

APPROVED Minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held on 17th June 2008

Present: Dr Geetha Upadhyaya
Mrs Lynne Kent
Mr Chris Jones
Mrs Margaret Damant
Mrs J McAllister – Principal

In attendance: Mr Steve Hooton – Assistant Principal, Learners and Learning
Mrs Margaret Robson – Assistant Principal, Employer and Community Responsiveness
Mrs Sheila Jones – Assistant Principal, Operations
Mr J Stott – Clerk
Mrs S Shaw – Deputy Clerk

Meeting started: 16:05pm
Meeting finished: 18:40pm

Quorum: 3 Members
Vacancies: None

The Clerk opened the meeting.

13/08 Disclosure of financial and/or personal interest

There was no disclosure of financial and/or personal interest.

14/08 To agree the Agenda and order of business as circulated

The agenda and order of business was agreed.

15/08 To appoint (a) the Chair, and (b) the Vice Chair of the Committee

The Clerk asked for nominations to the position of Chair of the Committee.

- (a) Dr Geetha was nominated and agreed to accept the position of Chair of the Committee.
- (b) Lynne Kent was nominated and agreed to accept the position of Vice Chair of the Committee.

16/08 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2008 were agreed as a true record.

17/08 Matters arising

- (a) At 04/08 (d) of the minutes, it was noted that Chris Morton, the Confederations Executive Officer, would attend the meeting to provide a briefing about the new Diplomas.
- (b) At 05/08 of the minutes, it was noted that the small proposed changes to the wording of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan statement had been made.
- (c) At 05/08, page 3 second para from the bottom of the page, the Principal confirmed that progress on impact assessments was continuing via a working group.
- (d) At 07/08, the Principal confirmed that updated data for 06-07 for long provision showed that success rates for under 19s at Level 3 had registered a rise of 3%. However, the main improvements had been noted in the 19+ success rates. Data at 31st March indicated that Level 1 was in line with the benchmark. This was attributable to work done during March to ensure that ESOL students were registered against the correct qualification aim. Overall therefore during 06-07 the 19+ success rate was in line with benchmark at Level 1 and just above benchmark at Levels 2 and 3.
- (e) At 08/08, the Principal confirmed that the training item originally intended for the F&GP Committee on 24th June on the subject of the "New Funding Methodology" would in fact now be held on 1st July at the Corporation Training.

18/08 To consider progress on the College's 2008 Action Plan arising from the 2006-07 Self Assessment Report

The Principal explained the background to the Self Assessment Report for the benefit of the new Corporation Member and explained how the cycle of action planning and progress reporting worked in College. She explained that this was the mid-year report to Corporation on progress during 2008 on the action plan that had resulted from the 06-07 Self Assessment.

The Principal presented the detailed progress report against the three identified areas of weakness, being:

- (a) To improve systems to underpin adult provision
 - (i) The Principal explained the lesson observation system, the improved average score and efforts made to encourage part time lecturers to take up more staff development.
 - (ii) Staff training in IAG to be offered to adults was to be offered in July.
 - (iii) An extension of diversity monitoring to Sector level.

- (iv) Initiatives to strengthen capacity to deliver embedded "Skills for Life".

16:25 Chris Morton joined the meeting.

The Principal introduced Chris to Corporation Members and the Assistant Principals and then continued with the report on progress against the Action Plan.

- (b) To improve retention rates.

Members noted that, although achievement was good for 16-18s at levels 1, 2 and 3, retention was not, particularly at Level 3 and this had the effect of depressing overall success rates.

The Principal explained that the close monitoring of courses and data on withdrawals indicated that retention issues were often related to personal difficulties that individuals may have. She reminded Members that the College's non-selective ethos meant that it may be difficult to make significant inroads into addressing retention. However, all efforts were and continued to be made to improve the situation.

Particular initiatives to note were:

- (i) The January cross-college initiative to follow up "non-returners" after Christmas at Sector level and a proposal to introduce SMS texting during 2008-09.
- (ii) Regular monitoring of courses causing concern.

Members noted that there were issues across the District with getting 19 year olds to succeed at Levels 2 and 3. The Principal considered that the College may need to "badge" more of its work as "NEET". On the positive side, in 06-07 roughly two thirds of the College's Level 1 enrolments related to discrete provision for students with learning difficulties or disabilities. Nevertheless, these students achieved well and performance was only 1% below the national average.

