

Minutes of Corporation Quality and Standards Committee Meeting – Monday 2nd July 2012 at 7:00pm

Present

Mr D Fitzgerald (DF) (Chairman), Dr R J G Bloomer (RJGB), Mrs J Bolton (JB), Mr J F B Clark (JFBC), Dr M A Khan (AK), Mrs J Powell (JP), Mr J C Wainwright (JCW), Dr P R Williams (RW)

In attendance

Mr T Dowling (TD), Mrs L Clark (LC) (Clerk)

Actions

1 Apologies for absence

None

DF welcomed DS (student governor) to his first meeting of the Q&S committee.

2 Declaration of interests

No interests were declared in respect of agenda items; however, members reserved the right to declare an interest at any stage of the meeting.

3 Minutes dated 5th December 2011

The minutes dated 5th December were approved with no amendments.

4 Minutes dated 12th March 2012

The minutes dated 12th March were approved with no amendments.

5 Matters Arising

Members noted all actions had been resolved or were agenda items at this meeting.

6 Progress with underperforming departments

RW referred to the paper tabled at the meeting showing predicted success rate of intake, modelled success rate and SFC average in respect of the underperforming departments. Last week Ofsted announced that 6th form colleges will no longer be judged on their own data, but instead the data for colleges as a whole will be used. This is a positive for the college, as national averages are invariably lower than SFC averages which are the highest among post-16 providers. Apart from Law all other departments' success rates are expected to rise to SFC average levels.

Members discussed the poor results in Law. RW explained that for next year new entry requirements to AS Law (grade B in GCSE English) have been introduced and there will also be a BTEC Law (entry requirement is a grade C in GCSE English) which is less of a theoretical, more course-work orientated course. In order to improve teaching and learning in Law, staff will be visiting another college to see how the weaker students are supported through the course.

DF commented that despite concern in the past, the modelled success rates look positive. RW and TD commented that on the basis of these success rates the only department which would be graded as a 4 by Ofsted would be Law. The only concern is that once a number of subjects have entry requirements over and above the basic College one those without additional requirements(e.g. Sociology) may become exposed but it will be ensured that those departments are supported.

The committee noted the paper as presented.

7 Annual Cycle of Q&S Business Items

7.1 Operational Plan 2011 / 12 – review

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting commenting that there is not a lot to update on since the last meeting apart from the results of the lesson observations from the Mock Inspection in March 2012. The lesson observation profile was targeted for 85% of lessons to be graded good or better, but the results were actually 63%. Plans are now in place to improve performance. Members expressed concern that even with notice of the mock inspection there was a large discrepancy between the targeted and actual grading. RW and TD explained that there will now be lesson observations in departments graded 4 where no notice is given and that the college is moving back to a grading system. For Ofsted, 70-75% is an approximate average for a college to receive a 'good' overall in teaching and learning. The previous year 81% of lessons had been graded good or better in the mock inspection. It was felt that an average of the two mock Inspections, to standardize the approaches of the two teams, would be the best indication of the current state of play.

The committee noted the paper as presented.

7.2 Operational Plan 2012 / 13

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting. A slightly different approach to the plan had been taken in line this year in that a fuller version would be completed in September to give time to absorb the new common inspection framework which has just been published. This is therefore a working document at present and a final version will be ready in September and reported to the committee and Corporation.

The committee noted the paper as presented.

7.3 Retention data (i) & Targets (ii)

(i) Retention Data

RW referred to the paper distributed prior to the meeting highlighting that retention is the best it has been since 2007/8. Drop out rates since November are 5.4% compared with 6.3% last year.

The committee noted the paper as presented.

(ii) Retention Targets

RW referred to the paper tabled at the meeting commenting that 95% is still an aspirational target but should remain at this.

The committee noted the paper as presented.

7.4 Departmental monitoring meetings

RW commented that this has largely been dealt with under agenda item 6. TD added that teachers have four monitoring meetings over the year and a more rigorous process for review is in place. An electronic markbook will be in place which contains up to date information at all times to accompany the monitoring meetings.

7.5 Equality and Diversity Report

TD referred to the paper tabled at the meeting explaining that there had been a lot of progress in this area and there is a more coherent E&D group in place.

The committee noted the paper as presented.

8 Learner Voice

TD informed the committee that the learner survey cycles had now been completed and this is feeding into department SAR and the quality improvement plan for next year. Some subjects, mainly the smaller cohorts, had 100% completion rates, whilst in some subjects only 30% of students completed the survey. DS, was asked his views on the survey and he commented that he did complete some of his subject surveys, but for some subjects particularly the lab based ones it was difficult to find time to fit this in to an already large workload. Members discussed having a computer room allocated to the class when the surveys require completion or having access to a computer during lab time and students taking it in turn to use. AK suggested the use of an optical reader as this is how surveys are completed at Sheffield Hallam.

9 Any other business

9.1 General Studies

RW explained that the funding regime is changing and that funding will be per student and not per course. It may be that the proposal for all L6 students to take compulsory GSCE General Studies and then have the option to complete As and /or A-level during U6 may not fit with this. Once the funding body's decision has been analysed, RW will report back to the Corporation.

9.2. Apprenticeships

DF explained at the Audit committee meeting held this evening he had asked for MP to provide a brief overview of the proposed apprenticeship scheme as it was important that the Corporation are aware of this. RW stated that in some areas

where roles are redundant services can be enhanced by an apprentice and that a young person will benefit from a job and training.

9.3 Risk Management Register

DF commented that this had been an agenda item at the Audit committee meeting held this evening and he had asked MP and the SMT to review section 10 regarding teaching and learning, particularly in reference to the decision to remove grades for teaching, as now the college is actually planning to grade lessons again.

10 Q&S Committee Annual Assessment

LC requested forms were completed and returned.

11 Date of next meeting

TBC.

12 Confidential Item

Detailed minutes are available from the Clerk to the Corporation.

Signed.....**D Fitzgerald**.....

Date.....**15th October 2012**.....

ACTIONS – Quality and Standards Committee Meeting – Monday 2nd July

Item	Action to be taken	By whom	By when
	None		