



Minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Curriculum Committee on Monday 11 November 2008 at 5.00pm in Room 3F099, York College

Present: Beth Armer
Alison Birkinshaw
Kevin Deadman
Andy Mendus (Chair)

In Attendance: Robert Grierson, Quality Manager
Richard Hinde, Clerk to the Governing Body
Graeme Murdoch, Deputy Principal Quality Assurance & Support (QA&S)
Clare Wareing, Assistant Principal 14-19 Vocational

The meeting started at 5.05pm.

Action

08.31 Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from David Maughan Brown and Glyn Jones. There were no declarations of interest. Beth Armer was welcomed as a new member of the Committee.

08.32 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 11 June 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2008 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

08.33 Matters Arising

The action summary sheet was considered together with the minutes and the following were noted as matters arising:

- No WBL Construction Skills reports had been issued by the Construction Skills sector body despite repeated requests. It was felt that such reports were needed by the time of the next WBL report to the Committee.
- With under-achievement of NVQs in Health & Social Care, and Food Processing/Professional Cookery/Food & Drink the key problem had been that the College lost a significant number of learners and assessors to other colleges. However, both Divisions involved had improved their monitoring and tracking of Train to Gain and it was anticipated this would lead to improvement.
- The Staff Recognition Group was in the process of being established and members were being sought. The Group would be chaired by the Principal.
- An update on ARLO was provided.
- The booking system for PCs had been improved and feedback from stakeholders was broadly positive. The Student Governor explained that the system could be further enhanced if the forced "shut-down" time was reduced from 30 to 15 minutes.

(Kevin Deadman joined the meeting at 5.20pm.)

08.34 Committee Terms of Reference and Schedule of Business 2008/09

It was reported that at its meeting on 17 July 2008, the Governing Body had considered and approved the Quality & Curriculum Committee's Terms of Reference and Schedule of Business for 2008/09, subject to further consideration by the Committee itself. Members were asked to review the existing Terms of Reference and proposed Schedule of Business for 2008/09 to ensure that they reflected the functions of the Committee, regulatory requirements and best practice.

It was confirmed that the Employer & Skills Committee would have responsibility for quality issues relating to Work Based Learning and Train to Gain, in the same way that this Committee had responsibility for the College's other provision. It was also confirmed that the College's Marketing and Sales Strategy would be the responsibility of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, but that issues relating to the effectiveness of the Strategy would be reported to this Committee.

The Quality & Curriculum Committee **agreed** that its stated responsibilities in its Terms of Reference should be amended to include a general reference to reviewing and receiving reports on quality issues associated with new initiatives in the sector (such as Framework For Excellence), and **endorsed** the proposed Schedule of Business for 2008/09.

Clerk

08.35 Learner Recruitment

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the report providing the latest headline data on recruitment as at 24 October 2008, together with analysis of key issues and actions. It was reported that the LSC had still not issued the appropriate software to enable the College to accurately calculate Standard Learner Numbers (SLNs). The College had developed its own software for modelling this but the position would be clearer once the LSC's software had been received.

With 16-18 Learners (excluding apprenticeships) it was reported that there was an increase of over 138 learners compared with the same point last year and the College was currently 24 learners short of its LSC year end target. The College was still anticipating more enrolments but was still in the process of cleansing the data to ensure enrolments/transfers and withdrawals had been processed correctly.

16-18 Apprenticeships were currently 105 below target. The courses were still enrolling but the College had concerns about meeting its year-end targets, as in the current economic climate there was evidence that employers were reluctant to take on apprentices.

With Adult Responsiveness (19+) Provision (excluding

Apprenticeships) it was reported that the College's Adult learner numbers were approximately 56% of the year end position whereas the College would normally expect the figure to be closer to 65%. Concern was expressed about achieving Adult recruitment targets. Employer Responsive - 19+ Apprenticeships were currently 58 below target but the College anticipated that this target would be met, as should the target for FE Workplace NVQs and Train to Gain. HE provision was now above target.

The Committee then considered the measures being taken by the College to improve any areas of under-recruitment.

08.36 Attendance and Retention To Date

The Deputy Principal QA&S presented the report on the current position regarding overall attendance and retention for 2008/09. It was reported that the current attendance level was 90% against a target of 88%. With retention, four "lines" of provision were better than the same time the previous year; three lines of provision were the same; and four lines of provision were below the position for the same time last year. Consideration was then given to the actions being taken to address these issues.

Discussion then took place about the level of Bromcom coverage within College, and steps being taken to improve the collection and recording of registers.

08.37 Learner Success 2007/08

a) AS/A2

The Deputy Principal QA&S presented the report summarising the College's success rate outcomes for 2007/08 together with the key areas of concern.

The following key strengths were noted:

- A2 achievement rate of 97.7%. This exceeded the national average of 97.2% and marked an improvement of 0.5% on 2006/07. It was also better than any of the York 11-18 schools, which ranged from 96.6 – 97.3%.
- A2 achievement at 100% in 33 subjects.
- A2 high grade (A-B) achievement of 45.5%. This was an improvement of 3.7% on 2006/07.
- AS achievement of 90.3%. This was an improvement of 1.5% on 2006/07.
- AS high grade (A-B) achievement of 35.5%. This was an improvement of 1.2% on 2006/07.

