and 90% accounting for authorised absences (AA). [HC 86%/ 88% (AA); UX 87%/91% (AA)]

FT 19+ HCUC Attendance was at 85% and 88% (AA). [HC 84%/85% (AA); UC 87%/91% (AA)]

The meeting noted that variation across curriculum areas still persisted and some were now below the target of 86%. Whilst attendance within vocational/academic classes had been largely well maintained, there remained a challenge to ensure that English and maths (E&M) attendance was at similar levels. Strategies to keep learners engaged in E&M so that they retained opportunities for achieving the qualification were now the priority. There had also been a drive to encourage staff to ensure lateness was not under-reported in registers so that punctuality matters could be addressed. The Governors were given assurance that the SLT were confident that there were strategies in place in the classroom to deal effectively with lateness. A few curriculum areas had fallen above the max target (6%) for lateness and attention was being particularly focused in these areas. DMcT confirmed that this had been a particular issue at Harrow within the Art school as well as poor attendance; corridor walks and focussed activity had borne improvement.

WBL Timely & Overall QAR: currently RAG rated as 'amber'

As previously discussed with JW at item 6 on the agenda.

HCUC Timely predicted QAR Min/Mid/Max = 47.6%/59.2%/65.1% with Mid usually taken as the most likely scenario

HCUC Overall predicted QAR = 67.3%/74.1%/77.7%

This compared to an end year 2017/18 Apprenticeship Timely QAR of 55% and Overall 64%\* (PNA 60/69%). The meeting was reminded that a previous administrative issue involving duplicate records meant that the 64% would correct to 66% over time.

AS/A Level: currently RAG rated as 'green'

The meeting was reminded that strong A level provision in GFE, in terms of learner numbers and performance, especially in London was rare. Governors were also reminded that A Levels were an AFI carried over from 2017/18 into 2018/19. However, retention YTD 2018/19 as an early indicator was significantly improved on 2017/18 with 16-18 at 96%, 14% up on YTD 2018 (compared with the NA of 95%) and 11% up for 19+ at 100% (NA 93%). Governors were reminded that for 2018/19 Harrow College offered Science AS only and a small amount of legacy Art (2 year model) & Science (1 year model) A Levels. While Harrow A2 retention had improved significantly, 16-18 remained an AFI for 2018/19. AS retention was high at 16-18 98% (NA 92%) and 19+ 100% (NA 85%). DDS informed the meeting that DfE performance measures were published in Jan 2019 which showed that HCUC was 'Average' for both AS and A-Levels, but was the best performer taking into account size and quality when compared to local (competitor) GFE providers. The Chair asked whether A level learners were showing a stronger baseline at entry and this was confirmed as the case as a result of the AS level offer at Harrow now being limited to Science subjects which had a higher entry requirement.

Greater consistency of learner outcomes for a few SSAs: currently RAG rated as 'green'

The meeting was reminded that learner outcomes were determined by a number of factors but Retention was a key indicator of end year performance. Retention was currently at 96.4% for 16-18 and 97.7% for 19+; this was above the retention rates 2017/18 YTD when Feb ILR rates were compared. Whilst overall retention was holding at a good level, variations were still apparent across

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curriculum areas, though most were within acceptable levels. Art (HC) at 91/92% and ENGTI (UC) at 93/93%% were noted as the low points at this stage of the year.

Further improvement in 19+ Access to HE: currently RAG rated as 'green'.

HC and UC would continue to monitor learner progress and performance on this programme but retention was good and improved YTD compared with the prior year.

Overall retention on Access to HE courses was HC (97%, 61/63 starts), UC (100%) & HCUC (98%) vs. 90% YTD 2018. Predicted QAR HC (70% - 83%= 44-52/63 starts); UC (68% - 87%); HCUC (70%- 83%).

Ongoing action to support student retention holds QAR to be on track to be on or above the NA. The meeting noted that Performance Reviews for this area of provision had just been undertaken at Harrow College and were now taking place at Uxbridge. The 'delicate' nature of the cohort at Uxbridge was noted; many of the students were adult learners with more complicated lives outside College impacting on their studies than traditional 16-18 students.

