

The City College, Board of Governors Meeting: 11/06/25 Start time: 2:00 pm/End time: 3:45 pm/Venue: Online – Microsoft Teams

Present: Uroy Clarke (Chair), Tasneem Riaz (Director), Mike Potter (External), Luthra Suman (External), Kate Diver (Current Student), Gweneth Thomas (Alumni), Susan Riaz (Secretary), Naweed Riaz (Staff, legal advisor, in attendance)

Apologies: Could not attend. Collin Chikanma

Item	Key points raised:	Actions	Who?	When?
1) Apologies	Collin Chikanma was unable to attend. Ian Woolgar has stepped down from the Board.	None	N/A	N/A
2) Minutes of Previous Meeting	Minutes of the previous minutes (Oct 24) were emailed to members of the Board before the meeting. <b>UC</b> – Welcomed members to the Board. The last meeting was in October 24 – checked members had read the previous minutes and asked whether everyone was happy. Members agreed they were happy with the minutes.	None	N/A	N/A
3) Report from the Director/Chair	<b>TR</b> : Reported that Ian Woolgar has stepped down from the board. She informed members to recommend other possible members.	None	N/A	N/A
4) Matters Arising	<b>Update for Access and Participation Plan</b> <b>UC</b> – Discussed this in our last meeting. Development in terms of improvement and needed to submit plan. <b>TR</b> – We had a call from OfS in January to say they were going to put a hold on everything because of financial sustainability in the sector. We are currently in limbo. We have submitted everything	None	N/A	N/A

	<p>by the deadline, but now nothing will happen until 2026. In August 25 the process will start, and we will find out whether we will have a visit in person or a remote visit.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – Does that then impact our movement in terms of increasing our charges?</p> <p><b>TR</b> – Yes, the 15<sup>th</sup> December was the submission of the financial tables. Those were fine. However, in terms of the APP, nothing has been done at the moment, so we need to wait and see.</p>			
	<p><b>EE Visits</b></p> <p><b>UC</b> – EE visits. I understand that went smoothly?</p> <p><b>TR</b> – that was the previous year. We haven't had visits this year but we had the AMR in January for Pearson HNC/HND courses. That was successful, but we have two external visits planned for this year and the summer for Business and Travel and Tourism. External Examiners visited for Acupuncture, and they are coming to the end of their five years, so from January 26 we need to get new examiners as we cannot have the same people again.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – we phased out the DET?</p> <p><b>TR</b> – Yes, we only had a small number, and we have stopped recruiting.</p> <p><b>GT</b> – I am sad the DET had to go as it was a good experience for me. Is there any hope for that happening again?</p> <p><b>TR</b> – Pearson are not offering the DET again. We would have to go with another awarding body, but the number of hours for the course are not practical. I think it went up to 250 hours. There is City &amp; Guilds, but as Pearson are not offering it and the requirements have increased so much then probably not. Most private colleges are not offering the DET now.</p>	None	N/A	N/A
	<p><b>Academic Board</b></p> <p><b>UC</b> – we touched on this in our last meeting. March and September were suggested – September this year for acupuncture.</p> <p><b>TR</b> – Acupuncture has one traditional intake in September. We</p>			

	<p>have interest but people do not start in enough numbers, so unfortunately, we are struggling still. We have one healthy intake but since 2019 we have not managed two intakes. Cost of living, fees, are all issues, as it does not get funding.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – It is a niche course. Were there more students in 2019?</p> <p><b>TR</b> – Yes, Acupuncture had practical elements even during Covid.</p> <p><b>MP</b> – If you look on the Acupuncture Regulatory Website, you can find a lot of cheap and cheerful courses, passed off as acupuncture to the uneducated eye. We are competing against this.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – Are we not established and accredited?</p> <p><b>MP</b> – A lot of these courses are not accredited.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – Do we promote the fact that we are accredited? Have we considered the price? Is there a payment plan?</p> <p><b>KD</b> – There is a lot of High Street competition, and I am just about to finish – there are similar fees in other courses. I am walking away with a license, but it has cost me over £20000 for my degree, but I am economically able to support myself over the three years. Because of the way it is structured it does attract a certain demographic and that demographic is small. The demographic does now feel different. There is no finance available, so people are making hard decisions, seeing the cohort, the price changes and other colleges. Much of what we do is practical.</p> <p><b>MP</b> – that is a fair assessment. The XXXX do the whole thing online and outsource the clinical. You have to find your own clinical supervisor locally. Economically they are very successful.</p> <p><b>KD</b> – you need to know your customer.</p> <p><b>TR</b> – None of our lecturers are keen to do it online, so we have stayed away from it. Some classes you can stream, but acupuncture needs a lot of different facilities. That is why a lot of universities dropped the courses.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – In terms of the demographics. Online is a no-no, but Kate did bring up the costings. In terms of the types of students we do</p>		
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	<p>have, what is the type?</p> <p><b>KD</b> – It's more an economic demographic. People who can support themselves, or to obtain a loan. The cost to do my course now, would cost me approximately a year more.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – Could I suggest that we possibly look at putting together a working group to explore how we represent our branding based around our current competitors and maybe suggest a payment plan. I know some banks offer a student loan.</p> <p><b>SR</b> – Most banks loans are postgrad and we do offer payment plans.</p> <p><b>NR</b> – we are exploring validation for the programme and if validated then it would get student finance.</p> <p><b>MP</b> – is that a university?</p> <p><b>NR</b> – Yes, we are actively working on that. It would be university rates then, so nine thousand but you would have funding.</p> <p><b>TR</b> – You may not get funding though as most acupuncture students have previous degrees.</p> <p><b>KD</b> – It's good we acknowledge there is a risk here. Other programmes and colleges have closed down, so there is an issue of continuity of members. I would hate it couldn't be continued.</p> <p><b>MP</b> – If we get validation, it would be a difficult demographic of students.</p> <p><b>NR</b> – It would be an option if we get validation.</p> <p><b>TR</b> – Average age would also come down. We mostly have mature students, whereas at present we only have a couple of younger students in their twenties.</p> <p><b>KD</b>: Yes, it is an older trajectory.</p> <p><b>TR</b>: Predominantly female too.</p> <p><b>UC</b>: So, with regard to a working group shall we pause on this.</p> <p><b>TR</b>: We are thinking of different courses, such as nutrition. The university we are talking about have complimentary medicine, so we might think about it. However, we need to see how</p>		
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	<p>acupuncture is as we are the only one in London. We are reliant on student numbers and as numbers decrease then I feel that it is a dominos effect, and we need to just keep an eye on things and safeguard ourselves with other courses. Acupuncture has always been subsidized by other courses. The overheads are crippling. We want to expand it, but we have to see.</p> <p><b>MP:</b> How about CPD courses? Xxx do a number of continuing professional development courses.</p> <p><b>KD:</b> There were a few but they are expensive. What is the average course? People don't have a disposable income.</p> <p><b>UC:</b> We will discuss this in our next meeting then.</p> <p><b>TR:</b> We will have a better idea for moving forward and on recruitment.</p>			
	<p><b>Recruitment Update</b></p> <p><b>NR:</b> In terms of City College we recruited around 130 in January and approx. 140 in May, so we are touching around 350 students on the BTEC programmes. The quality of students could be better but we are discussing collaborations with state colleges for student recruitment. Looking at Acupuncture, by the same colleges, they may be able to help us with the demographics. We are looking at XXX, which is quite an affluent area, so they will publicise the acupuncture course. With BTEC, the idea is to hope to get another 200 students in September so we can increase to approx. 800 students as Acupuncture is being subsidised. Fees are low but acupuncture makes no money but in fact is a loss.</p> <p><b>TR:</b> With overheads it doesn't work at all.</p> <p><b>NR:</b> It is top heavy with a lot of lecturers, but acupuncture does give us status. However, we hope for more students on both acupuncture and BTEC. From September onwards, we are hoping to run Digital Technology, Health &amp; Social Care and Hospitality to widen our students. That is positive, but regulation is also stricter.</p>			

	<p>We are working to try to get more students and of better quality.</p> <p><b>LS:</b> It has been suggested we contact Wellbeing Centres to attract Acupuncture students. It is a different type of course. Xx is contacting them, and they are keen to work with us.</p> <p><b>TR:</b> That is more a short course, rather than a three-year course, which is what acupuncture involves. My feeling is that we will not get so many students through this. We lock the fees for the year a student starts, so if we increase fees next year it doesn't affect the current students. Transparency is the key and we keep to the fees, but although we would get numbers for a short course, we don't run that.</p> <p><b>UC:</b> What is the restriction for overseas students?</p> <p><b>TR:</b> We don't have Tier 4.</p> <p><b>UC:</b> It is niche. Do you have a breakdown for the numbers in May and September?</p> <p><b>NR:</b> All Business. From September that will change, with Hospitality growing. We will restrict Business and introduce Digital Technology.</p> <p><b>TR:</b> We used to have a lot of DET but now we have dropped that course. We want to concentrate on other courses. We also have the Performing Arts Course, but numbers would be low. Retention rate is not bad, but it is time consuming with attendance. With acupuncture you don't have so many problems.</p>			
	<p><b>Possible New Board Members:</b> Eimear Cross (CCA)</p> <p><b>UC</b> – I did receive some paperwork for a new possible board member.</p> <p><b>TR:</b> To replace Kate, who will be leaving. She had a meeting with Susan and completed the paperwork. Kate can continue as an alumni, but she has to step down as a student.</p> <p><b>KD:</b> I appreciated my mentoring. There are feedback mechanisms there so that is good.</p>			

<b>5) OfS Updates</b>	<p><b>TR:</b> New conditions have just been issued regarding Sexual Harassment. The OfS did contact us about E6, but they confirmed they will not be reviewing it, as it relates to a period before we applied for the APP. The required training is not inexpensive — it must be delivered through an institutional subscription and provided online.</p> <p>Separately, we are working on the student data submission for HESA. In January, the OfS contacted us about our student numbers and financial forecast, which we updated in April. Their request covers not only the current year but also the three preceding years and the three years ahead. We projected 500–600 students for 2025/26, and I hope we can maintain that estimate. It is better to remain conservative, and given the importance of student calibre, we do reject a significant number of applications.</p> <p>Many universities have recently faced increased scrutiny from the OfS regarding collaborative arrangements. Some institutions have even ended partnerships with colleges that were not OfS-registered. This has contributed to the rise in applications we have received.</p>			
<b>6) Staffing Levels and Training</b>	<p><b>UC</b> – Are there new staffing?</p> <p><b>TR</b> – we have two new admin staff. Also, seven new lecturers on Business who self employed. Adrian started full-time in January and also Damaris. Four of our academic staff were previous DET students and that has also happened in CCA, where we have previous students now assisting.</p> <p><b>UC</b> – even in the university where I work they do recruit from students.</p>			
<b>7) Action Plan Update</b>	<b>UC</b> – Other courses – are we still waiting for updates for the Access and Participation Plan?			

	<b>TR</b> – We have approval to run a Business Distance Learning Programme. We can recruit 50 students a year and we are currently working on resources. It has been approved for funding.			
<b>8) Any Other Business</b>	<b>TR</b> – We do need new Board Members. Ian has stepped down because of health reasons, so we do need more external members. Perhaps we need to put that on LinkedIn again.			
<b>9) Date for Next Meeting</b>	Oct/Nov 25			