

**Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held in the Vision Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday, 17 May 2012 at 7.10 pm**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kate Allsop, Chair  
Diana Gilhespy  
John Holford  
Asha Khemka

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation  
Patricia Harman  
Janice Hill  
Nikki Witham  
Julian Walden

		<b>ACTION by whom</b>	<b>DATE by when</b>
<b>12.16</b>	<b><u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA</u></b>		
	The Chair reminded members to declare at the start of the meeting interests held in any matters to be considered. No interests were declared.		
<b>12.17</b>	<b><u>WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b>		
	Apologies were received from James Stafford and Linda Gratton. The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.	Clerk	17 May 2012
<b>12.18</b>	<b><u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2012</u></b>		
	The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting and were approved and signed by the Chair.		
	AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2012.	Chair	17 May 2012
<b>12.19</b>	<b><u>ACTIONS OUTSTANDING AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></b>		
	The action progress schedule was noted. There were no matters arising.		
<b>12.20</b>	<b><u>DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</u></b>		
	The Deputy Principal introduced her detailed report, and the following was specifically brought to members' attention:		

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair

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- The College made the decision to seek a new validating partner for some of the provision currently with LMU, rather than move all provision to the University of Derby. The new validating partner for the College is Birmingham City University. Members` attention was drawn to the data table at paragraph 2.2.4, which shows the awards currently with LMU and the proposed validating partner changes. It was noted that, at this stage, validation would not be sought for three of the foundation degrees, as going forward, a market for these awards is not envisaged. The Computing Foundation degree will be replaced with HND Computing Qualificaitons which better meets the needs of learners and aligns with the suite of HNDs already offered in the School of Learning.
- The development of the parntership with Birmingham City University (BCU), is progressing well and the next stage of the validation process will be a two stage event at the College, which will focus on institutional approval for the College to be a partner of the University, and the second stage will be validation of the specific programmes. The provisional date for this event is week commencing 11 June 2012. Members were assured that, if partnership arrangements with BCU were delayed, then the College has been given assurance that it can enrol students with LMU for one further year, as a fall back position.
- The College was involved in the University of Derby`s Ofsted inspection of initial teacher education in February 2012 and, as a patner college, of particular note is the fact that grade 1 was awarded for the sub grade `to what extent does the training assessment ensure that all trainees progress to fill their potential, given their ability and starting points`. Information from the University of Derby confirms that this is the only grade 1 awarded in this area in the past year for initial teacher training at a higher education institution. All agreed that this was a very positive picture.
- Ofsted consultation – `A good education for all` contains proposals for amended inspection arrangements for maintained schools and academies, further education and skills, and initial teacher education from September 2012. It was noted that the consultation period closed on 3 May 2012, and that the College had completed a response document.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

## 12.21 RETENTION REPORT

The Director Curriculum & Standards introduced this item and drew members` attention to her report, where the following was particularly noted:

- There has been an overall decrease of 0.96% in withdrawals compared to March 2011, even though the number of enrolments has increased.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_Chair

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- A slightly lower percentage of females have withdrawn from their programme of study, compared to males.
- Withdrawals of learners of other ethnicities have increased by 1.91% from March 2011.
- There is a significant decrease in withdrawals of learners enrolled to a level 4 programme by 18.62%, whilst withdrawals against level 3 programmes, have decreased by 9.2%.
- The College is currently meeting its target retention rate of 92%. Overall retention has risen by 1% compared to the same period in 2010/11.
- Retention has increased by 1% for 16-18 learners and remains static for learners aged 19+.
- Retention for males and females has levelled to 92% as has retention for white british learners, and those of other ethnicity.
- There is a strong focus within Schools of Learning on reducing the number of withdrawals and raising retention.
- Within the corporate strategic risk register for 2011, risk priority 11 data usage, the risk appetite is risk averse.

AGREED: \_\_\_\_\_ to note the content of the report.