Robust judgements of TLA quality to confirm greater consistency of high standards: currently RAG rated as 'amber'

The meeting was reminded that HCUC had now converged its previously disparate observation practices in gauging the quality of TL&A. There has been a distinct shift to using more 'drop-in' Learning walk (LW) methodology favoured in Inspections to gauge the quality of TL&A. This was in addition to the longer individual staff Lesson Observations (LOs). The meeting noted that the mix of LW and LO activity indicated that the quality of TL&A was above 80% for staff and areas that met or exceed the expected standards. Governors challenged the SLT on why it was necessary for the College to seek external advice on where weaknesses existed in TL&A. The CEO asserted the value of external validation which provided rigorous challenge to the SLT and provided mitigation to any over-grading or complacency. **The Chair suggested that an additional method would be to undertake peer reviews between the same curriculum areas at each College i.e. effectively internal external review. DDS agreed that this would be a good idea moving forward to compliment the external validation process** and thanked MRW for this useful suggestion.

Further stretch & challenge for all learners through better assessment for learning: currently RAG rated as 'amber'

Following last year's TL&A audit, 'Assessment for learning' was identified as a key area of focus to secure higher quality learning delivery. Within this, 'questioning techniques for deeper understanding and learning' was highlighted. The meeting was assured that attention to Value Added and learner progress was being maintained and supported with a focus on academic target setting and learner progress during learning walks. Also a focus was stretch & challenge in class via TL&A delivery, questioning, differentiated tasks, deeper learning and independent skills development focus; High and higher grade push; in-year monitoring of learner progress against VA metrics. The meeting was assured that HCUC Value Added (VA) and English and maths learner progress measures remained mainly positive.

The meeting commended the detailed information provided in the report which enabled them to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the two individual colleges and also provided a clear picture across HCUC. DDS informed the meeting that the whole college SAR 2017/18 had been sent to an ex-HMI for review before it was posted on the ESFA and Ofsted portals. One of the changes suggested had been to change the grade descriptors in the SAR summary to words rather than numbers; this was to allow better dialogue and some flexibility within an Ofsted inspection. The Chair highlighted the issue which was standing out as needing improvement as Apprenticeships; she challenged the SLT on whether the College was allocating sufficient resource to securing improvement in this area of the curriculum. The Management Team asserted the turnaround achieved to date in 2018/19 and that resources had not been the issue in affecting outcomes. KT sought clarity on whether there were any local colleges doing well in this area of the curriculum that the College could learn from; this was not believed to be an option. DDS assured the meeting that although the issues had not been seen early enough in 2017/18 to effect a change in time for the

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year-end, the issues had now been resolved. Although it was a 'slow-turning ship' there had already been a positive impact seen from the new vigilance systems. LS reminded the meeting that the College was the only London College represented on the AoC National Apprenticeship Policy Group. The meeting discussed the higher success of WBL private training providers and pondered whether the College could look at replicating this type of model to achieve improved outcomes; the SLT would consider this further.

***The QIP Update Report was NOTED and RECEIVED***

## 8. Higher Education (HE) Report

The meeting noted the HE Report which gave an in-year summary of progress.

*In-year retention:* The meeting noted the details of current HE retention by course at February 2019. Overall retention was 86% YTD 2018/19 (207 learners retained out of 240 starts). The only HE offer which was rated as 'amber' rather than 'green' for retention was the HNC/HND provision at Uxbridge (UC) with a retention of 82%. It was also noted that UC 2 year courses completing in 2018/19 had a retention rate of 70% overall (RAG rated as 'red'). The retention for the 1<sup>st</sup> year retention on 2 year courses (ENG, CIT and T&T) was currently at 97%. The meeting was assured that special intervention measures had been agreed to ensure that the second year students who had been retained were being supported to achieve and furthermore, that newly recruited first year students were better retained.

