

The City College, Board of Governors Meeting: 26/06/23 Start time: 3:00 pm/End time: 4:35 pm/Venue: Onsite: Conference Room, TCC / Online – Microsoft Teams

Present: Uroy Clarke (Chair), Tasneem Riaz (Director), Ian Woolgar (External), Collin Chikanma (Current Student), Mike Potter (External), Susan Riaz (Secretary), Naweed Riaz (Staff, legal advisor, in attendance)

Apologies: Amanda Banks (External), Mattias Scheibel Larsson (External)

Item	Key points raised:	Actions	Who?	When?
1) Apologies	Amanda Banks (External), Mattias Scheibel Larsson (External)	None	N/A	N/A
2) Minutes of Previous Meeting	Previous minutes (Aug 22) circulated and agreed on.	None	N/A	N/A
3) Report from the Director/Chair	TR: Apologies that meeting did not happen as planned in March. Ideally, we should have meetings twice a year, so we will schedule our next meeting in November. Since the last time we spoke our focus was heavily on recruitment as we were struggling with numbers and the Office for Students (OfS) were concerned about financial stability. We did better in April, higher than in September or January. Those students who did HNC are now moving to the HND and progressing. If we do not make a profit, then we are hoping to break even. We have had external examiners' visits and I am pleased to report that certification was released for all of them, but a slight caveat for DET. This is not just us, but we are limited to recruiting only 20 DET students per year. I will go back to Pearson			

	and clarify why we received that email, but it seems that everyone received a similar message. However, we should make that up with larger numbers for Business and other HNC subjects.			
4) Matters Arising	<p>Risk Register: TR: Our risk ratings will go down and we are hoping that we will remove the red flags from our risk register going forward. Recruitment is key – not just the numbers but having good students who will complete.</p>			
	<p>Annual Monitoring of Management and Governance: TR: This was done early this year. The next one will be January 24. UC: The previous one was satisfactory. TR: Yes.</p>			
	<p>Recruiting a new Chair and members to the committee UC: We felt there was a need to recruit a new Chair and new members going forward. We do encourage you to suggest any suitable colleagues or friends. We want to expand to having other committees, such as a remuneration or audit committee but we do not have the numbers needed to expand.</p> <p>TR: Ian has suggested he may wish to take the role of the Chair and that is something we will explore. How would you feel if Uroy steps down and Ian takes the role of the Chair? Uroy has other ideas, but we cannot explore these ideas at the moment.</p> <p>UC: Yes, we will open this to a vote. When the time comes, we will put that to a vote.</p> <p>IW: Uroy, would you stay or move sideways to the lead on another</p>			

	<p>committee?</p> <p>TR: Yes, that's the idea.</p> <p>IW: I am happy enough to do this and become the Chair.</p>			
	<p>Paperwork for new student members for approval</p> <p>UC: I also received paperwork for new members.</p> <p>TR: Yes, we have sent paperwork for two students. Kate Diver is an acupuncture student, a current student. Ramona Padurean will be alumni. We can approve as we have the paperwork. There is another interested student and we had a meeting, but she needs to provide the paperwork.</p>			
<p>5) Access and Participation Plan</p>	<p>TR: We have not submitted this to OfS at the moment. We have to gather the data, so the idea is to work on this. What it does is provide exemption for VAT which is a major expenditure and we can increase fees and it also opens up other avenues from OfS. We need to get the data together and we need to work on this. Hopefully, this is a long-term plan and by the end of the year, we will have submitted this to OFS.</p> <p>UC: That will open doors for funding.</p> <p>TR: They do give grants, but we cannot access this as our fees are capped and have a limited amount we can charge.</p> <p>MP: That will give student loan capability?</p> <p>TR: We do have student loan funding for Pearson courses, but not</p>			