The key weakness was said to be that the level of A2 high grade (A-B) achievement was below the 2005/06 benchmarks in 17 subjects. It was explained that the ALPS system for performance monitoring at student level had now been rolled out across the College for all AS

and A2 programmes, as well as National Diplomas, and this was intended to raise students' aspirations and ensure a greater proportion of high grades across all subjects. The Committee also considered the College's other general initiatives to improve success rates together with subject specific concerns and actions.

b) 16-19 Vocational including Under 16s

The Assistant Principal 14-19 Vocational presented the report summarising the success rate outcomes for 2007/08 by Division and including Under 16s provision.

The following were identified as key strengths:

- Significant improvements in many retention, achievement and success rates, particularly Levels 1, 2 and 3 Long courses.
- Fourteen Divisions with very good or outstanding vocational success rates for specific areas of provision offered by them.
- Very good Under 16s success rates for Business Management Levels 1 and 2; Building services Levels 1 and 2; and Engineering Level 3.

The following were identified as key weaknesses:

- Short Qualifications were below national benchmark and below 2006/07 rates.
- Six Divisions had poor vocational success rates for specific areas of provision offered by them.
- Very poor Under 16s success rates for Hair & Beauty, all levels; Sport, all levels; and Construction, all levels.

(Robert Grierson joined the meeting at 6.10pm.)

Detailed discussion took place in relation to measures already implemented to bring about improvement, together with future initiatives to drive up success rates.

08.38 Value-Added Report 2007/08

The Deputy Principal QA&S presented the report identifying the College's value added performance for AS/A Levels for 2008. An outline of methods used to measure value added was provided together with a summary of conclusions and responses. The reported results showed improvements from 2007, and it was noted that the ALPS mechanism was being used with individual learners to challenge them through a system of minimum target grades. It was also noted that the College's ALIS results for 2008 also showed an improvement on 2007.

It was **agreed** that it would be useful for this report to be presented to all Governors at the next Governing Body meeting.

**DPQA&S
/Clerk**

08.39 Internal Review Level 1 Provision

The Principal explained that a Level 1 Working Group had been

established under the leadership of the Heads of Division of Hospitality & Tourism, and Engineering. The Group was leading on an intensive improvement action plan for the College's Level 1 provision.

The Quality Manager then reported that the internal review of Level 1 provision had identified key weaknesses in teaching, and initial advice and guidance choice. Key strengths had been identified as good management of learner behaviour, effective one-to-one support, and good adherence to Health & Safety.

It was reported that a record number of OTLs had been scheduled for this term. It was also noted that staff delivering Level 1 provision had welcomed the fact that its profile within College was being raised.

08.40 Internal Review: Music/Music Technology

The Quality Manager presented the report on the internal review of the College's Music and Music Technology provision that was carried out during the week commencing 6 October 2008. The overall conclusions were referred to and the following key strengths were identified:

- Improved levels of learner satisfaction from second year learners.
- High levels of attendance.
- Some effective use of ILT.

The following weaknesses were identified;

- Poor success rates on all programmes.
- Low value added on AS/A2 Music and Music Technology.
- Poor attainment by some learners.
- Poor learner punctuality.
- Poor teaching profile.
- Insufficient formative assessment.
- Some poor classroom management.
- Poor leadership and management.

Discussion took place about the findings of the report and the measures being taken to bring about improvements.

Consideration was also given to other College areas which it was intended to review in future.

08.41 Post Inspection Action Plan

The Deputy Principal QA&S presented the report identifying the significant improvements that had been made in relation to the four key areas for improvement identified by Ofsted. These all related to improvements (in 2007/08) in Qualification Success Rates.

The Action Plan presented identified progress with a number of other areas for improvement which had been drawn from the Ofsted Inspection report by the College. It was reported that cumulatively these had all contributed to an enhanced College approach to learner success. This had not only resulted in improvements in learner

success rates for 2007/08, but also the establishment of a baseline of improvement strategies that supported the College's aim of moving from "good" to "outstanding".

The Committee noted the report and acknowledged the significant amount of work that had been undertaken by staff in this regard.

08.42 Strategic Plan 2008/11: Relevant Extracts

The Deputy Principal QA&S presented progress reports on sections of the College's Strategic Plan relevant to the Committee's responsibilities. Updates on Portfolio Development (14-19 Vocational, 16-19 A Level); Teaching & Learning (14-19 Vocational, 16-19 A Level); and Quality Assurance were considered. The Committee welcomed the report but felt that future updates could be more qualitative in terms of showing progress against specific targets.

DPQA&S

Discussion then took place in relation to difficulties being experienced by the College in gaining access to learners at schools with sixth forms. It was noted that a 14 -19 Strategy Meeting had been scheduled within College to consider how such access could be improved.

08.43 Any Other Business

None.

08.44 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 25 February 2009 at 5.00pm.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm.

Signed:

Chair:

Name:

Date: