

**APPROVED Minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Committee held on
3rd March 2008**

Present: Dr Geetha Upadhyaya
Mrs Lynne Kent
Mrs J McAllister – Principal

Apologies: Mr M Brannan, Chris Jones

In attendance: Mr Steve Hooton – Assistant Principal (Learners and Learning)
Mr J Stott – Clerk
Mrs S Shaw – Deputy Clerk

Meeting started: 10:15 (late due to weather conditions)

Meeting finished: 11.30

01/08 Disclosure of financial and/or personal interest

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

02/08 To agree the Agenda and order of business as circulated

The Agenda and order of business was agreed.

03/08 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2007 were agreed as a true record.

04/08 Matters arising

- (a) At 25/07 of the minutes, the Principal informed members that, in January, Ofsted had carried out their Annual Assessment as a remote, desk-based exercise, during which the College Self-Assessment Report had been carefully scrutinised. The Principal explained the process and informed Members that the outcome of the assessment had been positive and that the inspector had confirmed that the College remained a “good” College with a comprehensive SAR and Action Plan.
- (b) In relation to 27/07 of the minutes, the Principal reported that the “lesson observation fortnight” had been carried out in January and that it had been welcomed by staff. The very small number of staff who had not achieved a “satisfactory” grade had been given additional support. All members of staff had been asked to take away 2 action points from their observation with a view to continued improvement. The Principal also drew attention to the

“peer referencing project” involving external observers from other colleges moderating the internal lesson observation system. The Principal highlighted the positive improvements that had been introduced to address the 2006 Ofsted Report’s comments regarding the lesson observation process.

- (c) In relation to the Governance Self-Assessment Report at 29/07, the Clerk reminded Members that the Corporation in December had decided to retain the lack of a student destinations report as a weakness. On the basis of this, the Clerk recommended a Governance Self Assessment of Grade 2 (Good). This was accepted

It was noted that the College had marked in the Action Plan arising from the SAR an action to try to obtain destinations information. The Principal explained some of the difficulties inherent in this, especially from the point of view of adult and work-based students.

- (d) In relation to 31/07 it was agreed that a training item on the development of Specialised Diplomas should be held at the June meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee.

The Principal introduced the Assistant Principal (Learners and Learning) and explained that she would ask Assistant Principals to attend meetings when areas for which they had specific responsibility appeared on the agenda. One key area of responsibility for the Assistant Principal (Learners and Learning) was that of Equality and Diversity.

05/08 To undertake the annual review of the Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan

The Principal introduced the item. She reminded Members that, as a Corporation, a decision had been taken to combine all three Schemes (Gender, Equality and Disability) into a Single Equality Scheme.

In relation to the Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan, she explained to members that as part of the annual review of the policy no changes to objectives were proposed at this stage.

The Committee however did agree a change to the overall statement as follows:

“Shipley College will demonstrate its commitment to equality of opportunity for all individuals. Everyone is unique and valuable. We celebrate the diversity of our governors, staff and students. We will not discriminate on the grounds of age, beliefs, culture,

different abilities and disabilities, economic status, gender, race, **ethnicity**, religion or sexual orientation.”

Members made a number of suggestions, including:

- (a) that a reference to “actions taken” be made to the section about “student voice” under Obj.1.
- (b) that the student planner and staff handbook might appear on the website.
- (c) that the document should make a clearer reference to the College’s excellent every day practice of equality and diversity, as well as the reference to specific activity such as “diversity weeks”.
- (d) the possibility of establishing a “celebrating diversity” page on the website.

The Principal took members through the report in detail.

She drew members’ attention in particular to the comment on page 4 that “06-07 diversity monitoring at whole College level has led to current investigation of 19+ success rates by ethnicity”. The Principal explained that the poor results at Level 1 for 19+ Pakistani students could be attributed in large part to the fact that most of these students were on community ESOL courses and that success rates were often depressed for this section of the learning community. However, she confirmed that success rates generally for Pakistani 19+ students at all levels had been disappointing and that an investigation was under way into the reasons for this.

In response to a question, the Principal confirmed that the College had tried to challenge stereotypical gender images in recent marketing campaigns.

The Principal explained that progress on College policy impact assessments was underway but that progress had been slowed by the difficulties in identifying a suitable format for these. The Admissions Policy had been impact-assessed.

A members asked whether any students had been involved in the Equality and Diversity staff group. The Principal replied that it was always difficult to engage students in additional meetings but that the Student Council and Student Affairs Committee were the vehicles for involving students in these issues. The Assistant Principal felt that, if students were willing to become involved in the staff group discussions, this could be considered. On occasion, specific student focus groups had been organised around a specific theme. Dr Geetha suggested using the intranet as a way of involving more students in this area of work.

The report was received.

06/08 To consider the first Annual Progress Report on the Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

The Principal introduced the item and explained that the College intended to publish the annual progress report on the website but needed further consideration of the format for publishing these.

The Principal took members through each element of the report.

It was noted that the impact assessment on the Admissions Policy as it affects Disabled Students had been completed, pending consultations.

Members received the report.

07/08 To consider Performance Indicator results for 2006-07 and targets for 2007-08

The Principal presented the "All Ages" results as published in the SAR. Members noted in particular that:

For all ages success rates

- (a) the college's all ages success rates for long courses improved at all levels in 06-07. Over the last 3 years success rates had improved at all levels, particularly at Levels 3 and 4.
- (b) The headline improvement target for all ages agreed with the LSC had been exceeded by 3%.
- (c) In relation to the national benchmark, all age success rates were below benchmark at Levels 1 and 2 and at Level 3 although there had been improvements to the latter success rate. At Level 4, the all ages success rate was significantly above benchmark.

For under 19 success rates

The College's overall under 19 success rates for long courses improved at Levels 1 and 3 and were maintained at Level 2. All under 19 success rates have registered improvement over the last 3 years, except at Level 1 where partial achievement of Entry Level students has depressed results. Compared to national benchmarks, despite good achievement levels, success rates for under 19s in 06-07 had remained below benchmark due to retention. However, the headline improvement target agreed with the LSC of 59% had been exceeded by 4%.

For 19+ success rates

The College's overall 19+ success rates for long courses improved at all levels in 06-07.

In relation to national benchmarks, it was noted that 19+ performance was now in line with the benchmark at Levels 2 and 3 and significantly above benchmark at Level 4. At level 1 performance was 3% below benchmark, mainly due to low success rates of Skills for Life, ESOL and community-based ICT learners. In some cases performance was below minimum level of performance trends. This issue was largely in relation to the College's continuing moves to align provision with LSC priorities. It was noted that full accreditation in pursuit of Governmental targets was not appropriate for some of these learners.

Despite this, the headline improvement target agreed with the LSC of 62% had been exceeded by 2%.

The report was received.

08/08 To maintain an overview of Curriculum Developments – Update on LSC priorities

The Principal presented a report outlining the key features of 14-19 policy and 19+ policy.

She focussed in particular on:

- 14-19 plans for each local authority
- phased introduction of new Diplomas from September 2008
- demand-led and performance related features of the new funding methodology
- new national apprenticeship service and the focus on employer and learner responsiveness
- the new curriculum and qualifications framework

The Principal suggested that members of the Committee might wish to attend the F&GP training item on the new funding methodology on 24th June.

09/08 To consider the College's Quality Policy and Strategy

The Principal introduced the item and explained that the paper had been submitted to a previous Committee meeting. The new Instrument and Articles of Government now required the Corporation to approve the quality strategy of the institution.

The Committee received the Quality Policy and recommended it for approval to Corporation.

10/08 To receive the 2006-07 Annual Report on Complaints

The Principal presented the report which had been prepared by the Deputy Clerk. She drew members' attention to the gender and ethnicity profile of the formal complaints and to the comments (where appropriate) for suggestions to improve practice in order to reduce recurrences of such complaints.

In relation to some complaints, Governors expressed concern that College Marketing should accurately reflect the level of the course so that students were clear about the level and content. They were concerned that rules and procedures concerning cancellation of classes were clearly stated in Ambitions and course literature.

It was noted that the Complaints Procedure would be impact assessed as part of the assessment of policies within the Equality, Diversity and Disability schemes.

11/08 To update the Terms of Reference in light of the new Instrument and Articles of Government

The Clerk presented the revised Terms of Reference which incorporated a formalised responsibility to "consider the quality strategy for the College and make recommendations to the Corporation".

The amended Terms of Reference were approved.

12/08 Any other business

Dates of proposed meetings to December 2008

Tuesday 17th June at 4pm

Tuesday 2nd December at 4pm

The meeting finished at 11.30am.