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Directorate:	Corporation	
Minutes of:	HCUC Governing Body	
Date:	Tuesday 22 September 2020	Time: 5.30pm
Venue:	Remote access via Zoom	
Present:	Nicholas Davies	Governor (<i>Chair</i>)
	Steven Cochran	Governor (<i>Vice Chair</i>)
	Tracey Critchley	Staff Governor (Harrow)
	Melissa Bridge	Staff Governor (Uxbridge)
	Darrell DeSouza	Governor (<i>Group CEO and Principal</i>)
	Nasim Khan	Governor
	Johanna Morgan	Governor
	Steve Owen	Governor
	Amanda Priem	Governor
	Mariann Rand-Weaver	Governor
	Ketan Sheth	Governor
Apologies:	Alasdair MacLeod	Governor
	Paul Walker	Governor
In attendance:	Pat Carvalho	Harrow Principal and Deputy CEO
	Dylan McTaggart	Deputy Principal HCUC
	Shane Woodhatch	Group Director Finance & Resource Planning
	Tracy Reeve	Clerk to the Corporation
	Gavin Hughes	Director of SEND, Safeguarding and Prevent (<i>item 14 only</i>)
	Imtiaz Aziz	HR Director (<i>item 15 only</i>)
	Andrew Miller	Exec Dir Corporate Services (<i>items 10 & 16 only</i>)
	Len Scott	Health and Safety Manager (<i>item 16 only</i>)

Governors' pre-meeting

In advance of the formal meeting the Governors held a short pre-meeting with no officers of the College present, (the Clerk was present as was the Principal in his role as Governor). There were no specific items that any of the Governors wanted to raise outside of the formal meeting.

Presentations

The Corporation Members received the following presentations:

- The College Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report 2019/20 which was presented by the Curriculum Director of SEND, Safeguarding and Prevent. (Presentation minuted at item 14).
- The annual Human Resources Report 2018/19 (minuted at item 15).
- The annual Health & Safety Report 2018/19 (minuted at item 16).

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Alasdair Macleod and Paul Walker.

2. Notification of any urgent business Members may wish to raise under any other business, and any items to be taken as read that Members may wish to discuss

There was no other business notified.

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

No specific interests were notified.

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4. Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 7th July 2020

this amendment the Minutes and the Confidential Minutes were APPROVED as an accurate record.

5. Matters arising from Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 7th July 2020, which were not agenda items.

There were no matters arising that were not already covered by the agenda.

6. Updates**6.1 Chair's Update****6.2 CEO/ Group Principal's Update**

There was no specific updates from the Chair that were not already covered within the meeting papers. DDS highlighted the current work that he and the Deputy CEO (PC) were involved in with the Black FE Leadership Group; a paper on their '10 Point Plan' would be presented at the Governors Strategy day for more information. DDS also informed Governors that he was hoping that they would be able to have a tour of the new IoT Building very soon – Covid-19 permitting.

6.3 Update: additional Governors' activities at the College July – September 2020

There was nothing to add from the other governors over the summer period.

NOTED

Governing Body Matters**7. Policies for approval**

- **Attendance at Governing Body**

This was presented for biennial review with no changes required

- **Code of Conduct**

The Clerk (TR) presented the Code of Conduct for Corporation members for the standing biennial review. The changes showing as 'tracked changes;' in relation to funding regulations, titles, GDPR and the Office for Students (OfS) were noted.

The meeting APPROVED the two policies as presented.

8. Governors' Attendance Report

The Clerk reported on the attendance of HCUC Governors at Corporation meetings during 2019/20. Overall attendance was 75% which met the Governance Key Performance Indicator target (75%). It was noted that where Governors had not met the attendance target individual exceptions had been due to work commitments. The meeting also noted attendance data down to sub-committee level; when combined with attendance at Corporation meetings the overall attendance figure was noted as 77%. The meeting was reminded that the individual Governor attendance statistics had to be included in the formal Members Report which accompanied the annual Financial Statements. The meeting agreed that moving governance online and the use of the Zoom format helped with attendance.

The report was NOTED.

9. Draft Programme for Governors Training Day – 7 October 2020

The CEO/ Group Principal outlined the arrangements for the Governors Training Day to be held on 7th October 2020 at Denham Grove Conference Centre. The Clerk had ensured that all social distancing measures would be in place and that it was appropriate for the meeting to go ahead on site. Governors were reminded that if they preferred to attend this event remotely that option was also available. It was noted that the programme would include:

- An update on HCUC enrolments.
- An update on QAR outcomes for 2019/20.
- A summary of adjustments to the delivery for 2020/21 to reflect Covid-19 guidelines and a focus on preparations for an Ofsted inspection under the new Covid-19 arrangements.

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- The Strategic Plan 2021-24 and operational priorities for HCUC.
- A review of key current curriculum priorities within the Covid-19 landscape.
- Developing the Digital and Marketing Strategy for HCUC's next phase of development.
- Annual Safeguarding Update for Governors
- Governors' self-assessment exercise to contribute to the College SAR

There would also be some time set aside for additional discussion that the Governors may wish to initiate with or without the wider SLT members in attendance. The Clerk confirmed that Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committee (SSC) Members had been invited to this event. Governors cautioned against trying to have too many items on the agenda as they needed careful scrutiny – especially the Digital Strategy.

The arrangements for the Governors' Training Day were APPROVED.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

10. Update on Covid-19 Action Plan

The meeting received a comprehensive Covid-19 update which covered the following aspects of operations at the College: Revised Risk Assessment – Estate Operations; and Financial Implications. The HR aspects of the pandemic would be considered within the annual HR Report to be taken separately.

Estate Operations: The meeting noted a report which gave them a comprehensive update on the start of year arrangements that had been put in place at HCUC. The Executive Director Corporate Services (AM) joined the meeting to answer any additional questions and provide additional assurance for Governors. AM confirmed that the College had preparing the premises and the timetabling in line with Government advice and Health & Safety Executive guidance, being very mindful of the continued health and well-being of learners and staff. HCUC would continue to make local decisions based on safety and capacity, in line with learner and staff need.

The key points of the report were noted as follows:

- The 'return to campus' Risk Assessment & related action plan had been approved by Governors on 5th June 2020. This risk assessment had been refined to adjust for the most recent Government and PHE guidance issued in August and September 2020.
- All HCUC campuses had been prepared with protective screens for appropriate areas e.g. reception and the refectories; temperature checks on entry; sanitiser dispensers; social distance, one-way route markings; and instruction to wear face coverings in communal areas/corridors
- College plans were for as full an offer and return to the premises as CV19 arrangements and the risk assessment would allow.
 - Priority was for on-site face-to-face lessons supplemented with remote learning as required. This would allow for a switch to part or fully remote delivery should the need arise. The learner survey undertaken earlier in 2020 had indicated that whilst appreciative of staff efforts made to maintain learning and assessment during lockdown, on premises TL&A delivery was preferred.
 - 16-19 year old learners would be treated as 'bubbles' within specified curriculum zones, distinguished by different coloured lanyards, assisted by their normal geographical separation within campuses
 - Adults in mixed 16-19 programme classes would require some reduction to maximum class capacity in order to adhere to CV19 guidance concerning social distance, even with mitigation e.g. face shields.
 - Adult learner classes, under more stringent social distance guidance than 16-19 bubbles, would have reduced capacity in order to adhere to CV19 guidance
- Induction for students had comprehensively covered the CV19 arrangements and expected campus behaviour.

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- The two College Principals had sent letters to all learners emphasising behaviours expected of them in terms of both, CV19 arrangements on campus and whilst travelling on public transport as well as the necessary commitment to study following gaps in learning as a result of lockdown. These messages were reinforced in letters sent to parents/carers.
- Remote staff meetings continued and College leadership had already delivered a whole staff Zoom welcome meeting at the beginning of term and as well as management delivering staff training remotely during the August whole College training day.
- Staff CPD: Safety checklists and briefings had been completed. A Covid-19 SafeSmart training course was to be completed by all staff – the completion rate was being monitored and chased by the H&S adviser and HR.
- Liaison with Awarding Organisations (AOs) continued following the DfE/ OfQual decision to downgrade some centre-assessed grades and then reverse this decision. A backlog of appeals was being addressed. Governors sought, and were given, confirmation that no learners had now been disadvantaged.
- Maintaining contact with employers and keeping apprentices engaged and re-igniting this activity with the Kickstart scheme (using the available incentives) was a priority
- Modified marketing activities continued through summer with heavier use of social media and virtual/video activity to accommodate the CV19 restrictions and to assist applications and enrolment processes 2020/21.
- Management were undertaking a Review of IT strategy – as previously discussed with Governors - to cope with the 'new' post CV19 world.
- Staff CV19 metrics continue to be collected and reported on a weekly basis by HR; 88 staff had now returned from Furlough. The meeting was pleased to note the positive reports from HR discussions with Unions in relation to the College management of the pandemic arrangements and return to work.
- Finance metrics through CV19 remained strong; 16-19/19+ main funding was assured for 2019/20 and due to lag funding method, also for 2020/21. Apprenticeship funding was at risk. Opportunities were being sought for alternative curriculum offers to assist post-CV19 economic recovery. DDS highlighted that this would be considered at the Governors Strategy day in October 2020.
- Capital projects remained on track through CV19 and nearing completion; the IoT building was on track.
- Risk Register had been revised in light of CV19 to reflect the negative impact on Apprenticeships, IoT numbers and potentially mainstream enrolments.

The CEO commended the Corporate Services team, H&S staff and the Estates staff who had enabled mitigation to be put in place so that the College could run a full timetable whilst still adhering to all government guidelines. The meeting discussed the challenges of ensuring that learner behaviour when offsite e.g. travelling on buses – met Covid guidelines (wearing facemasks and staying in groups of 6 or less).

Financial Implications:

The budget for 2020/21 included a COVID19 financial impact which totalled £1,050,000 affecting income, pay for blended learning and non-pay for additional costs for PPE and anticipating inflationary increase due to supply and demand during this period

SW confirmed that currently there was a nil return since the impact of COVID19 was not yet known until HCUC submitted its first funding return in October 2020. There were current plans for remote learning which curriculum teams were working through which stood at £141,000 but actual costs were not yet finalised. Despite reporting a negative COVID19 financial impact to HCUC's finances there had also been additional Government relief to Colleges which had not been included in the budget. HCUC had been awarded a further £3,973,000 in grants of which £2,294,000 related to capital and £1,679,000 related to income. SW confirmed that the final impact of these additional grants would be reflected in the mid-year forecast once plans were in place to deliver against these income streams.

The Covid-19 operational update and Financial Impact report was NOTED and RECEIVED

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11. Covid-19 Curriculum and Quality Headlines**11.1 Exams and Learner Achievement 2019/20**

The Deputy Principal (DM) presented this report. The meeting noted that calculated grades (for A Levels, GCSEs, FS, and the majority of vocational qualifications) for HCUC's 19,500 qualifications had been completed, moderated and 'ranked' in line with awarding-body deadlines. A small number of HC qualifications were still being processed but would be completed before the final 2019/20 ILRs, all others have been certificated. Governors were pleased to note that 2019/20 retention had improved further on 2018/19: 16-18 retention was 94.4% (4th August ILR, 92.8% 2018/19) and 19+ was 94.9% (92.8% 2018/19). The meeting noted the emerging picture (all ages QAR) for the majority of awarding-bodies. The 16-18 data was broadly in line or just above the prior year but 19+ data was just below. DM highlighted that results were not yet complete and the data was for indicative purposes only. The meeting was assured that the full data tables would be available for the Governors Strategy event in October 2020.

11.2 Approaches to 2020/21 delivery of learning

The meeting was reminded that in line with government guidelines HCUC had initiated a full return to college for the significant majority of staff & students. Students had returned for their full programme hours with some remote delivery encouraged. Students had been timetabled into School Bubbles; coloured lanyards matching zones indicated if a student was in the right geographical area of the College. The meeting noted the additional £960,000 Covid-19 catch up fund for 16-18 learners that would provide additional teaching resource to support small-groups (five student max). Staff had started to plan the College approach to map students 'knowledge-gaps' and to create strategies that would best support learners at the subject level. DM confirmed that a 'think-tank' would take place tomorrow on this important topic. Adult learners would benefit from an internally funded up-to £250k Covid-19 catch up fund. This would predominantly cover additional teaching costs required in order for the College to split groups to meet Covid-19 restrictions.

Governors were reminded that in 2019/20, external observations, aligned to the 2019 EIF, conducted by Ofsted-trained observers showed a solid 83% judged as 'meeting expected standards or better, with outstanding features'. DM informed the meeting that ungraded Class and Remote drop-in observations would begin during September to focus on attendance, punctuality, and new staff. Managers and Advanced Practitioners to provide early support to staff who received lower lesson observation grades in 2019/20; re-observation of those staff would begin from week commencing 12th October. External observations would begin after October half term, subject to Covid-19 safety.

DM assured the meeting that work would continue in 2020-21 to improve standards of Education and Training, in line with current Ofsted expectations, including the current interest in blended learning. Inspections were currently paused until January 2021 (reviewed monthly). However, Ofsted Interim Reviews were being conducted in the autumn term, with the following themes:

- *What actions are leaders taking to ensure that they provide an appropriate curriculum that responds to the reasonable needs of learners and stakeholders and adapts to changed circumstances?*
- *What steps are leaders, managers and staff taking to ensure that the approaches used for building knowledge and skills are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of learners?*
- *How are leaders ensuring that learners are safe and well informed about potential risks, including from online sources.*

In light of the above, early Teaching and Learning Hours would be delivered across HCUC covering the following two subjects: 'Strategies to identify Learners' core subject starting points and to address any gaps'; and 'E-Learning -Padlet Proficiency and Quirky Quizzes.'

DM reminded the meeting that it was likely that HCUC would receive a full Ofsted inspection in 2020/21. The HCUC Education and Training Objectives for 2020/21 would focus on the Ofsted EIF:

- *Intent:* Purposeful Lesson Plan with demanding objectives, linked to sequencing in Curriculum Plan; Effective teacher strategies to address punctuality/attendance/behaviour.
- *Implementation:* Teacher use of effective and efficient adaptive teaching strategies/demanding tasks to ensure all students achieve objectives, with appropriate support/extension tasks where required. Development of learners' additional skills including English, maths, employability, E &

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D, digital skills. Teacher use of effective and varied assessment strategies to check understanding in lessons and at the end of the session and to provide helpful feedback. Formative assessment feedback on marked work to improve/check progress over time/prepare for summative assessment. There will be a continued focus on staff individual areas for development. HCUC also need to support staff to deliver T Levels/Transition Programmes and the challenge of providing extended Work Placements within the current climate.

The Deputy Principal invited questions from the meeting but Governors did not have any. They commended the very comprehensive report which had provide assurance for them on the delivery of TL&A under the Covid-19 guidelines.

The Covid-19 Update on TL&A Delivery was NOTED

12. Approval of Corporate Goals 2020/21

DDS confirmed that the Corporate Goals for 2020/21 as presented took account of the context of Covid-19 as ongoing through the year. The meeting noted that Ofsted were looking at remote learning and looking at methods for Colleges to enable learners to catch up on missed learning and any resulting skills / knowledge gaps. It was likely that success rates 2020/21 would be hit by the impact of the break in learning during 2020.

The front page of the Corporate Goals Report 2020/21 remained under the four key headings: corporate performance; learner outcomes; quality of education; and responsiveness and compliance. The targets shown under work experience, learner engagement and T level delivery were very uncertain at the current time due to the constraints around work placements.

DDS highlighted a change in the format of the corporate goal reporting for 2020/21: the separate College reports had now been amalgamated into one Corporate Report with local College nuances reflected in the narrative. The meeting was reminded that within the body of the draft Corporate Goals the left hand column provided the key Corporate Goal target details, whilst the right hand side 'Notes' column provided an explanation of the CG target or objective. Sometimes targets or objectives had been carried over, albeit on an updated basis, from 2019/20. Where a goal was new or had been changed substantially this was indicated in the 'Notes' commentary.

The meeting also noted that due to the fact that performance data would not be published for 2019/20 no updated national averages would be available; the comparison against 2018/19 NA would be considered.

The meeting APPROVED the summary report for the Corporate Goals and the target key performance indicators for 2020/21.

13. Audit Matters

Internal Audit Strategy 2020/21-2021/22

The meeting noted a paper which detailed the updated internal audit strategy and the annual plan for 2020/21. Governors were reminded of the requirements and obligations placed upon the Audit Committee and the Corporation under the overarching statutory documents of FE colleges. The importance of the challenge and scrutiny role of the Audit Committee and Governors was noted and agreed. Governors noted that since 1 August 2015 the Uxbridge College Corporation had agreed that no one firm would be appointed to deliver the annual internal audit contract; internal audit requirements were now reviewed annually and specialist firms appointed as necessary. It was confirmed that this had worked well during each year since for HCUC. Specialist audits had been commissioned where necessary; this had provided a good level of assurance for Governors and had also proved to be good value for money. It was confirmed that after further discussion at Audit Committee in September 2020 this approach was proposed to continue into 2020/21 for HCUC. The meeting noted the audit area covered in the last year of the internal audit contract included Key Financial Controls (with a satisfactory assessment) and Human Resources (also satisfactory). GDFRP (SW) highlighted that the funding audit assurance for 2019/20 scheduled to take place in November 2020 would not take place due to Covid-19. However, SW assured

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the meeting that to mitigate any possible funding clawback post year end 2019/20, a provision would be made.

The meeting noted the key areas of concern raised by a review of both colleges risk registers for 2020/21 and in discussion with College senior managers. Areas planned for inclusion in the internal audit plan 2020/21 were noted as: Safeguarding & Prevent (standing biennial review); Health and Safety (standing biennial review); Key Financial Controls including payroll; Funding compliance; Estates compliance; IT Systems and maintenance; GDPR and associated areas; and Apprenticeships. The meeting noted that there was an element of catch up in the timetable for the current year due to the impact of Covid in 2019/20; the ambitious internal audit programme would be spread evenly throughout the year. The meeting was assured that this annual plan and strategy had been considered and approved by the Audit Committee on 17 September 2020.

The meeting APPROVED the Strategy for Internal Audit and the detailed audit plan for 2020/21 and 2021/22 was APPROVED.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

14. Safeguarding Report 2019/20

Members considered the annual report, prepared by the two College Safeguarding Leads, which gave an overview of the Safeguarding and Child Protection issues raised during 2019/20. The report covered both Harrow College and Uxbridge College. The meeting noted overall numbers of serious safeguarding cases and the breakdown by category of incident during 2019/20 for both Colleges. Gavin Hughes, the Uxbridge safeguarding lead attended the meeting to present the report and take questions. He highlighted that the statistics were not markedly different from the Mid-Year Report which was brought to the March 2020 Corporation meeting but that there had been an increase of domestic violence cases and sexual exploitation during lockdown. There had also been marked increase in learners declaring mental health issues. GH assured the meeting that the College had continued to support all at-risk learners throughout lockdown.

Safeguarding Register: Categories within the 28 serious safeguarding cases at Uxbridge (UC) and 26 cases at Harrow (HC) were noted and this was benchmarked against the figures for the prior year (30 at each college in the prior year). The details of numbers and action taken with learners on a Secondary 'at risk' register were noted by each College. The strong network and interaction with numerous external agencies to support learners was commended. Governors were pleased to note that HCUC remained committed to supporting the work of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The meeting expressed concern at the numbers of learners on the register due to sexual exploitation, this had increased since the prior year.

Prevent: There had been 4 Prevent referrals made at Uxbridge during 2019/20 and none at Harrow. GH informed the meeting that 2 of the UC Prevent referrals had gone on to work with the police Channel Panel; the Chair highlighted that this was a very good thing for at-risk learners as the impact was usually very positive. GH confirmed that the Channel Panel had worked well for the learners referred. The meeting sought, and was given, assurance that the College was in full compliance with the specific duties placed on FE colleges because of the 'Counter-terrorism and Security Bill 2015'. It was noted that both Colleges attended the London HE/ FE Regional Prevent Meetings; this had been a useful source of networking and sharing good practice

Staff Training and Development: The meeting noted details of activity taken during the year and was given assurance that 99% of staff at HCUC had received Prevent and Safeguarding training. Annual updates were delivered to all staff via an online training system with face-to-face training on a biennial basis.

Criminal convictions and bullying: Governors were pleased to note that both Colleges now used the same procedure at enrolment with all students asked to declare any unspent criminal convictions. The consistent procedures to deal with any criminal convictions gained during learners attendance at HCUC were noted and Governors were assured that each case was dealt with on an individual basis.

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Student Involvement: The detail of the student involvement with regard to Safeguarding and Prevent was noted. All students had a Prevent tutorial delivered to them during the first few weeks at College. A further British Values tutorial was delivered in February. Students had unlocked 'badges' on their phone app by completing tutorials and quizzes for certain subjects. Anti-bullying week was promoted throughout the College in November with a pledge wall and wrist bands on each site. Anti-bullying, cyber-bullying mental health and domestic violence tutorials had also been delivered. Safer Internet Day was promoted around the College in February; the e-Safety tutorial was also delivered and advice shown on the plasma screens and on the front page of Moodle. A knife crime awareness week took place and an external speaker attended to talk about Digital Wellness. Students attended mental health art therapy courses and staff have been trained in mental health first aid and had continued the well-being groups established at both colleges during 2018/19. Wherever possible this work had gone onto remote delivery during the college closure.

GH reminded the meeting of the arrangements for a Link Governor for Safeguarding which had been instigated in 2017/18. Each of the two Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees had one nominated non-executive adviser (NEA) member with a specialist remit for safeguarding; these two NEAs attended the individual colleges Safeguarding Committees. This local focus was then brought together at HCUC Corporation level with Nasim Khan acting as the Corporation lead on Safeguarding issues; he liaised with both of the specialist NEAs and the SLT links to keep an over-arching watch on both Colleges.

The Annual Safeguarding Report 2019/20 was RECEIVED.

15. Annual Human Resources Report 2019/20

The HR Director (IA) joined the online meeting to present this report.

Workforce Data: Governors noted that the total average headcount at HCUC was now 741 (499 at UC and 242 at HC) this had increased from 713 at the end of 2018/19. The figure for agency staffing was also noted as 79 at year end (reduced from the peak of 162 due to Covid-19 furlough). A similar reduction in Casual Staff from 174 to 82 at year end was also noted; this was part of the usual cycle during the academic year although the Casual contracts were ended in June rather than the usual July. Governors were reminded that no prior year data for Agency and Casual staff was available for comparison. Staff turnover across the College group was 16% during 2019/20 which was below the AoC benchmark of 17.4%. The meeting noted that the AoC benchmark data was from pre-Covid so did not reflect the current situation. The 1% increase compared with the prior year figure of 15% was partly due to the reduction in recruitment during the Covid-19 lockdown. The turnover at HC was marginally higher (17%) than at UC (15%).

Workforce Equality Data: The BAME representation at HCUC at 36% was meeting the HCUC target of 36%. HCUC BAME representation also continued to meet the GLA figure of 36% for BAME who were economically active in the London population. BAME representation at HC was well above the College target at 39%. At UC, the BAME representation was just below the 36% target at 35%. HCUC female representation in 2020 was 72%, this figure exceeded the GLA figure for females who were economically active in the London population at 46%. Females made up 75% of the workforce at HC and 74% of the workforce at UC. At HCUC, the representation of staff with a declared disability was at 8% average throughout 2019/20 but this figure had risen from 6% in period 1 to 10% in period 4; directly linked to staff declaring a disability at or around the time of the Covid-19 lockdown. However, the HCUC 2020 figure of 8% was still below 12% (the GLA figure for disabled persons who were economically active in the London population). Representation of disabled staff at HC was 6% and at UC was 8%. IA confirmed that although low at 8% the disability statistics at HCUC were consistent with other FE Colleges. However, more work would be undertaken on this issue and HR was mindful that a more proactive approach was required with HCUC job adverts being sent to disability groups. At HCUC 60% of the workforce were in the 44+ age group, (prior year figure noted as 61%). The meeting noted the improvement of BAME candidates' performance at UC compared with the prior year. Performance (appointees vs applicants) of female applicants and in the age group over 41 had also been consistent across the colleges. The Chair sought further information on the BAME data by contract type – agency versus established staff – to enable governors to see whether there was any skew within this e.g. if a higher percentage of BAME staff

