

**MINUTES of
CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE,
2 MARCH 2009**

Present: I Mason (Chair), J Ahearn, G Davies Marshall, J Duggan, Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal, G M Humby, Miss H Ross, S Willis, Mrs V Woodward

In attendance: J P Charleton (Clerk), P Baker, R Jones, J Morris, Ms A Piercy, I Rigby, M Shaw

Apologies: Cllr R Simpson

394.0 MEMBERSHIP

The Chair welcomed Mr G Davies Marshall to his first meeting of the Committee as Staff Member (Teaching).

395.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded members of their duty to declare an interest, financial or otherwise, in any items on the Agenda. No interests were declared.

396.0 MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2008

(a) Minutes

It was RESOLVED:

that the minutes be confirmed as a true record and be signed by the Chair.

(b) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

397.0 FACULTY ANNUAL REPORTS

(a) Faculty of Professional Studies

Mr R Jones, Head of Faculty of Professional Studies, presented the executive summary of his Faculty's Annual Report for 2007/08 noting that the detailed report had already been issued to governors. Faculty recruitment during this period had been successful, with enrolments for 2007/08 ahead of target for the majority of full-time FE courses. The Faculty SAR had awarded grade 2 (good) ratings for all categories to reflect improved success, achievement and retention rates for most courses and Subject Sector Areas (SSAs) in relation to the national average position.

Key risks for the Faculty included the impact of the LSC's new funding methodology, further increased fee levels and potential increased competition. Next year's targets included the improvement of overall quality with a targeted increase in the proportion of grade 1 provision.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

At this point Mr Jones left the meeting

Mrs H Haroon-Iqbal joined the meeting during the following item of business

(b) Faculty of Technology

Mr J Morris, Head of Faculty of Technology, presented the executive summary of his Faculty's Annual Report for 2007/08 noting that the detailed report had already been issued to governors. Ratings in the latest Faculty SAR had improved to Grade 2 for most categories to reflect improved success rates, particularly in Engineering and Computing. Success rates for Work-Based Learning (WBL) had continued to improve with all SSAs now above the LSC's Minimum Level of Performance.

Key risks for the Faculty include the impact of the new build on the location of provision and the consequences of the current economic downturn on work-based activities. Next year the Faculty would strive to maintain its overall grading for effectiveness as 'good' while closely monitoring performance in WBL and employer engagement activities.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

At this point Mr Morris left the meeting

398.0 STUDENT INDUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Mr P Baker, Quality Manager, presented a report which summarised the results from the Student Induction Questionnaire conducted in the early part of the Autumn term in 2008. Ratings for all of the most important questions were above the national average with the majority of rankings in the upper quartile. In terms of distance travelled, ratings for 25 questions had risen by double figures over the last four years.

Following discussion Mr Baker highlighted improved ratings for certain questions as a result of specific actions taken by College Management.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

399.0 ACCOLADES AND COMPLAINTS REPORT

Mr Baker presented the Accolades and Complaints report for October 2008 to January 2009, during which period 7 accolades had been received with 6 formal complaints upheld or partly upheld. The number of complaints upheld or partly upheld in 2008 was the lowest since annual records have been maintained.

Members welcomed the downward trend in the number of formal complaints received and upheld.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

400.0 STUDENT COUNCIL

Miss H Ross, Student Member, presented the unconfirmed minutes of the Student Council meeting held on 10 February 2009. The meeting had included feedback from the two student governors on a recent training event organised by the NUS and also discussion on the effectiveness of the start of year arrangements.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

401.0 STUDENTS' UNION (SU) UPDATE

Mr J Ahearn (SU President) highlighted the following developments:

- A summer ball was being planned to take place at the Moat House on 21 May
- The SU was helping to promote the sustainability agenda by organising a 'Green Week' in March with the support of David Kidney MP.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

402.0 COLLEGE CHARTER

Mr Baker presented the draft College Charter for 2009/10, noting that no changes to the previous year's document were proposed following major revision two years ago.

It was RESOLVED:

that the College Charter for 2009/10 be approved.

403.0 DISABILITY STATEMENT

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) highlighted the proposed revisions to the College's Disability Statement for 2009/10.

It was RESOLVED:

that the revised Disability Statement for 2009/10 be approved.

404.0 HEALTHY COLLEGE

Mr M Shaw, Head of Faculty General Education and Care, delivered a presentation on the results of a survey of young people including College students on their perception of health issues. The survey highlighted a number of health-related issues and concerns which would be considered as part of the Healthy College Initiative and in ongoing discussions with the local Primary Care Trust.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

At this point Mr Shaw left the meeting

405.0 SUCCESS RATES

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented a headline summary report on the College's final position for retention, achievement and success rates for 2007/08 compared with the previous three academic years. Success rates for learners on long qualifications had improved for the fourth consecutive year to 78% compared to the national average of 71%. The improvement in this key measure had allowed the College to self-assess at Grade 2 (Good) for achievement /standards.

Members welcomed the report as evidence of the College's improved overall performance against national benchmarks.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

406.0 OFSTED ANNUAL MONITORING VISIT

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) gave an oral update on the outcome of the recent OfSTED annual monitoring visit on 24 February 2009. In oral feedback to College Management the Inspectors had confirmed significant progress by the College in the improvement of overall success rates. Reasonable progress had been reported in respect of quality of provision, the management of WBL and equality and diversity. The only area of concern identified by Inspectors related to success rates for WBL for which insufficient progress was confirmed.

Members welcomed the outcome of the monitoring visit and congratulated College Management on good progress made in raising achievement and standards. It was noted that Governors would be advised when Ofsted's final report is available.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

407.0 STUDENT DESTINATIONS

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented an analysis of post-course student destinations for full-time students who had completed their studies in Summer 2008. The report highlighted the effective pathways between levels of study and confirmed that progression from level 3 courses to higher education remained at 51% in line with the government target.

It was RESOLVED:

that the report be received and noted.

408.0 COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) presented a report as requested by the Corporation which evaluated the College's capacity to improve its overall self-assessment grading from 'good' to 'outstanding'. Under the current inspection framework, to self-assess as outstanding the College would need to achieve grade 1 for Achievement/Standards, determined largely by the success rates of learners on long qualifications in relation to the national average. While the College was making steady progress towards this goal, actions required to achieve an outstanding grade in the short term would adversely affect the educational character of the College and relationships with partners.

Members considered an extract from 'How Colleges Improve – a review of best practice' published by OfSTED in September 2008 which highlighted the characteristics of those colleges that had significantly improved their performance and OfSTED grading. Following discussion, members expressed support for the strategy as recommended by College Management for the College to work towards achieving excellence and an outstanding self assessment grade in the longer term by a continuation of current steady progress and improved performance.

It was RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be received and noted;**
- (b) that a further report on the achievement of a self-assessed Outstanding grading be presented to the Committee in the Summer term.**

409.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 8 June 2009 at 5.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.