## **12.22 INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESSES – MID YEAR UPDATE**

The Head of Quality & Performance introduced this item and drew members` attention to the detail of her report. The following was specifically noted:

### 1) Internal Reviews 2011/12

- In total 60 internal reviews are planned throughout 2011/12, these include 7 Schools of Learning, 8 business support areas and 45 employer responsive partner providers.

### 2) Schools of Learning

- All School of Learning reviews had been completed by 12 October 2011.
- Schools of Learning internal reviews focussed upon weaker performing provision.
- Outcomes of the reviews were used to build quality, teaching, learning and performance projects, which will support the School of Learning`s capacity to improve.

### 3) Business Support Areas

The business support internal reviews will commence in the summer term of 2012. The internal reviews will focus upon the College core values. Outcome of the internal reviews will provide valuable evidence and business support self-assessment.

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#### 4) Employer Responsive Partners

20 reviews have been completed to date, 25 reviews have confirmed dates for completion. Established partner providers with outstanding performance, will receive a desk based internal review.

#### 5) Outcomes

Improvement plans have been developed by each Management Team and shared by the Review Team Leader. The Management Teams will evaluate and measure the impact of the improvement plan in the self-assessment report 2011/12. Reviews of the internal review reports indicate that each School and partner provider have different strengths and a different range of issues to address. There are some recurring themes and Management Teams have been advised where they could potentially work jointly to make improvements. The review process has enabled Heads of School and Business Support Managers to work across other Schools of Learning and other Business Support areas in the College, providing an excellent opportunity for the exchange of ideas and good practice.

In general discussion, it was felt that the College could demonstrate the 'impacts' of the improving processes, and particularly in relation to partner reviews, with a clear focus on student surveys and retention. Governors did question how this Committee can better flag up key risk areas/trends/patterns so that these can be top priority discussion items at meetings. The Head of Quality & Performance confirmed that she prepares a high level QIP which identifies key themes and progress made to address any issues, it was agreed that this would be provided and reviewed at the next meeting.

Head of  
Q&P

12 July  
2012

Members` attention was drawn to appendix A, which provides details of the findings of the review teams under the headings of:

- a) Initiatives and activities to support improvements,
- b) Areas for development, and
- c) Recommendations for further improvements.

Members were assured that improvement plans have been developed by each Management Team and shared with the Review Team Leader. It was acknowledged that the reviews provide a detailed and focussed approach, providing the Management Teams with objectives and findings which they are able to use as a basis for improving all aspects of provision.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_Chair

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## 12.23 TEACHING & LEARNING REPORT

The Head of Quality & Performance introduced this item and confirmed that the purpose of her report was to advise the Committee of the outcomes of the graded teaching and learning observation process for 2011/12. It was acknowledged that her report focuses upon On Campus School of Learning observations and Off Campus Provider observations for the period from September 2011 to 23 March 2012, key points to note were:

- 337 College staff have been identified as requiring an observation 2011/12, alongside re-observations of staff following a grade 3 or 4 at their initial observation.
- To the 23 March 2012, 270 observations have been completed, and a further 110 observations have been planned up to end of June 2012 (this includes re-observations).
- The overall grade percentage good or better, is 84%, this should be compared with the same period in 2010/11 which was 89%, and 2009/10 which was 82%.
- There has been a decrease in the percentage of observations graded outstanding. The bar that Ofsted expects staff to reach is ever reaching higher, with greater expectations for individualised learning, which enables every student to make maximum progress, is present in all sessions.
- 179 partner provider assessors and trainers have been identified for graded observations by the College team throughout 2011/12, this will be continuously reviewed throughout the year to ensure that lesson observations are completed where required.
- To March 2012, 86 graded partner observations have been completed, compared with 35 at the same stage last year. 47 observations have been planned through to the end of May 2012.
- Of these observations for 2011/12, 65% is the percentage good or better, this should be compared with 43% for the same period in 2010/11. It was agreed that this was a tremendous increase on previous years, but that there is still work to be done.
- 27 observations have been completed by low risk partners, who have been supported to undertake their own graded teaching and learning observations by the Quality, Teaching, Learning and Performance Department. All observations are moderated by members of the Quality, Teaching, Learning and Performance Department. Of these low risk partners, the percentage good or better is 63%.