*Progress against Higher Education QIP 2018/19:* The meeting noted progress against the Areas for Improvement identified in the SAR 2017/18. The only area rated as 'red' was the retention rate over 2 year courses which had already been discussed by the meeting.

*National Student Survey (NSS) 2017/18 outcomes:* The meeting noted that the NSS response rate for HCUC at March 2019 was 51% (compared with 68% at the same point in the prior year). Relevant curriculum teams were encouraging students to complete the NSS survey.

In addition, an online spring survey had been completed by UC HE students. The results from this survey showed that generally HE students agreed that the College was doing things well in most areas. More than 80% agreed with all the statements in the survey sections about Information and Guidance (IAG), Teaching, Course Management and Assessment & Feedback. However less than 80% agreed with any of the statements about resources; covering the LRC, general IT and course specific resources. Governors were assured that the survey results (which were also broken down by programme area) had been shared with curriculum teams and lower scoring areas were being followed up. The online survey was being sent to Harrow College teams to complete with their groups. ***Governors asked for additional detail to be provided benchmarking HCUC survey outcomes against other providers, so that the context of HCUC outcomes could be better understood.***

*Registration with Office for Students (OfS):* The meeting was reminded that the College had been notified that HCUC had been entered on the register of Higher Education providers on 10th December 2018. Whilst the College had met the overall conditions of registration to date, SLT had been notified that HCUC would be subject to "enhanced monitoring" for Condition of Registration B3 (which relates to outcomes for all students). This means that the College was deemed to be at an increased risk of breaching this condition and was required to submit an action plan by the end of March to show how this would be addressed. QCS Members were informed that SLT had agreed to convert all provision to two 1 year courses for 2019/20. Actions to address poor retention were already identified within the QIP (as previously discussed) as the College had not met the Corporate Goal target 2017/18 for HE retention. Governors were assured that this area had been given a high priority at HE Programmes Committee and HE Academic Standards Committee. It was also noted that the HE Core Group was meeting with the HCUC Director Funding and Management Information to understand the complex metrics related to this area so that the College could provide an explanation to the OfS and submit a robust action plan. ***The Chair flagged the need for the College***

**to update its Access and Participation Statement for HE on an annual basis; SLT would remain alert to this issue.**

HE Programme Committee Activity: The meeting noted that there was now one HE Programme Committee for HCUC with Harrow colleagues joining the Uxbridge group for meetings. This was enabling good practice to be shared across the group for HE. Governors noted that recently the group had focussed on: Strategies to improve recruitment and retention; Applications for 2019/20; Input from Pearson on the new RQF qualifications; and, Sharing practice on the delivery of the project units.

Access to HE retention and Predicted Achievements: The meeting noted the detailed learner progress and performance on this programme area which had been considered in more detail at the local SSCs. The current retention rate was 98% across HCUC with predicted achievement within a range of 78-88%.

**The HE Report was NOTED.**

#### 9. In-Year Performance Monitoring including HCUC KPI Dashboard

The meeting considered the new data dashboard for Governors which showed in year performance against the Key Performance Indicators for 2018/19 split by Student Progress, TL&A, and Student Experience. It was noted that amendments had been made to the format following feedback from the QCS Committee in November 2018. The meeting noted the summary dashboard which provided year-to-date (YTD) performance 2018/19 for HCUC, HC and UC for the following metrics: Retention, Work Based Learning (WBL) updates, FT Attendance, Employability, Lesson Observations, Complaints and Disciplinarys. The meeting noted that this dashboard had also been presented at each of the Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees (SSCs). The meeting noted the following aspects of performance:

##### YTD performance against target for attendance 2018/19

- Attendance overall at 87% for 16-18 and 86% for 19+, currently above the 86% target. There was variation within certain Schools, monitored at SSC/ SLT level and followed up on a weekly basis.
- There were significant strategies in place that were regularly reviewed and refreshed across HC & UC to meet underperformance. Despite these, attendance at cross-college English and maths continued to be below that of the substantial vocational course provision.