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were on agency contracts. ***It was AGREED that this additional data would be brought to the next Resources Committee meeting.***

Sickness absence: The sickness levels at Harrow between period 2 and 4 of 2019/20 had remained consistent around 4.3 and showed a drop from period 1 (5.7). This contrasted with Uxbridge, which had seen a rise in sickness absence to 8 since period 1 (5.4). The overall sickness absence rate at UC (8) and HCUC (6.7) was above the HCUC target of 5.6 days (the AoC benchmark.). IA informed the meeting that the AoC benchmark was pre-Covid and this was likely to rise as all Colleges were impacted by the pandemic. The higher sickness figure was a result of COVID 19 when there was an initial spike in sickness levels. Governors sought, and were given, confirmation that this was a spike in short-term sickness not long-term. IA also highlighted that the absence rate for HCUC of 6.7 days was lower than the published benchmark figures from the CIPD Health and Well-Being at Work Survey which reported Public Sector as 8.5 days, Non-Profit Sector as 7.3 days.

COVID-19 Update: Return to campus, September 2020: Governors sought an update on whether the spike in sickness absence had continued into the start of the 2019/20 academic year when staff were required to return to campus as face-to-face delivery of Teaching and Learning resumed. IA confirmed that although he had not yet done a formal analysis of the statistics, he was conscious that a lot of staff were reporting ongoing health issues to HR as there was a nervousness about returning to campus. However, this had not impacted the delivery of teaching and learning. The meeting noted that 96% of HCUC staff had now returned to working on campus with only 4% working remotely. Governors also noted that HR had surveyed staff views on the Health and Safety measures put in place across HCUC for September 2020 and 99% of staff were happy with the safety protocols/ equipment. IA confirmed that HR were currently following up the 1% who were not satisfied to try and ascertain their concerns and any additional remedial action required. To date HR had dealt with three cases where variations have been agreed to enable the staff member to return to work onsite. During the last 4 weeks, 46 staff had been tested for Covid but none were positive. In addition, 16 staff had taken Covid-19 antibody tests of which 7 were found to have antibodies. The meeting commended the excellent job undertaken by the Exec Director Corporate Services (AM) and the College Health and Safety Adviser (LS) to achieve this high level of staff satisfaction. This detailed HR survey data was noted by the meeting and agreed that the detailed staff responses enabled individual conversations to take place to reassure staff about returning to work on site. In addition, staff had been asked about their levels of satisfaction with remote working and the effectiveness of the college communication during the lockdown period and the end of the academic year, the responses were as follows: 95% of staff stated they felt that communication since the lockdown had been effective 92% of staff stated that they had been able to carry out their job role effectively during the lockdown period. IA confirmed that he was continuing to meet with union representatives on a weekly basis to keep them informed of developments and give them ongoing reassurances. DDS confirmed that the dialogue with the unions had been constructive and positive throughout the pandemic.

Training: The Training and Development Budget 2019/20 across HCUC was £283,000, which was broken down as follows:

- £140,000 allocated to teacher training (£91,000 at UC and £52,000 at HC).
- 33 staff undertook the teacher training course during 2019/20
- All individual staff training and development requirements had been met within the staff development budget.
- 99% of established staff completed the Safeguarding and Prevent online training
- The July 2020 Whole College Training Day had taken place via Zoom and feedback had been positive although staff agreed that there was no substitute for being 'in-the-room'.

During the early part of 2019/20, Human Resources launched a new online appraisal process; 15 training sessions had supported the implementation of the new process. Deadline for completion of appraisals was 31 October 2019 and completion rates had improved compared with the prior year – the detailed data was taken as read.

Employee Relations: The meeting noted the detail of employee relations work during the year. This included formal action to deal with poor performance, staff grievances where mediation had been

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attempted, contractual issues, flexible working requests and disciplinary issues. IA highlighted that during 2019/20 54% of all HR case work had focused on sickness and wellbeing of staff. The level of case work related to staff wellbeing and sickness reflected the increased workload on the HR team as a result of COVID-19. During lockdown where staff were working remotely (working from home) HR developed additional guidance around lesson observations to support teaching staff who were in their probationary period. HR practice had to be adapted during lockdown when dealing with disciplinary/capability/grievance/sickness meetings.

Staff Focus Group Feedback: The meeting noted the summary feedback from Staff Focus Groups held during 2019/20. These had involved 70 staff in total and were conducted in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. The first groups involved lecturing staff at each College (October 2019) whilst the second comprised a range of Managers (meeting in January and February 2020), the final group was support staff (May 2020 via Zoom). In addition to support staff, several teaching staff were also invited to attend this meeting to gain teaching staff feedback on online learning and remote delivery.

The meeting was reminded that the purpose of the focus groups was to use the forum to discuss issues that were assisting or hindering an effective work environment and work practices, with a view to addressing action that could lead to improvement or advise staff about the College's stance on the matter. Comments were not attributable to individual members of staff, and the focus groups had been supplemented with an anonymous questionnaire that broadly mirrored the topic areas covered. The range of topics that had been covered during the year were noted. The meeting was reminded that detailed reports had been presented to Senior Leadership Team, Stakeholder and Scrutiny Committees as well as Resources Committee throughout the year. At each of these meetings the management response and resulting action plan had been discussed.

Covid-19 Job Retention Scheme (JRS) – The meeting noted an update on the furloughing of staff at HCUC under the Job Retention Scheme. In April 2020 HCUC reviewed the application of the scheme and determined that established and casual staff could be furloughed up to a maximum of 10% of the gross wage cost of all HCUC staff. The furloughed staff received 100% of their normal salary (HCUC topped up the difference between the government grant from the JRS). The meeting noted that HCUC furloughed 88 staff under the scheme but that all furloughed staff returned to normal working from 20 August 2020. IA confirmed that HCUC would now be eligible for the Job Retention Bonus of £1k for each furloughed employee that remained in HCUC employment at 31 January 2021.

The meeting RECEIVED the annual Human Resources Report 2019/20.

