



MINUTES OF THE TRC QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 8 JUNE 2015

PRESENT

Ms M Allen; Mr D Fitzgerald (Chair); Mr P Jagger; Mr J Ellis; Dr R J G Bloomer; Mrs A Todd; Dr P R Williams

In Attendance:

Mrs E Pickering, Acting Clerk to the Corporation; Mr T Dowling, Vice Principal Teaching and Learning.

APOLOGIES

14.82 Apologies were received from Mr B Owen

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

14.83 Members were reminded of the need to declare any 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.

MINUTES

14.84 The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

14.85 Members received a list of actions arising from previous meetings which had been completed or were included on the agenda for this meeting.

UPDATE ON RETENTION 2014/15

14.86 The Principal presented members with a paper giving a comparison of retention data for the past 11 years. The latest data shows that the drop-out figure of 4.5% between 1 November 2014 and 15 May 2015 is an improvement on the previous year's already strong figure – and the best since 2005-6. The members discussed the paper and considered the reasons why students leave during the academic year. The fact that retention had not just held up but improved was an endorsement of the Progress Tutor system. It was also a reflection of the care taken to ensure as far as possible that students are enrolled on courses appropriate to their needs.

The Principal informed the committee that applications from students for the next academic year are looking strong with numbers higher than at the same time last year.

The members noted the report.

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY UPDATE (Melanie Allen joined the meeting during this item)

- 14.87 The Committee received an update on the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy 2014-2016. The VP T&L referred to the priorities (highlighted in red in the report) in which progress has yet to get underway.
- 14.88 Priority 1 relates to the raising of the general standard of TLA. One action is to increase the proportion of staff who achieve an outstanding outcome from a lesson observation. The VP T&L informed the meeting that this was no longer a target as a decision was made at the start of the year not to grade lesson observations, mirroring a change in approach by inspectors and returning to a former practice at TRC. Learning walks have taken place and next year a system of 'peer to peer' observations will be introduced. There was considerable discussion as to how this will be introduced and what the outcomes will be. The meeting was told that all staff have been trained in carrying out the observations and time will be given for staff to reflect on what was observed via the twilight sessions. The programme of Learning Walks will also continue as a quality check. These will be in the form of a 'drop in' observation rather than at a pre-arranged time. The VP T&L hoped that governors would be able to be more involved under this arrangement than they were in the current academic year. It is also important that good practice is shared amongst staff. The members discussed these changes and what the effect will be on improving TLA. They considered how the data from the observations and Learning Walks will be used. They noted that the results would be used within the department and also in Performance Monitoring meetings. The College Senior Management Team are aware that the changes, which are designed further to improve quality, will need careful explanation with staff, starting with Heads of Departments.
- 14.89 Priority 2 relates to raising the high grade profile of the college. The first action – 'college to refresh assessment policy with view to ensuring students having to re do work if it does not meet the standard of their MTG' has been removed as it was felt to be impractical and detrimental to enforce in the light of maintaining realistic workloads and ensuring that all feedback given is purposeful and high quality.
- 14.90 Priority 3 relates to the use of technology. The VP T&L told the meeting that the action relating to the use of Moodle should be orange rather than red as the LSS results, due by the end of term, will give an idea of students' reaction to Moodle. Changes are also to be made to the Gradebook system. At present there is some inconsistency across the departments as to which and how many marks are entered into the system. It is therefore very difficult to judge how equitable the process is. Next year a series of timed assessments will be held across the curriculum at the same time (about 7 to 8 times a year) and it is these marks that will be entered in Gradebook. This will lead to a more consistent approach and hopefully reduce the workload on teachers and allow them to be able to judge even better how their students are progressing.

The members noted these comments on the strategy document which will be reviewed again during the next academic year.

LEARNING WALK PROGRAMME UPDATE

- 14.91 The proposed changes to the Learning Walk programme was covered by the previous agenda item.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.92 The next meeting is to be arranged.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____