

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 5.30pm**

**PRESENT:**

Marianne Howarth – Chair  
Alex Brown  
Geoff Hall  
Jonathon Oldham  
Carol Parkinson

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Margaret Allen – Acting Deputy Principal  
David White – Interim Vice Principal Corporate Services  
Liz Leek – Curriculum Director  
Hugh David – Strategy Analyst  
Sarah Jordan – Head of Inclusion  
Lanre Ogun – Director Foundation Learning Tier and Student Support  
Val Mattinson – Director of Corporate and External Affairs  
Claire Kay – Clerk to the Corporation

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The Chair welcomed Liz Leek, Alex Brown and Jonathon Oldham to the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were noted from Delroy Brown, Brian Hambidge and Danuta Januszonok.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no personal interests declared.

3. **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2008 were approved and signed.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the minutes which would not be covered by the agenda.

5. **INSPECTION REPORT OCTOBER 2008**

Members were updated on the feedback received from the Ofsted inspection team following their visit. The draft report had been issued and matters of accuracy checked by the College. The report would be available on the Ofsted website in approximately 3 weeks.

Members welcomed the highlights report and congratulated staff and students on an excellent outcome. Members were pleased to note the judgements given by Ofsted were in line with the College self-assessment grades demonstrating a robust process of self assessment.

The report was noted.

## 6. **STUDENT OUTCOMES REPORT**

The Committee received a detailed report on the student outcomes from 2007/08 detailing retention, achievement and success rates including historical trends. Members noted the issues in the report around the achievement of MLP for AS and A2 provision and the detail provided per subject area and age (14-19 or adult).

The report was further developed to include achievements by diversity profile. Members supported the proposals to target actions to specific groups, especially disabled students and some ethnic minority groups, aiming to reduce the differentials between groups and understand the reasons for these differentials.

A further report would be reviewed at the next meeting to update the NVQ data and consider the 2007/08 benchmark data if available.

Members noted the report.

## 7. **AS/A2 LEVEL REVIEW**

Liz Leek, Curriculum Director was welcomed to the meeting to discuss with members how a proactive approach was being used to impact positively on the success rates for A level learners.

Members discussed the following key points:

- Points score for entry;
- The balance of 4 subject options versus 3 subject options;
- The methods being used to address retention;
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Members thanked Liz for a very informative debate and encouraged the supportive and proactive environment being created in this key business area.

## 8. **DRAFT COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2007/08**

The draft College SAR was circulated to members in the papers. The report had been validated by the Ofsted visit in October and as previously reported the grades supported. Members noted section 15 within the report summarising the overall grades and key strengths and areas for development.

**The Committee agreed to recommend the College SAR 2007/08 to the Corporation for approval.**

## 9. **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008/09**

The areas for improvement identified within the College SAR are expanded upon within the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) as part of the continuous improvement cycle.

The aim of the QIP was to move the College from good to outstanding in 2 years and identifies areas for improvement and actions to build on strengths setting challenging targets to achieve this end.

Monitoring against this plan will be reported to the Committee and will form the basis of the overall Quality Strategy.

**The Committee agreed to recommend the College QIP 2008/09 to the Corporation for approval.**

10. **QUALITY STRATEGY**

The Committee received the revised Quality Strategy for review. This was a new requirement of the Instrument and Articles of Government. The document focuses on the continual improvement of the College by aiming to provide high standards of teaching, to support students to realise their potential, to be committed to enabling students to gain their preferred outcomes and by listening to the learner voice.

The strategy outlines 6 key quality objectives, underpinning these objectives is the standard of teaching and learning. The strategy defines specific targets within each objective to be monitored by the Committee. To assist in this monitoring role the report suggests a quality audit function to provide the Corporation with assurance that the College has the capacity to identify and deal with areas of concern and to report on areas of good practice.