16. Annual Health and Safety (H&S) Report 2019/20

The Health and Safety Adviser (LS) and the Exec Director Corporate Services (AM) presented the comprehensive report which updated governors on all aspects of H&S across HCUC during 2019/20. The workload for H&S staff had been massively increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the College had appointed a H&S Compliance Officer in early June 2020. LS confirmed that Risk Assessments were continually being updated to reflect new Covid-19 guidance and the emerging situation. The H&S report covered the following items:

- Health & Safety Action Plan 2019/20 (this arose from the internal audit of the Health and Safety Management System which was conducted by the H&S Adviser in July 2019).
- External Environmental Management System report by QMS – July 2019
- Health and Safety Committee
- Health and Safety Audits
- H&S Compliance assessments
- First Aid Arrangements
- Accident and Incident Statistics
- Fire safety and M&E Inspections
- Health & Safety Training

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- Risk Assessments, including Fire Risk & Asbestos Risk
- Workstation Assessments
- Covid-19 preparedness

The meeting was assured that good progress in all aspects of Health and Safety across HCUC continued to be made during the last year. All items on the 2019/20 H&S Action Plan had either been completed or were on track for completion by the end of 2020/21. LS highlighted that any emerging areas in relation to Covid-19 and the need to protect staff and students would always take priority within the Action Plan. The meeting noted that the external audit of H&S had been deferred from July 2020 and would take place in 2021 (as previously noted under the internal audit strategy).

Health and Safety Committee: Health and Safety Committee meetings were due to be held once a term at each of the Colleges. The H&S Committees were comprised of senior managers and union representatives. Meetings had been held once per term and were chaired by the Executive Director of Corporate Services. The term 1 meetings went ahead but terms 1 and 2 were cancelled due to lockdown.

Staff and Student Injuries: The meeting noted the injury statistics for staff and students and was pleased to hear that there were no major incidents reported at any of the HCUC campuses. There were 63 student/ visitor injuries across all campuses and 15 workplace injuries for staff and contractors. The meeting noted that there had been 1 RIDDOR reportable incident affecting a member of staff at the Harrow Weald campus.

The annual Health and Safety Report 2019/20 was NOTED and RECEIVED.

17. Digital Strategy update

The meeting received the following update report from Deputy CEO/ Principal Harrow (PC); it was noted that this would be considered further at the Governors Strategy event in October 2020. The meeting was reminded that the first Digital Strategy workshop took place in July 2020; this was run internally as an extension of the SLT planning away days. Discussion focussed on link with future strategic development, benefits to students and staff CPD, the need to ensure students sector skills are informed by employers and a recognition that the use of technology on HCUC campuses and any infrastructure development needed to take remote learning into account. PC confirmed that the TLA workshop facilitated by JISC had now taken place. This had involved a 'deep dive' looking at teaching, learning and assessment through a digital lens; exploring what other colleges were doing and the actions that HCUC could take forward this year as well as for future planning. The next step would be an Executive Team workshop facilitated by JISC which would enable the EMT to shape the draft strategy drawing on information gathered so far. PC highlighted the timetable in relation to the IT Infrastructure Tender. Governors agreed that this work was very exciting and very important. HCUC needed to be leaders in this area and ensure that its delivery of T&L was cutting edge. **It was suggested that the EMT should remain mindful of this need for excellence and to drive forward the College Digital Strategy during their JISC workshop.** PC confirmed that feedback from the EMT workshop would inform discussion at the October Governors' event.

NOTED

18. T Levels Launch – Update on HCUC Preparations and the Capacity Development Fund

The meeting received the following update report which had been written by the Curriculum Director responsible for this area of work (JO'N).

The meeting was reminded that HCUC was now delivering the first T Levels at Uxbridge College from September 2020 – the only FE College in London to have been granted permission to do so. The College aimed to ensure that it was in the forefront of these curriculum reforms by developing clear strategies and ways of working which would inform future practice.

The following key points were noted in relation to T Level delivery:

- All planning including for budgets and resource allocation to support the T Levels running in 2020/21 (Digital and Early Years Education at Uxbridge College), those being developed for 2021/22 (Digital

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and Science at Harrow College) and associated projects (Transition Project and Capacity development Fund 3) has taken the circumstances related to Covid-19 into account.

- Recruitment to date for the 2020/21 T Levels was noted as follows: Digital 7 (target 15), Early Years 14 (target 15). Unit research and Schemes of Work for both T Levels had been developed over the summer.
- To date the following placements had been secured: Digital 4, Early Years 0. This was commended by the meeting considering the pandemic and the preponderance for staff to be based at home. Employers were reluctant to have learners in the workplace on industry placement.
- Prior to the summer Early Years placement providers indicated they would be able to provide placements, however this changed in light of guidance issued over the summer – including in relation to “bubbles.” The curriculum team are in contact with both the awarding body and their placement contacts to find a suitable solution.
- The College is in regular dialogue with the DfE regarding the challenges related to securing the required Significant Industry Placements (SIPs) particularly with the current Covid-19 restrictions. HCUC was making representation about there being no flexibilities in relation to remote working and/or project based Digital SIPs which actually reflected current industry practice. The College would also raise the challenges relating to Early Years placements which had emerged over the summer. Governors felt very strongly that the DfE needed to change their approach; it was unfair to get learners onto T level qualifications that they were unable to complete due to the intransigent attitude to the SIPs. ***It was agreed that HCUC management should continue to lobby DfE / ESFA on this issue.*** PC highlighted the work currently being undertaken by Heathrow on virtual work placements under a DfE funded project.
- The small numbers recruited to the Digital T Level reflected a national trend thought to be related to a shortage of placements and lack of clarity in relation to progression opportunities. The College was supporting these smaller numbers through the deployment of T Levels Early Adopter Development Funds (EADF) and some small group numbers funding. Supporting the pilot year of this T Level would enable further development to take place and will build traction for the future.
- Recruitment to the Level 2 Transition Programmes was as follows: Digital UC 21 (target 18), Early Years 18 (target 18), Digital HC 16 (target 18).
- As there was generally expected to be less availability of work experience placements in 2020/21, priorities in relation to securing placements had been agreed by SLT in the summer. These would be as follows: SIPs for the T Levels being run this year and being developed for next year (as above), the Transition Programmes and students who were unlikely to progress to higher education or within the College the following year. Placements were expected to be a combination of onsite work experience and virtual work experience.
- HCUC was partnering on the College Collaboration Fund project led by West London College and Heathrow with a specific focus on enabling work placements with employers linked to the airport.