	<p>acupuncture. We cannot charge higher than six thousand. There is a new format for the access and participation plan, so we will get that together and show the committee.</p>			
<p>6) New Courses</p>	<p>TR: moving forward that all relies on numbers. We are looking at new courses.</p> <p>NR: Public policy.</p> <p>TR: Internal verifier course as well. So those people who teach could do the course. We are looking at that but need to go to Pearson for approval.</p>			
<p>7) Audit of use of public monies</p>	<p>TR: When we do our accounts we do need a separate committee. Once we have that we can think about in November.</p> <p>UC: That is based on us increasing numbers of board members.</p>			
<p>8) Staffing Levels and Training</p>	<p>UC: Have we recruited new staff.</p> <p>TR: Yes, we recruited two full-time DET lecturers last year, and we now have four or five part-time Business lecturers. In addition, we have two more full-time admin members. We may need one or two full-time members of staff for Business. Possibly we can see whether any part-time people would prefer a full-time role? PJ is also wishing to relinquish his full-time role and so someone has been recruited and is shadowing him to become the programme leader from September. She has a PhD in IT and a good range of different qualifications as well as being an ex-acupuncture student.</p> <p>MP: What is her name?</p>			

	<p>TR: Ilze Black. She has been assisting with Tui Na.</p>			
<p>9) Consumer Protection Compliance</p>	<p>TR: All of the information on our website needs to be correct and we have to ensure that we comply with this. OfS have sent us a newsletter reiterating the fact that students are consumers. Of course we are aware of that and they do know their rights, but we need to ensure we operate within the correct parameters. If you have noticed anything on our website which is incorrect, do please let us know. Our provider profile needs to have all the information from the website so they can check it is all correct.</p>			
<p>10) Calendar of Significant College Events</p>	<p>TR: We have just had all the external examiners visit. We have had five different visits just for DET. You are expected to have three visits, then we had a spot check and then a management review. Certification has been released. We are ending our term shortly and then we have student submission but not more visits. An OfS financial return needs to be made so that needs to be submitted in terms of accounts and that will show how we are doing. We have recruited late, so I feel next year will be much better. I am hoping that we break even or make a small profit. It is not always easy to see how we have done.</p> <p>UC: How are we doing for numbers?</p> <p>NR: We recruited quite hard to get a larger number. We did just over 100 this term. Have cut down with DET as we have had issues with learners having a work placement, so we are now insisting that students have a work placement. Business Management did very well, with over 75 HNC students, a small number for Travel and Tourism and those who completed the HNC have continued with the HND. We also had some students on the Travel and</p>			

	<p>Tourism HND as well as Business. Hopefully, we will recruit until the end of August and hope to recruit the same number again for the coming semester.</p> <p>TR: We were hoping for a double intake for acupuncture, but with the cost of living crisis we ended up with one intake of 24. We are hoping for two intakes in September.</p> <p>MP: Is it face to face or online? A lot of courses are now online.</p> <p>TR: During open days we have explored this and most prefer on site but the course itself is difficult to do online as the practical element has to be done face to face.</p> <p>MP: Other colleges are limiting the amount of time people are onsite and minimizing that just to the clinic.</p> <p>TR: We had that issue during the train strikes. Had to reschedule the practical element as lecturers could not get in as well as some students.</p> <p>MP: Face to face classes should be a selling point.</p> <p>TR: OfS and Pearson like blended learning, but engagement is sometimes difficult – cameras may be off for example so you are not sure how far students are involved and engaged with the class.</p> <p>IW: A lot of tutorial support can be done online but it is best if most of the course is onsite.</p> <p>TR: It is not the same. As with our meeting today, some people are online, others are onsite.</p>			
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	<p>MP: I do prefer things onsite. The problem is that I book tickets in advance as it is a lot cheaper.</p> <p>TR: So we need to book the date in advance as it would be nice to do things in person.</p> <p>IW: Yes, if meetings are planned then people can give them preference and feel more obligated to attend. I think that in the wider business community as well as education, hybrid working has a multiplier effect. My wife's tutorial business was shifted online during the pandemic, but she has found that if you have some lessons face to face it is easier to have a better relationship and that makes the online lessons more productive. People like it as they don't have to pay for travel or lunch, so if they do not come into the office five days a week you save transport costs, so they prefer that option, but the face-to-face stuff is important for management to have a degree of authority over staff or the student body. I think this is how we will all look at business and education. I saw in a management consultancy business designed so that the consultant can pull out his desk from a filing cabinet in the wall and that is the extent of the office. Then you just shut it up and it stays there until you return again. That will be future of office working.</p>			
<p>11) Key Performance Indicators and Benchmarking</p>	<p>TR: We started registration in 21/22 but now numbers have improved. In Feb 24 we will see our key performance indicators. We didn't have enough data previously, but moving forward we will have greater data and we need to be careful about as the emphasis is on retention and completion. Non-continuation is what the KPI are all about, so you need to recruit genuine students. You do get students who are really keen and some who do not</p>			

