



CORPORATION TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 10 JUNE 2011

PRESENT : Mr I Standen Chairman
Ms P Martin
Ms A Mollart
Mrs A Thomson
Dr G Wilson
Ms W Wright Principal

IN ATTENDANCE : Mrs P Connell Clerk to the Corporation
Mr S Andrews Deputy Principal
Mrs R Smith Student Services Manager

ACTION

9/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

10/11 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2011 were received and confirmed as a correct record.

11/11 MATTERS ARISING

5/11 Student Attendance Report for the Current Academic Year. It was noted that a further progress report on this subject would be made under agenda item five.

6/11 Report on Trimester 1 Performance Monitoring. The Deputy Principal advised that information as requested had been provided in the reports for the current meeting, which had been presented in a revised format.

12/11 MINUTES OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Quality Assurance Committee meeting of 20 May 2011 were received and approved.

It was noted that most matters considered at the meetings would be reviewed under the following agenda items. Discussion ensued concerning the planned changes to the TALO process to take effect in 2011/12. The Joint Forum meeting had not yet taken place but initial feedback from staff and the UCU

representative was very positive. The Deputy Principal reported that the proposed changes would be introduced in a sensitive and supportive way.

Members noted the discussion at the Committee concerning the possibility of inviting the Corporation to approve a revised attendance target (in the performance indicators) of 93% rather than the 90% figure which was the current target. Overall attendance at the College was excellent (91%) and well above the average figure of 77% for the sector revealed in Ofsted inspection reports. It was recognised that it would be very difficult to improve performance when the College was operating at such a high level. However, Members supported the view of the Deputy Principal that every effort should be made to secure continuous improvement. **It was, therefore, agreed that the Principal should be invited to make a recommendation to the Corporation meeting of 12 July 2011 for the target to be raised to 93%, to be achieved over a three year period.**

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13/11 REPORT ON TRIMESTER 2 MANAGEMENT REVIEWS

The Committee received a written report from the Deputy Principal, which was contained within appendix B.

The Deputy Principal spoke on his report, advising that robust performance monitoring continued to drive improvement at College and, latterly, also at Schools levels. Discussion ensued concerning the data presented in the report in relation to the following key areas:

- i **retention continuing (LSC rules applied).** Members noted that, overall, retention rates were very good (currently 89%). Success rates (ie retention x achievement) for the whole College were well within the 90th percentile range. However, significant problems were being experienced at Level 3 (16-18) and at some Level 1 programmes within the same age range. Action had been taken by College management to conduct a detailed analysis of the reasons for this and plans had been put in place to secure sustained improvement. The Committee considered at length the data relating to the individual Schools, at different levels and length of programmes, for different age groups. The issues concerning Level 1 (16-18) related primarily to Entry Level students. The numbers involved here were very small and it was, therefore, difficult to draw firm conclusions from such a small statistical sample. Retention on programmes for students in the 19+ range was extremely strong. Retention was also very good on short and very short courses. The Deputy Principal drew Members' attention to any individual areas where performance had fallen well below the norm for the College. He advised that a new post of Student Performance and Experience Manager had been approved. It was hoped that this would ensure that students in this age group received the highest quality of support, thus enhancing their experience on their learning programmes and optimising their performance. The Deputy Principal gave a detailed account of other strategies which had been put in place to secure further improvements. Members welcomed the transparent and rigorous approach which had been adopted to monitor and improve performance. They noted that improvements in the production of data meant that any areas for further development could be more easily identified. The Committee also sought the views of the Student Member of the Committee and there was some discussion concerning curriculum design on applied learning programmes. Members also considered the likely impact on the data of the A Level programmes,

which would become the responsibility of the College from 1 September 2011. **It was agreed that** the Principal and Deputy Principal should bring forward proposals to the Committee concerning the reporting of this data.

- ii **attendance.** It was noted that, overall, College attendance levels were outstanding. Any areas of poorer performance had been identified and issues addressed. Members had already considered this matter under agenda item four and had invited the Principal to bring forward an even more challenging target for the Corporation to approve in July.
- iii **lesson observations.** The Deputy Principal advised that in excess of 160 lesson observations had been conducted in the current academic year to date. The overall number of lessons graded 'good' or 'better' was high. The observation process was risk based and focused, in the first term of each year, on teachers who had received a 'satisfactory' grade or below in the previous year, new staff and newly qualified teachers. Developmental support was provided for all staff who received a grade three or below and a follow-up observation was conducted. Members noted the variation in performance across the Schools and the correlation between retention rates and areas with a greater number of 'satisfactory' grades. The Deputy Principal had already given details of changes planned for the next academic year under agenda item four. Members welcomed these proposals and looked forward to receiving further reports in the autumn term. They also supported the proposal to extend the successful deployment of subject learning coaches to the A Level curriculum area.
- iv **student feedback.** Members reviewed the table showing student feedback resulting from the induction survey conducted in October and the 'on programme' survey carried out in January 2011. They also considered the data presented which showed student perceptions by School. It was noteworthy that there had been a clear improvement in the student rating for ten of the questions covered in both surveys. However, there remained a significant variation in students' positive perceptions in relation to their learning programmes at age levels. Students in the 19+ age category were clearly the most satisfied. A significant amount of work had been carried out following the analysis of the surveys and a number of initiatives had been launched to improve and support the 16-18 learner experience. Members particularly wished to commend the outstanding result concerning students' perception that all learners were treated equally and fairly and, also, the efforts which had led to a significant improvement in the perception of students in Creative Studies where there was a large number in the 16-18 category.
- v **staff qualifications.** Data presented revealed that a very high percentage of full and part-time staff were either fully qualified or working towards a teaching qualification. The current position remained very strong and would continue to be monitored by managers to ensure that all staff were appropriately qualified.

In conclusion, the Committee thanked the Deputy Principal for his report and recorded their support for the effort being made to effect continuous improvements in performance.

14/11 REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE CURRENT SAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Members received a written report from the Deputy Principal, which was

contained within appendix C. It was noted that, as a result of the increased focus on retention, progress had generally been positive and the up-dated plan revealed some significant improvements, as at May 2011.

Members commended the progress which had been made to address any issues identified through the College's rigorous self-assessment process.

15/11 INCLUSIVE LEARNING ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received the above report from the Curriculum Support Manager, which was contained within appendix D.

The Deputy Principal advised that good progress had been made against the action plan for the year. Feedback had been received from learners receiving support. The results were very encouraging. 96% of students felt that the support they received met their needs. All observations of learning support staff had resulted in 'good' or better grades being awarded.

Students' mental health issues had been identified as a priority focus for the College in 2010/11 and staff training had been carried out by an external specialist. Additional sessions had been delivered by the ALS Coordinator.

Work on two projects had been successfully completed. The College had trialled the use of a brand of software to help students with communication problems (WIDGIT). The software had subsequently been purchased to enable full advantage to be gained from it by the relevant group of students. The College had also been involved in the Cheshire East Local Authority's pilot of the Learning for Living and Work Framework. Feedback had been sent to the YPLA to inform the planned Green Paper. Collaboration with the David Lewis Centre had increased significantly during the year. A specialised transition programme for David Lewis Centre students progressing to the College was, also, under discussion. The ALS Coordinator regularly attended transition reviews at the local High Schools.

In conclusion, Members commended the progress which had been made and welcomed the measures taken to ensure that students received the highest quality of support, as appropriate.

16/11 SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

The Committee received the above document, which was contained within appendix E. Members also received the updated Safeguarding Action Plan for 2010/11 which was attached to the report.

The Student Services Manager, who was also a Staff Member of the Corporation, spoke on her report. She confirmed that the Safeguarding Committee had met on a termly basis and discussed relevant issues regarding safeguarding. A sub-group had also been formed, which met twice per term, to ensure that targets in the Action Plan were met in a timely manner and, also, to offer peer support. Members noted the staff development which had taken place during the current academic year. Refresher training had been undertaken by the governor with particular responsibility for this area. The Student Services Manager gave an oral report

concerning a number of safeguarding issues which had arisen in 2010/11. It was noted that the personal tutors and the College Counsellor were all involved with safeguarding referrals. Meetings had taken place with Connexions to monitor the attendance and progression of students who were in the 'cared for' category. It was intended to introduce a number of new strategies in 2011/12, designed to ensure more timely capture of information at enrolment, to offer these students the best possible support. The Principal was liaising with the Children's Trust in Cheshire East (of which she was a member) since this was also one of the Trust's priority areas. Plans were being made for the provision of counselling services at The Macclesfield Academy, although this service would no longer be paid for by the EIP, as had been the case for students at Macclesfield High School.

The Counselling Report and statistics highlighted the rise in the number of students accessing the service. It was believed that this was largely due to students' excellent working relationships with their personal tutors. The College Counsellor was currently liaising with the organisation providing counselling services for the local High Schools. It was hoped that, following clarification of data protection issues, it would be possible to facilitate a smooth transition from school to College. Proposals had been made to the Senior Management Team to increase the hours of the College Counsellor to meet additional demands on her service. The impact of the service upon the retention of those receiving support was being formally monitored. Consideration was also being given to the changes occurring in the ALS fund methodology and their financial impact in this area.

In conclusion, Members thanked the Student Services Manager for her report, which was formally recommended to the Corporation meeting of 12 July 2011.

17/11 IQER SUMMATIVE REVIEW

The Committee received a written report from the HE Unit Manager, which was contained within appendix F.

It was noted that the Summative Review had taken place in April 2011. The draft report had been received by the College in May and had confirmed confidence judgements for both Academic Standards and Quality of Learning Opportunities., The report had also confirmed that reliance could be placed on the accuracy and / or completeness of Public Information, which the College was responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivered. Three areas of good practice had been highlighted and no recommendations had been made at 'essential' level. A comprehensive action plan had been drawn up to share the good practice identified and to implement any other recommendations for improvement. The final report was due to be published in July 2011.

Members commended the staff in the HE Unit for this excellent result for the College. They formally recommended the report contained within appendix F to the Corporation meeting of 12 July 2011.

18/11 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received a written report from the Clerk to the Corporation, which was contained within appendix G. Members conducted their annual review of their terms of reference. The existing terms were attached as appendix Gi to the Clerk's report. The Committee considered the proposed revisions which were contained within appendix Gii. **Members supported the latter and formally recommended them for approval to the Corporation meeting of 12 July 2011 with the proviso that term 12 should read as follows:** 'The Committee shall advise the Corporation on the effectiveness of the College's preparations for review of its HE provision and shall make appropriate recommendations to the Governing Body'.

19/11 ANNUAL LIST OF PUBLICATIONS MADE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

The Committee received the above document, which was contained within appendix H, in compliance with Teaching and Learning Standards Committee minute 22/10. It was noted that the list was due for review later in the term, when it was intended to add the College's e-Safety Policy.

20/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This would be determined when the calendar of meetings for the forthcoming year was approved by the Corporation in July.

Before closing the meeting, **the Chairman wished to extend his thanks, on behalf of all Members, to the Student Member of the Committee,** who would be leaving the College when she completed her programme of study in the summer. The contribution which she had made had been very valuable and much appreciated.

Pamela J Connell
Clerk to the Corporation
16 June 2011