Members welcomed the quantitative approach to key quality objectives and considered the concept of a quality audit as excellent. Following advice from the Clerk the Committee agreed a review of the terms of reference should be undertaken to reflect the changes within the Quality Strategy and passed the following resolutions:

**The Committee agreed to recommend the College Quality Strategy 2008/11 to the Corporation for approval.**

**The Committee note management intentions to support the implementation of the Quality Strategy by commissioning annual quality audits.**

11. **IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMEWORK FOR EXCELLENCE**

A report was presented to the committee confirming the final dimensions of the FfE which will be monitored by the Committee.

**Responsiveness**

Members noted the changes required to the Learner Voice survey and the impact this may have on the timings of future meetings. Learner destination data was complicated and currently very difficult for the College to adequately assess. Employer responsiveness considered the views of employers and the amount of training provided, this was currently considered in accordance to the FfE indicators as outstanding and the aim for 2008/09 was to achieve the Training Quality Standard.

**Effectiveness**

Both the quality and effectiveness measures in this area are currently viewed as good

**The Committee approved the proposals for monitoring the FfE dimensions by the Committee.**

**Members noted the need to have an additional meeting between February and May to review the outcomes from the FfE prior to publication.**

12. **RESPONSIVENESS TO LEARNERS**

An overview of the mechanisms in place to respond to the learner voice were discussed. A summary of the disciplinaries involving students between April 07 and September 08 was presented and members noted the effectiveness of the policy. Members noted with interest the large fall in disciplinaries involving black males and requested that the reasons behind this be explored and if possible practice replicated elsewhere.

The annual complaints summary was reviewed and members noted the diversity profile of complainants and the most regular issues raised. Members welcomed the actions taken in response to complaints and explored the quality of the process and how the satisfaction of the complainant was measured.

Members considered the outcomes of the exit survey for students comparing the results against the national benchmark data, noting the results were slightly below national levels.

Members considered the changes due through Framework for Excellence to the learner survey and noted specifically the different profile of learners surveyed compared to the current survey process.

The report was noted.

**13. RESPONSIVENESS TO EMPLOYERS**

The report presented the performance of Work Based Learning (WBL) and Train to Gain (T2G) provision. The members were pleased to note the significant improvement of overall success rates and timely success rates for WBL noting the improvements made in the control environment for this provision. The success rates for T2G were seen as outstanding with the quality of partner provision reaching 93%.

Members noted the changes to the survey process for employers due to Framework for Excellence and welcomed the improvements in this key area of growth for the College.

Members noted the report.

**14. ANNUAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT 2007/08**

Members were presented an Annual Report on Equality and Diversity. The achievements made in the year included improved strategic level monitoring, revised documentation and recruitment processes and PDR processes, the creation of staff and student disability groups, a celebration of diversity through International Day and a chaplaincy pilot scheme.

Members considered the areas for improvement around monitoring and reporting on disability profiles within staff, students and governors but welcomed the detailed statistics on the College profile on gender, ethnicity and disability compared to the wider community.

Members noted the priorities for 2008/09 and welcomed the proactive promotion of Equality and Diversity now prevalent within the College.

**The Committee agreed to recommend the Annual Report for 2007/08 including the corporate priorities for 2008/09 to the Corporation.**

**15. COMMITTEE ANNUAL SELF ASSESSMENT**

Members considered the annual self assessment undertaken as part of the College self assessment process and noted the areas of compliance with the Committees terms of reference. With the exception of monitoring the effectiveness of staff development as part of the quality assurance arrangements, the Committee had addressed its duties and responsibilities.

The Committees qualitative assessment resulted in the following self assessment grades:

Effectiveness	Good
Risk management	Outstanding
Staff Development	Satisfactory
Student learning	Good
Decision making	Good

Areas for improvement identified to move towards outstanding included reporting on lesson observation grading, effectiveness of staff development, implementing and monitoring the impact of FfE and clearer target setting and monitoring.

**The Committee agreed the annual self assessment report.**

**16. RISKS ASSIGNED TO THE COMMITTEE**

The risks assigned to the committee for monitoring in 2008/09 were reviewed by the Committee. An update was provided by management to demonstrate how these risks were being monitored.

Members noted the report. There were no further risks identified during the course of the meeting.

**17. CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS**

There were no confidential items.

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was 10 February 2009. Members would be circulated for a further meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.05pm.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_