Members suggested contacting those who had left College and trying to find out what they were doing and whether there was any part-time or work-place learning that the College could offer them.

- To improve Sports facilities

The Property Strategy was intended to address this issue.

The Principal requested that item 8 (Chris Morton's presentation on the development of Specialised Diplomas) be taken before item 7. Members agreed to this agenda order variation.

19/08 Training: to receive an update on the development of Specialised Diplomas presented by Bradford Council's Confederation Officer

The Confederation Officer presented information on three areas:

- (a) the history of where Diplomas fit within the qualification landscape;
- (b) the structure and design of the QCA Diploma
- (c) the Bradford context.

Members received the presentation and noted that Shipley College was taking a lead role in two diploma lines and would be working with a number of partner schools and colleges as follows:

Environmental and Landbased Studies
Leisure, Travel and Tourism

The College was currently taking a partner role in three other Diploma initiatives: -

ICT, led by Salts Grammar School,
Society, Health and Development, led by Belle Vue Girls School
Business and Finance, led by Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College

20/08 To receive an update on the planned programme of courses for 2008-09

The Principal provided a verbal update.

The Principal explained that the LSC had now confirmed that the 08-09 allocation was for 760 16-18 learners. 20 of those places had been specifically secured to address NEET issues.

The College had also been allocated 2,300 Adult Responsive places.

Employer Responsive numbers were pending, as were the PCDL (Personal and Community Development Learning).

In general terms, the College would be aiming to enrich the creative and digital industries offer and would be developing a "Foundation for Choice" option suitable for NEET students. This course would find its home in the new "Essential Skills" sector.

On the part-time side, provision would be adjusted in under performing areas.

The Principal outlined plans regarding Royal Horticultural Society courses.

The Principal was encouraged that the trend in recent years to implement stringent cuts in adult funding had not been replicated this year.

21/08 To consider a progress report on

(i) Student attendance monitoring, and

It was noted that the report figures were not final but were provided to give an idea of the level of attendance across courses.

It was noted that there had been 41 Major Programme courses during 2007-08. Overall attendance on these courses had been at 80.1% with 56% of the courses above this figure. 12% of the courses had registered over 90% attendance.

During the same period, 303 part-time courses had run. Overall attendance on these was 81.5%. 63% of the courses had over 80% attendance. 23% of the courses had registered over 90% attendance.

A comparison with the results from 2006-07 showed that there had been a decline from 60% to 56% of attendance at 80% or above on Major Programme courses. Despite this, the overall attendance across the college as a whole had not changed significantly. This was despite increased efforts to improve overall attendance.

(ii) Analysis of the reasons for student withdrawal

It was noted that the data on withdrawals for 2007-08 was not in its final form.

It was agreed that another withdrawal report should be produced when the end of year data for 2007-08 was finalised.

Members compared the interim data given for 2007-08 with that provided for 2006-07 and noted that there were significant "reason unknown" responses.

Members noted that the College did not currently have in place sufficient resources to chase up every student. However, this was an area for consideration with the Careers Service whose Personal Advisors may have a role in this area.

Governors requested data on withdrawals according to qualification aim and level.

It was acknowledged that current data on withdrawals and attendance was relatively “unrefined” and that other data such as that provided by Student Satisfaction Surveys may throw additional light on the issues underlying non-attendance and drop-out.

22/08 To review the College Charter for Employers

The Principal introduced the item and explained the importance of the Charter in relation to the Framework for Excellence and the Training Quality Standard.

Members considered the proposed new Charter for Employers and the set of Service Standards and suggested a number of changes.

The Assistant Principal (Employer and Community Responsiveness) explained that further work would need to take place on developing the service standards. They would need to go through the Employer Panels before they were finalised. The Assistant Principal explained that the College would be commissioning employer satisfaction surveys from the same company as student satisfaction surveys.

Members received the Charter and Service Standards, suggested a small number of additions and recommended them for further development.

Members made suggestions about how the College could broaden its employer base via a number of networks.

The Principal explained that an employers’ event was taking place at Pace on Thursday 19th June.

23/08 To agree the format for the Committee’s annual report to the Corporation

The Principal explained the structure of the annual report and Members agreed that the existing format should be used.

24/08 Any Other Business

Dates of proposed meetings to December 2008

Tuesday 9th December at 5pm

The meeting closed at 18.40pm.