##### Retention YTD was high and improved – (based on the 6<sup>th</sup> March ILR)

- Retention across both ages was well above national average (NA) and improved on YTD 2018.
- By Qualification type: all 12 qualifications were on or above NA across both ages.
- By SSA: all 16-18s and 13 of 14 SSAs for 19+ were on or above NA YTD; the SSA area for improvement was noted as Sport/ Travel.
- Headline 16-18 retention was at 96.2% (noted as being 0.6% higher than at March 2018: this meant that 72 additional students were still in learning. 19+ retention was at 97.2% and was also up by 0.6%.

##### Complaints 2018/19

- A detailed complaints report had been presented at HC & UC SSCs.
- There had been 17 formal complaints in total to date at HCUC, 8 had been upheld
- The meeting was assured that complaints were being dealt with in a timely manner and none currently were considered to pose a legal or financial risk to the institution.

##### Disciplinarys

- The meeting was pleased to note that the number of disciplinarys was marginally below YTD 2018 and that exclusions were significantly below YTD 2018.

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Quality of Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TL&A)

- The meeting was reminded that the methods for gauging and reporting the quality of TL&A at HCUC were now converged across the two Colleges. Outcomes from both Lesson Observations (LOs) which were 30-60mins observations of individual staff and shorter duration, 'drop-in' Learning walks (LWs) were being used to identify whether expected standards were being met (or exceeded). A common system introduced in 2018/19 was now being used to capture and report these findings.
- Initial observations YTD indicated a better consistency than the previous year. The combined findings for HCUC LOs indicated that 82% overall met or exceeded expected standards. In addition, a number of learning walks had also been completed to date. These rated TL&A standards for curriculum areas as a whole but required a certain threshold number of LWs to be conducted before an overall view could be taken. The latter had been managed for UC and findings confirmed the strength of TL&A across different curriculum areas, although some variation has been identified (in the area of English and maths).
- Governors noted that for 2018/19 the TL&A findings had been confined to those obtained from external (Ofsted trained) observers and so there was confidence in the rigour with which these LOs and LWs were providing a realistic gauge of the quality of TL&A at HCUC. The HCUC SAR for 2017/18 reported the quality of TL&A as 'Good with outstanding features' and Governors were assured that the current findings YTD 2018/19 supported this judgement.
- Further independent 'Quality of TL&A Review' was planned for the spring term which would solely use the inspection style of LWs; external (ex-HMI) observers would be conducting this work across HCUC.

Learner satisfaction 2018/19

- Governors were reminded that a positive set of learner survey results were reported in autumn 2018. It was noted that the Spring 'FE choices' survey had just been launched across HCUC (week commencing 11/03/2019). This survey had a component that would link into the externally published 'FE choices' survey results.

The meeting also noted the headline statements beneath the KPI Dashboard which provided additional detail. DDS reminded the meeting that, where appropriate, the data feeding the dashboard would be supplied as 'optional reading' Appendix papers. In this way, QCS members should be able to build a clear picture of how the College was performing against the targets set and progress in 2018/19. The meeting discussed the need to add WBL data to the dashboard report; **it was agreed that Overall WBL in-year predictions should be included on a minimum, mid-point and maximum basis.**

10. **Curriculum Review Report**

QCS Committee members considered the report which was presented for discussion. Governors were reminded that during the first year post-merger HCUC had focused on a number of priorities. Prime among these had been bringing together cross-college Corporate services, systems merger and staffing re-structure among key support and curriculum areas. Review of the curriculum had been addressed in a number of phases. Governors were reminded that during 2017/18, advances were made in the following areas:

- English & maths - CPD activity took place with curriculum teams sharing practice.
- Access to HE this provision for HCUC in 2016/17 was close to minimum level thresholds (70% QAR) and so was given particular attention. Led by the Director Vocational UC, teams closely tracked in-year learner progress and undertook activities sharing practice, including pastoral support of learners and internal moderation method. Improvements were realised in 2017/18
- Higher Education HC staff participated in the annual UC HE staff development day with shared practice at the forefront. Some rationalisation of the HC HE provision in liaison with the UC offer was managed as a result in 2018-19.



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- A-Levels: HC continued to rationalise unviable and underperforming A-levels (Humanities, Economics, Arts & Media)- retaining strengths in Science.

In addition, an overview of the broad qualifications on entry (QoE) and prospectus information was undertaken. This resulted in agreements for standardised wording in HCUC prospectuses at HC and UC in terms of QoE to Level 1, 2 and 3 programmes. A detailed examination of where current (2018-19) learners had been placed on programmes, particularly at Level 2 and 3 had taken place, with appropriateness and stretch and challenge based on QoE being tested. The initial developments in 2017/18 had been continued in 2018/19 and the following areas of curriculum review progress were noted by the meeting:

- A level Review Further to previous rationalisation of A-level provision at HC and with removal of poorly performing courses (Arts and Humanities) retaining the stronger Science offer, a comprehensive review in the autumn term 2018, focused at HC was undertaken in partnership with the then UC Head of Sixth Form (an Ofsted Inspector).  
*Outcome:* positive outcome and re-assurances about quality of provision
- A more detailed examination and review of HCUC curriculum was also undertaken including qualifications on entry, placements of learners at different levels of study, progression pathways and suitability of course to learners needs. This had resulted in the following:
  - Level 2 Vocational programmes to be BTEC by default unless there was a clear rationale for alternatives. It was considered that BTEC L2 was the more appropriate pathway and preparation (with examination content) for Applied General study at Level 3 BTECs.  
*Outcome:* HSC, H&B, Sport would change awarding bodies at Level 2 at HC.
  - Vocational Level 3 BTEC RQF programmes were agreed to be the favoured option and ultimate aim for progressing learners (DfE approved; with robust exam assessment components and more highly valued by University admissions).  
*Outcome:* Schools across HCUC were piloting or extending delivery of L3 NQF/RQF qualifications in readiness for a full roll-out in 2020/21.
  - A concerted shift from Level 3 BTEC QCF to RQF programmes was in place at HC and UC for 2019/20.
  - Ensuring appropriate stretch and challenge for learners at Level 3 in terms of 60 credit, 90 credit, programmes and their pathways leading to Diploma and Extended Diploma.  
*Outcome:* Schools across HCUC are offering higher proportions of 90 credit options. Some Schools were exploring 60 credit options to stretch Level 2 students.
  - ESOL provision - detailed work involving Head of Schools at HC and UC had taken place to understand the variations in provision and to bring about better alignment.

DDS informed the meeting that Heads of School, in formulating their Development Plans for 2019/20, had deliberated carefully in relation to the curriculum intent of their portfolio offer. The meeting was reminded that the new Ofsted Educational Inspection Framework (EIF) due for launch in September 2019, stressed the importance of meaningful curriculum for learners and highlighted the expectation that this should have “integrity and substance”. DDS assured Governors that Heads of School had carefully examined the appropriateness, stretch and challenge within the curriculum being offered to their learners being very aware of the need for relevance to industry, developing learners to be work ready and supplying them with skills for further and higher study and their future careers.

Future curriculum developments were also noted including: HCUC’s participation in the first tranche pilot for T-Levels to be launched in 2020/21; the bid for the Institute of Technology; and, the College participation in the Mayor’s Construction Academy. The meeting talked in detail about the challenges of the T Levels and the requirement for a work placement of 45 days within the programme. The 2019/20 curriculum portfolios were currently being finalised but QCS Members were given a detailed update of notable amendment at each College. Final versions of the HCUC portfolio would be determined by budget considerations and so were unlikely to be fully finalised until April 2019. The

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CEO asserted that the portfolio would be ambitious, coherent, ethical and based on realism. The meeting spent some time discussing the partnerships in place moving forward with the bid for the IoT and the timeframe for full implementation. The meeting noted that the business case showed IoT learner numbers growing steadily until full capacity was reached for Year 3 of operation in 2021/22.  
***The Curriculum Review Report was NOTED.***

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### 11. To receive FOR INFORMATION:

The meeting received the following detailed documents which were provided to give Governors full assurance around all aspects of underlying quality across HCUC. The reports were largely taken as read with QCS Committee Members given the chance to ask further questions or comment where appropriate.

#### 11.1 Learner Progress including Value-Added

The meeting was reminded that HCUC used three main measures for Level 3 value added data: DfE, ALPS, and an internal system that predicted value added, based upon predicted grades. Governors noted that DfE performance measures were published in January 2019 which showed that HCUC was 'Average' for both A-Level and Applied General. To give some benchmarking detail the meeting noted that value added at HCUC was: stronger than competitor FE colleges (West Thames, Windsor Forest Colleges Group, West Herts) and was comparable to EHWLC, who ran a much smaller A-Level programme; and was typical for school 6<sup>th</sup> form performance in Hillingdon, but weaker than typical school 6<sup>th</sup> form performance in Harrow. The ALPS Value Added measures broadly agreed with the DfE, but gave a more detailed breakdown and include non-reformed BTEC qualifications. Governors discussed the need for the College to aim to be better than 'average' but noted the in built limitations of English and maths and Functional Skills outcomes which dampened performance.

***NOTED***

#### 11.2 HCUC English and Maths Report

As previously discussed the DfE performance measures, including those for English and maths were published in Jan 2019. This showed small but positive progress scores for both English (+0.14) and maths (+0.05). Governors noted that this was stronger than for all four competitor FE colleges listed above (EHWLC, West Thames, Windsor Forest Colleges Group, West Herts), which all had negative progress scores for both English and maths.

Governors noted that HC and UC had adopted a common enrolment process for 2018/19, for English and maths. The large scale of the provision was noted with currently 7564 enrolments for English and maths, which make up 44.7% of the total enrolments across HCUC. English and maths enrolments were made up of GCSE (50.6%), Functional Skills (39.2%) with smaller Award qualifications at HC only, making up the remainder (10.2%).

The split between the two colleges was noted as HC (46.1%) and UC (53.9%). At HC just over half the enrolments were for 19+ (51.0%); the majority of enrolments at UC were for 16-18 (92.7%).

The meeting noted that 211 students sat for GCSE English and/or maths in November 2018 and 110 students (52.1%) achieved a 9-4 grade. Results from the first series of Functional Skills exams in January had recently been published and were in the process of being analysed.

***The report was NOTED***

#### 11.3 HCUC Learner Views

The meeting took this report as read and commended the detail in the papers which had been presented to the two separate College Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees. The meeting noted

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that the college-wide Learner Survey had launched on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and would remain open for responses for 3 weeks until the Easter break and for 3 weeks after. The report contained details of the questions asked. This survey had been issued to all learners across HCUC in order to capture students' thoughts and reflections on their experience to date since September 2018 enrolment. Results from this survey would be brought to the June 2019 QCS Committee meeting.

**NOTED**

## 11.4 HCUC SEND Update

The QCS Committee took this detailed report as read; it provided the year-to-date information for 2018/19 for this growing area of provision. Governors noted that HCUC now had 425 High Needs learners (217 at Uxbridge and 208 at Harrow). Specialist Element 2 and 3 High Needs funding for learners would be at £5.6m for 2018/19 at the College. Governors noted that HCUC was currently implementing the College SEND Strategy and was in the process of harmonizing processes, costings and staffing structures across HCUC.

**NOTED**

## 11.5 In-Year Teaching Learning and Assessment Report

The meeting took this detailed report as read with information provided on: Headline TL&A Updates; TL&A systems convergence and identification of Afls; gauging the quality of TL&A in-year; staff development; and actions to date. The report provided QCS Committee Members with a detailed outline of the progress made since merger to converge systems and approaches to the quality management and improvement of Teaching Learning and Assessment across HCUC.