Members generally discussed partner provision and the observations, and whilst acknowledging that it was an improving position, it was felt that there was still work to be done. The Principal confirmed that as approximately 50% of College funding is received from Employer Responsive provision, there is a need to get the quality of teaching and learning to the same grade profile as the remainder of the College. Members did not under-estimate the size of this challenge, and taken in

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the context that for some partners, this was the first time they have ever been observed, it was agreed that it was a learning process for all. In general terms, members were advised that all partners are very responsive to ongoing support, and it is a very collaborative approach to bringing about improvements.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

#### **12.24 HE ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Deputy Principal introduced her report and confirmed that key agenda items discussed at the HE Academic Standards Committee were:

- Recruitment for 2012/13. The student number control for 2012/13 for full time entrants has been confirmed at 211. In 2011/12, the Student number control was 206. 227 applications have been received, with 67 offers of places made and 41 acceptances received.
- The impact of the new fee regime on students moving from part time HNC to HND programmes was discussed. HND students will be classed for funding purposes, as new full time entrants, and therefore incur the fee of £5500. This has been reviewed with the Deputy Principal/Director of Finance and a lower fee agreed for progressing students for 2012/13.
- Feedback on progression boards was noted, no issues arising.
- National student survey – the College set a target response rate of 89%, with a minimum of 70%. At the date of the meeting, a 65% response rate had been achieved, students had until 12 April 2012 to complete this survey. It was noted that full survey results will not be published until the end of the academic year. At the end of the survey period a response of 81% had been achieved compared to 76% in 2011.
- The annual monitoring schedule was discussed and how this linked to the FE self-assessment process.
- The exit strategy from Leeds Metropolitan University was outlined and the validating of programmes with the University of Derby and Birmingham City University.
- The positive feedback from the University of Derby Ofsted inspection of initial teaching training was noted.

In general terms, members were advised that applications for HE places were looking positive, but that the reality may be that the College struggles to hit full target and this will be solely related to the impact of increased fees introduced.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_Chair

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## **12.25 LEARNER VOICE REPORT**

The Director: Curriculum and Standards introduced this item and provided an update on the national learner survey. She confirmed that a total of 1137 learners took part in the national learner survey 2010/11. It was noted that the College learner satisfaction rating rose from 8.4 to 8.6 (this is out of a mark of 1 to 10). Outcomes for the overall areas surveyed, showed a middle range of scores compared with other FE colleges and all organisations surveyed. An average score of 8+ was achieved for all areas surveyed, with the score of 9 from 'respect from staff'. Two areas identified for improvement as a result of this survey are:

- a) prior information, and
- b) what to do next.

Members reviewed the scores given and noted that, in general terms, adults showed a higher level of satisfaction rates than 16-18 learners. It was acknowledged that this was against the expected trend, as it is usually the case that adult learners are more demanding. Governors felt that it was important that clarity and an explanation be given as to why youngsters are not responding as positively as envisaged, as in isolation, this was an unusual trend.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

## **12.26 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew the following to members' attention:

- The student induction survey includes the statement 'I feel safe in College'. 3149 students responded to this statement, with 98% of respondents agreeing that they felt safe. This places the College in the upper quartile when compared nationally with the ratings of 119 providers, with 415,000 respondents. All Governors agreed that this was an excellent achievement.
- All individual comments relating to the survey have been analysed and addressed.
- The reporting for partner providers in relation to all aspects of safeguarding has improved and is now more consistent. Penalties will be in place for non-compliance with the College's safeguarding requirements.
- Good progress has been made against the safeguarding development plan since this was reported at the January 2012 meeting.
- The safeguarding development plan with annotated progress to date was noted as an appendix to the report
- All safeguarding incidents, whether College based or with partner provision have been dealt with promptly and to a satisfactory conclusion.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair

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One additional point noted was the fact that the students now have an opportunity to report incidents through a reporting button on Learnernet. All comments made are picked up and addressed through usual tracking activities.