	show as much enthusiasm, but it is hard to get those students all the time. It is important that we tighten our interview checklists, that we test students before they are accepted and that we ensure that students understand and can converse fluently.			
12) Transparency and Publication of Information	TR: Everything needs to be on the website, including the minutes. Everything has to be transparent and please comment if you find anything that should, or should not, be there.			
13) Student Matters – External Examiners Report	<p>TR: Can you give us some feedback, Collin?</p> <p>CC: I am pleased to hear that the college has more numbers. One of the things I would mention is about the placement for DET students. It is difficult to find a placement sometimes and I did want to work in a primary school, but the DET is for higher education and that caused a difficulty. You thought you could go into school to do a placement, but most did not know what it is about and so they struggled.</p> <p>TR: The DET course is post 16+ and it is geared for that age. You cannot do a placement in a school or nursery and you need to be observed, so it is GCSE, A Level or adult learners. Pearson would not accept a school. However, once you get a DET qualification you can get QTLS.</p> <p>CC: The recruitment agency you put me in touch with do still contact me about vacancies, which is good.</p> <p>TR: The placement is a voluntary thing not a teaching position. It is for experience. We are now only accepting students who have placements. We are trying to make connections with providers. Placement is such a big issue, but we are working on it and we have</p>			

	<p>learnt from earlier students what the difficulties are and to be clear from the beginning what is required.</p>			
<p>14) Action Plan Update</p>	<p>TR: External examiners reports are fine. We have had no blocks so far and no problems with acupuncture.</p> <p>MP: I am on the accreditation board now.</p> <p>TR: We are trying to find a collaboration with a university but that was put on hold because of OfS. We are keen to explore this though, so if you know any university then let us know. Moving forward we had a spot inspection for DET and the lady who visited had been here before for HND, so we got talking and she mentioned she worked for OFQUAL and works to get courses approved and we suggested having a meeting in the summer. She gave us a lot of information about OFQUAL and will think about acupuncture to see whether we can get it approved so we can be our own awarding body. That is something we want to look at and explore and the long -term plan is to work for awarding body status, which requires a lot of investment. New programme leader has that paperwork so if we could get funding for acupuncture then we would have larger numbers.</p> <p>MP: That would be interesting.</p> <p>TR: When I arrange a meeting would you like to be part of that?</p> <p>MP: Yes, I would.</p> <p>TR: She was very positive, and I would much rather do it ourselves than have to rely on a university.</p>			

	<p>MP: The attraction is getting a degree with students.</p> <p>TR: It is a continuous effort with a lot of meetings. The day to day running means that the bigger picture sometimes gets forgotten.</p> <p>MP: The right people are so important. City College is far more effective than other places I have known.</p> <p>TR: We want to do better, and it is frustrating.</p> <p>MP: You use the resources that you have well.</p> <p>TR: Well, we do need to have paperwork to provide. We cannot afford to be complacent and there is always room for improvement. The more people on the board will help. I want to step back a bit. Moving forwards we can get more senior staff.</p>			
<p>15) Covid Recovery</p>	<p>UC: Looking very positive.</p> <p>TR: As normal now.</p> <p>NR: Rules and regulations gone.</p>			
<p>16) Any Other Business</p>	<p>IW: Do you want to meet about the Chair before the next meeting?</p> <p>TR: Yes, that would be useful. Perhaps a Monday or Wednesday.</p> <p>UC: Yes, we can arrange a meeting to discuss this.</p> <p>TR: It would be a good idea to have a meeting to discuss the role of</p>			

	<p>the Chair.</p> <p>UC: If anyone comes across with anyone with the skills and potential to join the Board please let us know.</p>			
17) Date for Next Meeting	2pm 29 th Nov 23			