The update report on preparations for ‘T’ Levels and Capacity Development Funding at HCUC was NOTED

19. Partnerships Report

The meeting received an update report on employer engagement and partnership activities for HCUC presented by the Deputy CEO/ Principal Harrow College (PC). This report also began to consider the role that HCUC could play in the emerging local economy post-Covid. The meeting was reminded that the College’s main funding allocations for 2020/21 confirmed in March 2020 were still in place. However, the College was still required to work with the rules for apprenticeships. There is a degree of uncertainty still regarding the full impact of COVID-19 as employers awaited the removal of furlough arrangements in October; nearly half a million people were on furlough or had already been made redundant by July 2020. This had impacted on key employer engagement and partnerships and the meeting noted the current key priorities for this work:

1. **IoT and HE provision:** This is both an opportunity (e.g., CPD, reskilling) as well as a threat (e.g., young people and adults defer education/training, universities recruiting more home students to offset reduced international market, and employers reduced commitment).
2. **Apprenticeships:** Fewer opportunities for apprenticeships in certain sectors will require the College to adapt quickly. The new **Apprenticeship and Technical Skills School** is now in place and will provide a coherent operational approach; PC confirmed that this new organisational structure within HCUC was working very well.
3. **Upskilling/Reskilling:** Opportunity to provide an appropriate course for those who had wanted to do an apprenticeship or employment. HCUC would consider traineeship/ kickstart programmes as appropriate with employers and other provider partners.
4. **Remote Delivery:** Opportunity to develop remote delivery to a wider adult audience (e.g. unemployed with low skills as well as reaching out to those currently in employment or recently made redundant). GLA Strand 2 funding would help HCUC capacity build development of remote resource (converted and purchased).
5. **Work placements:** This includes extended work placements for our first 'T' levels at Uxbridge. Risk heightened due to employer capacity and confidence. We now have dedicated Industry Placement Development Officers in place at HC and UC to lead on quality engagement with both employers and students. A new CRM database will record and help us maximise employer engagement. The successful application to the DfE's College Collaboration Fund with Heathrow Skills Partnership will look specifically at virtual work experience. **Governor (AP) highlighted an initiative that Morgan Sindall was working on with the DfE – she would copy this detail to the EMT for information.**

The rest of the very detailed report was taken as read due to the weight of business the meeting was considering.

The Partnerships Report was NOTED and RECEIVED.

20. Academic Report

The meeting considered the HCUC Executive Summary and the detailed papers which sat behind this cover paper were taken as read. The Deputy Principal highlighted the KPI Dashboard which was considered by the meeting. The meeting also spent some time looking at progress on the QIP 2019/20.

In-year progress against Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) 2019/20

The meeting was reminded that progress against individual HC and UC Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) focused on identified Areas for Improvement (Afls) identified by HC and UC SAR analysis 2018/19 had been considered in detail at QCS Committee on 25 June. A detailed summary by College was taken as read by the Corporation meeting. Progress against the Afls identified for HCUC as a whole, was summarised as follows:

- Consistency in Study Programme attendance and punctuality – 'amber with elements of red'. This had been affected by the Covid-19 move to online learning.
- 90% of 16-18 and 19+ SSAs QAR above National Average (NA) and Qualifications Type QAR above NA – 'green with elements of amber'.
- WBL Timely and overall QAR – 'amber'
- Ensure WBL learners are supported by robust employer/ learner IAG to support a positive student experience leading to strong outcomes – 'amber'.
- Further stretch & challenge for all learners – 'green'
- Robust judgements of TLA quality to confirm greater consistency of high standards – judged as 'amber'.
- Intent in curriculum planning – 'green'.
- Effectively track and support students – judged as 'green'.

The Academic Report was RECEIVED.

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21. Finance Directorate Report

The Group Director Finance and Resource Planning presented the Finance Report.

21.1 Management Accounts July 2020

The accounts for HCUC had been presented to and reviewed by the Resources Committee on 16/09/20. Key performance indicators to 31 July 2020 were noted as follows: historical cost surplus of £3,166,000 (compared to forecast surplus of £2,607,000); cash days in hand 132.0 (forecast 152.9); current ratio 2.94 (forecast 2.24). The meeting was reminded that this would not be the final position for the year; a number of adjustments were being made in preparation for the external audit and presentation of the financial statements. These adjustments would include accruals and prepayments, in addition to a provision in relation to any final adjustments relating to the funding claim. The July 2020 accounts would be reissued once the financial statements audit was completed, to highlight all adjustments.

Governors commended this very strong year-end result which was particularly admirable during the current unusual year.

The Management Accounts to 31 July 2020 were NOTED and RECEIVED

21.2 Capital Projects Update

GDFRP informed the meeting that partial handover of the Armstrong Building at Harrow had taken place on 22 August to enable students to use the new entrance from the start of term. Works would be completed by October half-term. The meeting was reminded that an offer for the house at Harrow Weald had now been accepted. Completion would take place once legal work on a charge over the property that was put in place prior to the HCUC merger was resolved. The work on the plumbing workshop under the GLA Small Equipment Bid would be completed by the end of September 2020 with no disruption to learners.

21.3 Interim Enrolment Report 2021/21

The meeting noted the enrolment report for 2020/21 on 15th September for each of the two colleges. The portfolio target (which was confirmed as the internal College target to allow for withdrawals during the initial 6-week period) for FT 16-18 year olds were noted as follows: Harrow – 1,816 (1,804 in 2019/20); Uxbridge – 4,236 (4,109 in 2019/20). Actual enrolment to date was noted as 92% of portfolio target across the group. However, this did not include the current withdrawals of 191 (116 at UC and 75 at HC); the prior year withdrawal figure was noted as 272 at the same point (182 at UC and 90 at HC). The meeting noted that enrolment would continue for a short time. DDS confirmed that any school where enrolment was less than 80% of target was being reviewed to look at the teaching hours, class sizes and resource allocated. DDS also highlighted the impact of Covid-related grade inflation for GCSEs in schools which meant that more learners had been able to stay on in school and take A levels. Anecdotal evidence suggested that this negative impact on College based level 1 and 2 qualifications had been felt across many of the London Colleges. The 19+ enrolment was currently at 105% of the portfolio target.