The Link Governor for Safeguarding, Diana Gilhespy, confirmed that she had been able to undertake the LSIS online training.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

#### **12.27 DESTINATIONS REPORT – INTENDED & ACTUAL**

The Director Curriculum & Standards introduced this report and confirmed that information relating to learners intended destinations was collected on completion of their course 2010/11, the following was specifically brought to members` attention:

- The highest proportion of students 36% progressed on to another, normally higher FE course at Vision West Nottinghamshire College.
- 28% of students progressing to HE enrolled on a HE programme with Vision West Nottinghamshire College.
- Students progressing to full time employment have increased by 59.7%
- In both categories (16-18, 19+) the highest percentage of learners progressed to another FE course at Vision West Nottinghamshire College.
- The data shows very similar comparisons between male and female destinations.
- Learners who are of other ethnicity comprise 7% of the data.
- Progression to full time employment is 5.1% higher for white british students.
- Most students have achieved their intended destination.

Of particular interest to the Committee was the dramatically increased percentage number of learners who have progressed to employment.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

#### **12.28 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY DATA REPORT AND REVISED EQUALITY SCHEME**

The Director of Communications, Marketing and Learner Engagement introduced this item and confirmed that the College has statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, part of which include the production of a single equality scheme and the publication of equality data. She confirmed that colleges were required to publish data by 31 January 2012, and as a result, the data included in her report was uploaded to the College's website on 31 January 2012.

In terms of equality data, the following key points were specifically brought to members` attention:

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- There are no significant issues arising for analysis of employee data. A lot of positive work has been done over the past year to improve both the College's BME and disability staffing profile.
- At cross College level there are no significant issues in relation to student data, and the College closed a 12% achievement gap between BME and white students. However, when we drill down into the data, there is a 5% achievement gap at 16-18 between white and white other students, and at 16-18 level 3, a 6% achievement gap between those students who have declared a disability and those who have not.
- In terms of the first issue, further work has been done with the Schools of Learning and the College has identified a large majority of the students at 16-18 falling under the white other category, are from Eastern European origin. Further work is being undertaken to ascertain whether language may form a barrier to achievement for these students and whether additional ESOL support, alongside their main programme, would be of benefit.
- In real terms, it was estimated that there are approximately 104 students who fall within this category.
- In terms of the second issue, there is a large proportion of level three students who declare a disability but do not receive additional support. The ALS Team is currently investigating whether students have refused support when offered, and what we can further do to support these students to succeed.
- The College has agreed that it would not include the following characteristics in its mass data collection exercise - marital status, sexual orientation and religious belief, maternity, pregnancy and gender reassignment.

Members agreed that, on the whole, the data trends were showing improvements. Members reviewed the revisions to the Equality Scheme and were happy to make recommendations to the Board regarding its approval.

AGREED to:

- a) Note the update provided and
- b) Recommend that the Corporation Board approve the revisions to the Equality Scheme.

## 12.29 FE CHOICES

The Deputy Principal introduced this report and confirmed that Framework for Excellence has been rebranded the Further Education Public Information Framework, and the website rebranded FE Choices. She explained, as was the case with Framework for Excellence, that it is often difficult to compare data as data is recorded for differing years, and that a number of colleges have undetermined scores because a low number of percentage learners were contacted and therefore a score was not awarded. It was felt that in general terms the processes

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involved were a bit flawed, and that the data was too out of date to really inform choices.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

**12.30 AOB**

As a general comment, members felt that as a standing agenda item, they would like to see examples given of 'outstanding' performance and standards. They felt that the Committee may be a little too focussed on whether or not the College is achieving the expected standards, and in doing so was losing sight of the real success stories and exceptional performances. It was agreed that this would be scheduled as a standing agenda item for future meetings. It was agreed that the Committee would receive a copy of the College publication 'celebrating achievements'.

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**12.31 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk to the Corporation confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled for 12 July 2012.

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_Chair

Date: