Capel Manor College

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Academic Committee
Minutes

Meeting Time and Date	**1000 on 22 June 2021**
Meeting Location	**Zoom Online**
Members	Dr Heather Barrett-Mold OBE (Chair) 🖥 Malcolm Goodwin (Principal) 🖥 Sarah Moreland MBE 🖥 Sarah Seery (Staff Governor) 🖥 Claus Matthews (Student Governor) Lauren O'Leary (Student Governor) Jarryd Russell (Student Governor) 🖥
Observers	Dr Sheila Cunningham 🖥 Roger McClure 🖥 Stephen Way🖥 Christine Bianchin (Academic) James Bryan (HR) Damien Fallon (Finance) David Scott (Estates)
Minute Taker	Joanne Coffey (Clerk) 🖥

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	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies 1.1. Apologies were received for Claus Matthews and Lauren O'Leary. 1.2. Stephen Way and James Bryan were welcomed to the Committee.	
2. Declaration of Interests 2.1. None.	
3. Minutes **Resolved to** 3.1. **Approve the minutes of the Academic Committee meeting held on 10 March 2021 as a correct record and authorise the Chair to sign them.**	
4. Matters Arising 4.1. No matters arising from the minutes were discussed.	

5. Review of Terms of Reference Decision) 5.1. The Terms of Reference were restructured to provide a clearer layout, an overview showing the key areas of activity and the following Academic Committee purpose: **'To do all within our powers to ensure that our students receive outstanding, relevant education and training consistent with our mission'.** **Resolved to** 5.2. **Accept the revised Terms of Reference and recommend them to the Governing Body for their adoption.**	**A: Governing Body (Appendix I)**
6. Report of the Vice Principal (Information) **Principal / Super SAR** 6.1. The College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) provides an annual review of the quality of Capel's provision that acts as an operational guide to improvement and building on best practice. 6.2. The concept of a Principal / Super SAR focuses on the main, long-standing and far-reaching areas of improvement vital to the College's aim to be outstanding. Therefore, it goes above and beyond the SAR to unify the College's strategic aims. 6.3. Governors agreed that the Principal SAR provided a useful analysis to the Committee of what outstanding looked like and that the ambitious statements were very powerful motivators for staff. 6.4. The Staff Governor confirmed that the Principal / Super SAR provided a framework to drive the goals that staff had already been working to achieve. The titles were easy to understand and remember and could be repeated across other areas, such as team competencies and targets, to create a uniform culture of excellence. 6.5. Due to the subjective nature of the assessments, the Committee discussed applying external validation. As this had already been applied to the SAR, the Principal / Super SAR will be included in future endorsements. 6.6. Governors thanked the Vice Principal for creating the Principal / Super SAR and they were impressed with how the College's strategic objectives had been embedded. 6.7. The inclusion '*to consistently promote naturally occurring Equality and Diversity opportunities and contextualise learning*' was particularly key, given that Capel is pan London and aims to be truly representative and the proposed new top level strategic	**Academic**

objective was noted. This will be taken forward for final adoption with the Governing Body.

Teacher Assessed Grades

6.8. For all categories of the awarding qualifications in 2020-21, the College can state a special case for consideration for individual students who have been disadvantaged by the pandemic and submit a Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG).

6.9. Despite a huge administrative challenge for the College, given there was contradicting guidance from awarding bodies regarding TAG being issued very late in the academic year, the deadline has now been met.

6.10. Maths grades for Capel students have been higher than for English grades for the first time. This appears to be a national trend.

Sexual Abuse Culture

6.11. In April 2021 The Department of Education (DfE) ordered Ofsted to investigate safeguarding in schools after thousands of sexual abuse and harassment allegations were posted on the 'Everyone's Invited' website. The College took this opportunity to review our students' experiences in this area.

6.12. Ofsted concluded that many staff and leaders, 'consistently underestimate the scale of the problem', failing to take sexual harassment and sexualised language seriously. They also identified the need for inspectors to investigate how schools and colleges tackle sexual harassment and violence including online. It will now be a requirement of schools and colleges to provide Ofsted inspectors with records and analysis of sexual violence and sexual harassment, including online and this will be included in the FE and skills inspection handbook.

6.13. The College has strong safeguarding procedures and processes for reporting and tackling cases of sexual harassment and violence. SLT receive monthly safeguarding reports and review and challenge trends, current cases and outcomes. Students already undertake a safeguarding qualification alongside their main vocational course and this includes violence and harassment as well as online safety.

6.14. The student group tutorial programme includes a wide variety of topics including healthy relationships. The programme was reviewed in April 2021 and an updated programme was implemented with an increased focus on relationships, harassment and violence.

6.15. All staff undertake mandatory safeguarding training delivered online and a revised plan for additional face to face training is under review to reinforce the core training and also allow a

renewed focus on sexual harassment and sexualised language in students.	
6.16. This will include a themed CPD session on what is, and what is not, acceptable to challenge.	
6.17. The strengthening of the safeguarding message included an increased number of tutorials regarding healthy relationships which had been well received by students.	
6.18. It was recognised by the Committee that challenging these behaviours is a global, societal challenge that may take time to cultivate.	
7. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) May 2021 Update (Decision) 7.1. Of the 92 individual actions 59 were complete and 18 were in progress and on track. 7.2. 11 actions were in progress but behind schedule and 4 were very behind schedule. These included pathways for Horticulture and Garden Design students to allow learners to progress in the way best suited to their future engagement in the industry/profession. 7.3. These actions remain achievable but had been heavily impacted by the pandemic. Fortnightly meetings, to support new staff members, had been put in place to ensure those actions are completed. 7.4. It had been found that by not labelling schools as being in special measures, but applying the same level of support, it had led to a less stressful and more focused mind-set. 7.5. Although there appeared to be a pattern of online learning issues, the College had, on a whole, been demonstrating high quality digital skills. This then highlighted areas which lacked the exceptional online teaching seen elsewhere and created a need to share best practice. **Resolved to** 7.6. **Accept the updates to the Principal QIP 2020-21 and recommend it to the Governing Body for approval.**	**B: Governing Body (Appendix II)**
8. Academic Policies (Decision) **Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG)** 8.1. As a consequence of the pandemic and as part of the Government strategy for awarding qualifications in summer 2021, exam based qualifications including GCSE's and qualifications considered equivalent to GCSE's and A Levels, will be awarded Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG).	**C: Governing Body (Appendix III)**

Digital Strategy Policy	**D: Governing Body (Appendix IV)**
8.2. As the College has been successfully embracing digital technology and digital solutions, both in teaching and learning, integration of systems and ways of working, a Digital Strategy Policy had been created.	
8.3. The policy outlines how digital technology is used to enable the learner journey, promote excellence in teaching and learning, develop staff and student digital capabilities, analyse the user experience and opportunities to change how we work, teach and study using technologies and software.	
8.4. The policy is visionary, in that it will enable clear identification of digital priorities and objectives, to direct the College along this digital journey. This will filter into strategies for how buildings and infrastructure are designed to maximise digital potential.	
8.5. The College has recently achieved Cyber Essentials certification which is a huge asset that demonstrates Capel's digital infrastructure.	
8.6. The Staff Governor reiterated the importance of having a lead on digital skills and capabilities being delivered in the classroom, so that Capel becomes a digital leader rather than a follower.	
8.7. A Student Digital Committee would be able to provide insight into what is current in 'their' digital world, and feedback from employers could provide insight into the digital literacy that they will be expected in the work environment.	
8.8. The Committee agreed that agility over being 'cutting edge' was key to keeping abreast of what is right for Capel's digital strategy.	
8.9. The College had carried out a JISC "digital capability" survey amongst staff prior to the pandemic and it was agreed that this should be repeated, given the post-Covid landscape where online learning is now at the core of what Capel does.	
8.10. The Student Governor expressed appreciation that online learning had already been put in place by their tutor prior to the pandemic, and that this had continued to be effective.	
8.11. As digital engagement had now made it easier to connect with industry experts, including globally, this would advance the student experience in making them 'job ready.	
8.12. The environmental green agenda had created a strategic career pathway for students to work towards.	
Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy	**E: Governing Body (Appendix V)**
8.13. The Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy was updated to reflect the change in academic structure, allowing the	

Vice Principal to delegate the holding of formal disciplinary hearings to a Director of the College.	
8.14. The Vice Principal will retain the role of overseeing the evidence and calling hearings and would ultimately sign off on outcomes.	
8.15. Governors noted the importance of procedure being followed by the Directors to ensure fairness to all. As disciplinary evidence is captured on ProMonitor, this also provided a timeline that staff can reliably refer to.	
8.16. The Policy was also updated to reflect references to online learning protocols.	
Resolved to	
8.17. **Accept the Teacher Assessed Grades Policy, Digital Strategy Policy and changes to the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy and recommend them to the Governing Body for approval.**	
9. Review of Risk Management (Decision)	
9.1. The Principal Risks had been updated to include that the Board would respond to strategic threats.	
Resolved to	
9.2. **Confirm that the principal risks represent the main internal and external risks and remain fit for purpose.**	
10. Academic Performance 2020-21 and KPIs (Information)	
Academic Performance	
10.1. Overall College retention had been consistently outstanding for the last 3 years at 96.2%. This was 1.2% above the College KPI of 95%.	
10.2. Overall predicted achievement for the College was 88.9%.	
Teaching and Learning	
10.3. Due to the pressures of online teaching during lockdown, the College paused formal graded lesson observations during this time until face to face teaching resumed.	
10.4. Supportive learning walks and peer observations had increased. Of the 236 learning walks 63% were online, 20% in class and 17% in practical lessons.	
10.5. Staff found the less formal observations to be less stressful and more powerful than formal graded observations, due to the constructive approach and opportunity for feedback.	
10.6. Ongoing research was being carried out with Heads of Schools to decide on whether a graded or non-graded approach for teacher	**Academic**

learning observations were of higher value to the College. The outcome of this research will be reported back at the next Committee meeting.

10.7. As grading provided an evidence base for tracking against student outcomes versus a non-graded nuanced approach, Governors suggested that both methods could be used to suit the lesson or skill being observed. For new teaching staff, the non-graded approach was already in place until enough evidence is available to formally grade.

10.8. The Committee discussed the challenges of diversifying the way that observations were delivered, whilst providing enough evidence of intent for Ofsted and benchmarking purposes.

10.9. The Staff Governor noted that staff had found the learning walks invaluable during the lockdowns and had actually requested them, to assure themselves that their lessons were effective. It was also noted that these observations concentrated on learning, rather than teaching, to ensure they were goal-focused.

10.10. Governors requested that acronyms used in the Committee reports are de-coded or extended, for clarity.

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Funding 2020-21

10.11. The College had retained 991 16-18-year-old learners for 2020-21. This was 3.3% below the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) minimum headcount target of 1,025 and 20 students less than retained at the same point in the previous year. As a result, the College allocation for 2021-22 had been reduced to 993 students.

10.12. It was vital that the College recruit at least 15% more 16-18-year-old students in 2021-22 in order to be able to state a case to the ESFA to request additional in-year funding in 2021-22. The 16-18-year-old learner target for 2021-22 stood at 1,200.

10.13. The current 2020-21 ESFA funding for adult students represented 81% of the ESFA Adult Education Budget allocation. The current 2020-21 Greater London Authority (GLA) funding for adults stood at 72.5% of the GLA Adult Education Budget allocation.

10.14. The College must hit the government's threshold of 90% of its adult funding allocation in order to avoid in-year claw backs for the current year and associated reduction in funding in 2021-22.

10.15. The College was running additional courses in the Summer term to increase adult income for 2020-21 to hit the ESFA and GLA 90% targets, and the Vice Principal was confident that this would be achieved.

11. Higher Education (Information)	
11.1. The College had 64 Higher Education (HE) students in 2020-21, 7 less than in 2019-20, as a result of lower intake of new students starting studies at Level 4 due to the impact of the pandemic.	
11.2. Current recruitment for 2021-22 was strong with 87 applicants from a target of 100.	
Royal Agricultural University (RAU)	
11.3. The College continues its partnership with the RAU with the agreement of a new HE fee level of £7,500 for all courses for 2021, pending a further increase in 2022 to £9,250 per annum.	
11.4. The College had gained approval to run a BSc (top-up) in Animal Conservation in liaison with the RAU to run alongside the current BSc (top-up) Animal Management and Applied Zoology for delivery in September 2021.	
Strategic forward thinking	
11.5. As the College continues to expand its HE offer it was important that a review of staff roles and structures was undertaken to ensure parity of roles and responsibilities across the College, and that associated structures meet the current and future needs of the provision.	
11.6. Challenges exist in attracting and retaining appropriately trained and staff qualified at MSc level and upskilling current staff which requires a significant budgetary cost.	
11.7. It was also important to prevent a cultural divide between HE and FE, whilst maintaining the HE experience and aspirational attraction to progressing Level 1 to 3 students.	
11.8. As a Programme Manager role is required for HE programmes, this would also need to be incorporated into the FE programme, to ensure that the structure is collaborative.	
11.9. The Committee were very supportive of HE but affirmed the need for conversion tracking before investments are made. The research being carried out on the staffing structure would provide a clearer perspective from which to build up from.	
11.10. Governors suggested that Capel could provide external CPD opportunities to bring in more income and provide its own students with more upskilling options.	**Academic**
12. Landex Peer Review 2020-21 (Information)	
12.1. The Landex peer review for this academic year took place remotely due to the pandemic. The College requested that the	

review focused on three key themes that had not previously been assessed by Landex:
 	
   a) Enrichment
 	
   b) Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
 	
   c) Provision of maths and English
 	
12.2. The Landex peer review confirmed that the College had retained its full membership of Landex. The accompanying report was one of the best peer reviews that the College had ever received and they had invited Capel to present at the Landex conference to share best practice.
 	
12.3. The key items for improvement were noticeably in line with Heads of Schools' self-assessment and student feedback, with actions relating to community projects, digital strategy and local authority engagement. The College was continuing to develop and improve its Teaching and Learning strategies with many actions already underway.
 	
12.4. The Committee congratulated the College for this significant achievement.	

13. Curriculum Plan 2021-22 (Information) 13.1. Enfield has the highest number of learners planned at 45.9% of cohort and the combined South London campuses of Crystal Palace and Mottingham make up 23%. 13.2. Applications were significantly ahead compared to 2020-21 and were largely made up of animal management students. 13.3. Virtual open days were planned for 16-18 year olds and a summer school, 'Get Ready for Capel' on 12 July 2021 would celebrate enrolment to create earlier momentum and motivate students. 13.4. The cross-College business courses (e.g. book-keeping) included some full-time provision for graduating students who are planning to run their own businesses. 13.5. The Committee praised the College's effective use of different social media platforms, including TikTok and Instagram. Governors suggested that enrolling and graduating students could promote their Capel celebrations through their own social media accounts. 13.6. As employers now used social media as a reference point for its prospective new hires, it was also suggested that the College manage how its TikTok videos are produced to create industry links that students could use as a platform to promote the professional standards at Capel that they are a part of.	**Academic**

14. Academic Board Minutes (Information)	
Attendance	
14.1. The College were continuing to challenge low attendance rates. Although small steps had been achieved, innovations were continuing in order to raise attendance to a 90% minimum.	
14.2. The Student Governor suggested that, although there can be valid reasons for absences, that sometimes students preferred not to attend to avoid a specific activity.	
14.3. Governors also noted that part-time jobs can grow and demand more of students' time as they become more proficient from their training. The nature of land-based learning does also create a higher risk for injuries.	
14.4. Attendance innovations will be the key focus of the next Heads of School training day.	
15. Student Disciplinary Report (Information)	
15.1. There were 7 resolved Gross Misconduct Disciplinary Hearings from September 2020 to April 2021.	
15.2. The 7 Disciplinary Hearings accounted for 4 separate incidents compared to 13 incidents in the same time in the previous academic year.	
16. Student Complaints Report (Information)	
Academic Provision Complaints	
16.1. There had been 1 complaint resolved by the College relating to academic provision.	
Specific Covid-19-related Complaints	
16.2. There had been 6 specific Covid-19 related complaints resolved by the College.	
16.3. The College's Covid measures had been strengthened by not allowing smoking onsite. A survey was in process to assess for future arrangements.	
16.4. Governors noted that by discouraging smoking onsite, that this would be another positive measure towards getting students 'work ready'.	
17. AOB	
17.1. None.	
18. Timed Update from Head of School	
18.1. Caroline Turner, Head of English, Maths and Foundation Learning, Foundation Learning Lecturers (Enfield), gave a presentation on English and Maths at Capel Manor College.	

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18.2. The presentation highlighted the importance of integrating maths and English into all areas of the curriculum and sharing best practice. 18.3. Governors thanked Caroline for her informative presentation and gave congratulations for strengthening Capel's outcomes in English and maths.	
19. Date of next meeting 19.1. The next Academic Committee meeting will take place on Monday 22 November, 2021 at 1000.	

APPROVED MINUTES			
CHAIR:	Heather Barrett-Mold	**DATE:**	22 November 2021
APPROVAL:	**Remote confirmation:** CONFIRMED **Or signed:**		