The meeting noted that an update on enrolment numbers would be brought to the Governors Strategy/ Training day on 7 October 2020.

21.4 Risk Management Update

- ***HCUC Risk Register***

The meeting considered the HCUC Risk Register which reflected the agreed Corporate Goals. This had been updated by the Executive team, through a review of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 corporate goals, and projects coming on stream throughout the year. The meeting considered the 'red' risks and the mitigating action that was in place to defend against crystallisation of the risks.

- 1.08 *Insufficiently qualified and equipped staff to support the delivery of study programmes and quality outcomes for learners.* (Risk score unchanged at 12 'red').
- 1.09 *Failure to recruit sufficient staff, qualified at the appropriate level.* (Risk score still at 12 'red').
- 1.13 *College SAR and/ or Ofsted rating falls below Outstanding within the new Ofsted EIF.* (Risk score remains at 12 'red').
- 3.07 *International income fails to meet financial targets due to unforeseen events.* (Risk score raised from 8 'green' to 10 'amber'). The CEO affirmed that HCUC were currently planning

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maintaining a pipeline for this work; there were still specific flights leaving India for international students.

- 3.11 Underachievement of funding targets (Risk score still at 15 'red').
- 3.12 Failure to secure and respond to large levy paying employers could impact on apprenticeship income (Risk introduced in June 2020 and still had a risk score at 15 'red'). This risk had become ever more of a threat during Covid-19 lockdown; the college had recognised this and the Business Development Consultants (BDCs) were working hard to stay in touch with employers during Covid-19 business disruption.
- 3.18 Apprenticeship (WBL) performance falls below Minimum Standards impacting funding contract. (Risk score reduced from 8 'green' to 2 'green'). This was no longer a risk as Minimum Standards had ceased to be enforced due to large variances of Frameworks/ Standards. However, WBL performance was still being carefully monitored by SLT and Heads of Schools.
- 3.20 WBL non-levy 16-18 and 19+ apprentices target not met. (Risk score still at raised level of 15 'red'). Current WBL delivery against the ESFA allocation was being closely monitored but had been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.11 Compliance with GDPR and other data related regulation (Risk score raised from 8 'green' to 12 'red'). SLT were concerned that despite staff training and advice from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) on best practice destruction of obsolete data was not always happening.
- 5.12 College loses IT capability and/ or data following a cyber-attack. (Risk score raised from 8 'green' to 12 'red'). This risk was very real despite IT Services using up to date security software and policies.
- 5.13 Operational impact due to Coronavirus (Covid-19). (This new risk added in March 2020 was still deemed as a risk score of 12 'red'). The meeting was reminded of the measures in place and the adherence to all Public Health England and Government guidelines as previously discussed by the Governing Body earlier in the meeting. Measures had been implemented at all HCUC campuses to ensure a Covid-19 safe environment for returning learners in September 2020. Learner and Staff views on the new arrangements would be sought as more people accessed the sites.

The HCUC Risk Register was NOTED and RECEIVED.

The Finance Directorate Report was NOTED and RECEIVED

ITEMS TO BE TAKEN AS READ

22. Resources Committee – 16 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting would be circulated as soon as available. The following key issues were highlighted by the Clerk in the absence of the Committee Chair (AMcL):

- The Committee had approved the bad debt write-off for 2019/20 and the schedule of HE Fees for 2020/21.
- Resources Committee were confident in the financial planning information provided with clear visibility around the HCUC cashflow over the next 18 months and predicted strong financial health over the full term of the 3 year financial plan.

NOTED

23. Audit Committee – 17 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting would be circulated as soon as available.

- Annual Risk Management Report 2019/20: Audit Committee received this and were recommending it to the Corporation for approval.

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- Internal Audit Strategy 2020/21: The meeting was given confirmation of the ongoing benefit of sourcing specialist auditors for different internal audits e.g. safeguarding, health and safety. This strategy provided value for money and produced a more rigorous audit with more valuable recommendations for ongoing improvement. This methodology was included in the internal audit strategy brought to Governing Body for approval.
- External Audit: The meeting received an outline of the planned timetable from Cooper Parry newly appointed external auditors. Cooper Parry had been appointed at short notice after the former external auditors BDO had pulled out of the education sector. The contract for external audit would be tendered in spring 2021. The external audit would commence in October 2020 and would be conducted entirely remotely.

NOTED**24. To confirm the dates and times of the meetings for 2020/21: all to be held via Zoom until Covid-19 guidelines change**

- Tuesday 8th December 2020 at 5.30pm
- Tuesday 30th March 2021 at 5.30pm
- Tuesday 18th May 2021 at 5.30pm
- Tuesday 6th July 2021 at 5.30pm

25. Items for Next Meeting

There were no items suggested. The Chair asked Members to feedback any ideas to the Clerk in advance of the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS**26. Any other business as previously notified**

There was no other business.
The Part 2 meeting followed.

Signed

Date.....

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Minute Ref	Action	By who	By when
15	Additional BAME data to be included in HR Report to Resources Committee to detail type of staff contract.	HR Director	March 2021
17	Digital Strategy Update to be considered at Governors Training day	Deputy CEO Governors	7 October 2020
	Exec Team to remain mindful of the need for HCUC to have a 'cutting-edge' digital strategy – this should inform discussions at the JISC workshop.	Exec Team (EMT)	30 September 2020
18	College management should continue to lobby the DfE on the issue with T Levels due to the limited availability of Significant Industry Placements during the Covid-19 pandemic. Lobbying to continue to highlight the value of virtual work experience.	Exec Team	Ongoing during CV19 pandemic
19	College management to consider detail of DfE initiative with Morgan Sindall.	A. Priem Exec Team	October 2020
23	An update on enrolment 2020/21 would be presented to Corporation members at the October Training and Strategy day.	CEO GDFRP	7 October 2020