**NOTED**

## 11.6 HCUC Staff Focus Group summary findings

The meeting received the report which provided detailed feedback from the recent staff focus groups which had been held on 30 January and 11 February at each of the Colleges for 28 Section Managers. The meeting noted the questions that had been asked which covered the following subjects: Key activities of their roles, barriers to fulfilling the job role such as administrative tasks; Communications; Learner impact/ culture & ethos; Customer service; Lesson observations; Teaching & learning hour (TLC-HC)); Study programmes, including English & maths; Ofsted Inspection; Student attendance & punctuality; People management; Staff training; E-learning; IT resources; Quality/Improving the quality of TL&A; Performance management and annual appraisals; Line management and staff development; College values.

QCS Committee noted the detailed reports which outlined the staff feedback and the subsequent management response.

Governors noted the positive feedback from the staff on the following aspects: Managers shared good practice about key activities to improve learner retention and success (HC/UC). Ofsted Inspection and getting outstanding was seen as very important (HC/UC), Communications from managers was timely(UC); Peer observations were viewed as positive (HC/UC) Learning walks for gauging the quality of TL&A and preparing for Inspection (UC/HC), TLC & TL Hours sessions valued as an opportunity to share best practice (HC/UC); People management (HC/UC); Managers across both colleges also recognised the importance of English & Maths for learners progress; Managers at both colleges had a good understanding of proprieties for Teaching and Learning, Ofsted Inspection and getting outstanding was seen as very important (HC/UC), Managers were aware of the College's values (HC/UC) and there seemed to be a general buy-in to the new quality measures across College. Governors commended the generally positive responses which showed an underlying commitment to driving HCUC forward.

The areas identified for attention/ improvement by the Section Managers were also noted. These included: Improvements in communication required in relation to changes in organizational structures and MIS systems changes (HC), Managers wanted more time to implement improvements following lesson observations (HC), Concerns about the reliability and set up IT equipment (HC),

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teaching work load impacting on management responsibilities (HC/UC); number and frequency of the combined LW/LO increasing pressures on staff (UC), frequent systems changes without adequate training (HC), mock Ofsted a concern about the quality of inspectors used last year (HC), Frequency of weekly Teaching & Learning hour (UC), Frequency of TLC's (HC) The level of support given to staff when implementing MIS systems changes (HC), Issue of management time being available to ebbed college values into staff working practices (HC).

QCS Members sought, and were given, assurance that action in relation to the areas of improvement identified above was being taken and would be monitored at SLT meetings to ensure appropriate action was taken in response to staff feedback. Governors sought, and were given, confirmation that feedback on proposed actions would be given to the participants.

## **NOTED**

### 11.7a) **HCUC Equality and Diversity Report Update**

The meeting noted this report which provided QCS Committee members with in year updates relating to progress on the HCUC E&D Action Plan. There were no areas of concern with all areas rated as 'green' apart from the following which was flagged as 'amber' until the end-year data was confirmed: predicted success for different ethnicities.

***The Equality and Diversity update report was NOTED***

### 11.7b) **Harrow College and Uxbridge College Disciplinary Reports**

The meeting noted the detailed disciplinary reports from each of the Colleges which provided data by age, gender and ethnicity. Governors were reminded that the main objectives of the college's disciplinary process was to promote and enable positive and appropriate student behaviour and where required secure changes in performance or behaviour that would enable a student to succeed. This linked closely to fundamental British values, as students were encouraged to respect rules, accept responsibility for their own behaviour and respect and tolerate others. All members of staff were responsible for supporting students to ensure that their behaviour and performance was consistent with appropriate standards and were encouraged to initially resolve difficulties at an early stage and where possible informally, to ensure students remained on their programme of study with a strong chance of success.

## **NOTED**

### 11.7c) **Uxbridge College Disciplinary Discussion Paper**

The meeting considered a report which looked at two issues regarding student behaviour at Uxbridge College which had been previously discussed at QCS Committee: the disproportionate number of Black African students involved in disciplinaries; and the increasing number of students involved in disciplinaries relating to drugs, particularly cannabis use.

Governors were reminded of the ongoing action in College to mitigate poor behaviour. There was an induction programme for students which covered behaviour and consequences; this was delivered in the first days of College. This was then followed up in subsequent weeks with more 'in-depth' discussion of appropriate behaviour and disciplinary sanctions. Students were reminded about their behaviour 'off-site' in our town centres and streets. They were advised that they risked exclusion for behaviour such as fighting. Tutors and managers were heavily involved with students once disciplinary issues have been identified. It should be noted that of the Black African students that had warnings following a stage 3 hearing 70% went on to achieve their qualifications.

The College held knife awareness events every year with speakers and activities. There was staff CPD delivered at training days on behaviour management which was linked to ethnicity.

HCUC had a pro-active approach to detecting and penalising students that break the code of conduct both within and outside of the College; this involved always following up on information even if the student was involved in an incident that was many miles away from the College. The local Police Community Officer linked HCUC with the police database and intelligence which helped the College to track students for offences that other Colleges might not be aware of and may not be as pro-active in following up.

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The meeting also noted the comprehensive mitigation already in place against ongoing drug use by learners. DDS informed the meeting that there was a feeling amongst the security staff and some staff at UC that cannabis use for teenagers had become more widespread. They believed that more students were willing to smoke cannabis during the day (off-site) and be under the influence whilst at College. Current statistics suggested that 14% of 16-19 year olds used cannabis. Research suggested that teenagers using cannabis are not a homogenous group that can be defined in ways such simple terms as 'anti-social' behaviour types. They are more likely to be from stable environments and many do not often appear to use other illicit drugs. In response to this Fountains Mill drug awareness team visited the College every week and offered open drop in sessions. The College had referred students to them in the past but this was not systematic and so would not form part of the action plan. In addition the College's Student Support offered a 1:1 counselling service for students with problems.

The College Police Community Support Officer patrols the local area around the Uxbridge campus, working closely with the security team. Normal practice for police would be to arrest someone 16-17 and issue a youth caution for a first offence of cannabis possession; a fine could be issued to someone 18. Staff Governor LK highlighted the need for some external input on the dangers of cannabis use for learners; learners took this more seriously than when EPR sessions were delivered internally by staff. DDS confirmed that an external guest speaker on the issue of cannabis use was planned for the spring term following the issue being debated at the Uxbridge SSC and previously at QCS Committee; this would deliver a 'real' message to learners.

In addition to this ongoing action the meeting noted an additional detailed Action Plan which was now being put in place in response to these two key issues at Uxbridge. A report on impact and progress would be brought to the next meeting of the QCS Committee.

## **NOTED**

### 11.8 **HCUC Risk Register**

The meeting received the Risk Register which outlined the key risks aligned to the College corporate goals which were being monitored by the Quality Curriculum and Standards Committee.

***The Risk Register was NOTED***

### 11.9 **Minutes of Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees (SSCs), Harrow College and Uxbridge College**

The minutes of the SSC meetings would be brought to the Governing Body for information.

### 12. **To confirm and agree the dates and times of QCS Committee meetings for 2018/19**

The dates and times of the meetings were agreed as follows:

- Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 4.00pm

The venue for these meetings was confirmed as the Uxbridge Campus at Park Road.

### 13. **Feedback to Governing Body meeting**

The following items were agreed as highlights of the meeting:

- The new dashboard of KPIs for Governors was a very positive addition; it clearly highlighted the key issues/ areas of concern/ strength.
- Feedback from Staff Focus Groups very positive (Section Managers). Staff across HCUC much more positive than in prior year - seemed committed to driving forward HCUC to excellence. QCS commended the direction of travel.
- The QCS Committee had considered the curriculum review and acknowledge the considerable amount of work that had been done on this issue. There was still work to do but SLT had a very good grip on the key areas for further review.

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14. **Any other business**

There was no other business. The meeting closed at 5.55pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

DRAFT

