

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 10 June 2014

Membership:	Riccardo Abela * Chris Christofides (Chair) * Nishall Garala * Karen Spencer * Mike Thorne
<i>*denotes present</i> In attendance	D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation P Marsh, Vice Principal L Turner, Vice Principal

485 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Riccardo Abele and Mike Stokes.

486 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

487 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2014 were agreed as a correct and accurate record.

488 Matters Arising from the Minutes

488.1 Beacon Award (minutes 478.1, 467.3 and 462 refer)

Alan Rusbridger, the editor of The Guardian and former alumni of Harlow College, is being presented with an AoC Gold Award and representatives of the College will be attending the presentation event.

488.2 Essex County Council (minutes 478.2, 467.1, 453.1, 443.1, 431 and 419.1 refer)

The Standards Committee noted that Tim Coulson is leaving Essex County Council at the end of June. His replacement will be invited to visit the College.

489 Ofsted – Further Education and Skills Governors’ Data Dashboard

The Standards Committee received and considered the report on Ofsted – Further Education and Skills Governors’ Data Dashboard, presented by Paul Marsh, Deputy Principal and Louise Turner, Vice-Principal.

Paul Marsh gave governors some background to the Ofsted data dashboard and governors noted that the dashboard is new for colleges this year.

The Principal informed governors that they have the opportunity to comment on how useful the dashboard is and what could be improved and that the comparative set used for the dashboard includes sixth form colleges.

Governors noted that all governors will need to be aware of the dashboard and understand the data included in it. Governors will be questioned on the dashboard by Ofsted and they will need a robust understanding of performance, quality and leadership and management.

Governors examined the dashboard in detail and following a lengthy discussion, the following points were noted:

- Entry level - the College performed extremely well at this level with all three comparisons being in the highest quintile.
- Level 1 – the College performed well in two out of three comparisons and was placed in the highest quintile. For mathematics, however, the College was below national average and in the lowest quintile.

The decline in mathematics was questioned and this was due to cohort size, the diagnostic assessment tools used not being sophisticated enough and teams undertaking maths functional skills without being fully prepared. This year there will be a significant increase in those studying maths.

- Level 2 – the College performed poorly in two out of three of the comparisons. Governors noted that the information was misleading as the College did not offer GCSE maths and English at the time and the comparisons do not reflect this. The College performed well above the national average for Level 2 success and was in the highest quintile.
- Level 2 apprenticeships – the College performed below the national average and was in the fourth quintile. This was mainly due to poor partner performance and under performance on the contract. A development plan has been produced and the College is aiming to recover to at least the national average for this academic year.
- Level 3 (excluding A-Levels) – the College is out-performing the national average, however the gap is narrowing.
- A-Levels – the College is in the fourth quartile for those achieving three A* - C grades, however the data is slightly misleading as students often study a mixture of A-Levels and BTECs. Governors agreed that the measure should be along the lines of: *“of those studying three A-Levels, how many achieved three A* - C grades.”*

Governors also noted that not many students study three facilitating subjects and that the measure should record students achieving AAB in any subjects, not just the facilitating subjects.

Governors noted that there is a danger that the College could be driven by the data in the dashboard and not by students' needs and that there is a perverse

incentive for pushing students across a particular line.

- Level 3 apprenticeships – the College is significantly below the national average, however measures have been put in place to address this.
- Level 3 value added – the College performed extremely well for value added for A-Level provision and performed well for vocational provision.
- Destination data – the College performed well against a basket of destinations, particularly well in progression to HE and other destinations. The College has a lower number of unknown destinations than the national average, however decreasing this number is still a priority for the College.

Following on from the discussion, governors agreed that the following points should be fed back:

- The biggest omission is context;
- There are no indications of the actual number of students / size of cohort;
- Categories should be revisited and labels used be revised.
- The information needs to be more relevant to the FE sector.
- Some more work is required on the dashboard and by governors for it to become more meaningful to governors.
- Definitions should be included.

The Standards Committee noted the paper on Ofsted – Further Education and Skills Governors' Data Dashboard.

490 Apprenticeship Improvement Plan and the Report on the Second Visit by Derek Baughan HMI

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of Karen Spencer, Principal, on the Apprenticeship Improvement Plan and the report on the second visit by Derek Baughan HMI.

The College has received a follow-up letter from Derek Baughan with feedback on his second visit.

Governors noted the following points from the feedback and the discussion which was held:

- The predicted success rates are challenging but realistic.
- Ideally the overall and timely success rates will converge;
- Tracking processes are extremely rigorous;
- The proof will be in the 2013/14 success rate data;
- The College has not been put in a high risk category for early inspection;
- The College will continue to regularly report on apprenticeship outcomes to governors;
- The College is reducing its number of sub-contractors delivering apprenticeships;
- The College has restructured teams to address identified issues.

The Standards Committee noted the Apprenticeship Improvement Plan and the report on the second visit of Derek Baughan.

491 Student Long / Short Success Rates and Value Added

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of Mike Stokes, Deputy Principal on student long / short success rates and value added, presented by Louise Turner, Vice-Principal.

There has been a significant reduction in the retention rate, which is partly due to the reduction in the number of additional courses that students undertake, added on to their main programme. Long course retention has dropped by approximately 2%.

The College achieved a 90.2% long course success rate and is currently ranked third in the country for long course success rates based on 2012/13 data. The all enrolment success rate for 2012/13 is 93.2%.

The predicted success rate for 2013/14 is 91%. There is a lot of work to be done to achieve this and staff are focusing on the B flag students.

The predicted apprenticeship success rate for 2013/14 is 67% which is a significant improvement from last year's figure.

The Principal informed the Committee that the funding agency has changed the guidelines on placing students on qualifications and this is being flagged up to the AoC and the DfE as it appears the system is flawed.

Value added for extended diplomas is predicted to be 0.4, AS 0.5 and A2 0.2.

Governors noted the future changes in delivery of English and maths being a condition of funding and that English, maths and functional skills will be included in future success rates.

Governors also noted the significant changes to the BTEC assessment processes, which are likely to impact on the College's value added.

The Standards Committee noted the paper on student long / short success rates and value added.

492 School Recruitment, Success Rates and Destinations

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of Karen Spencer, Principal, on school recruitment, success rates and destinations.

The Principal reported that she has been meeting with local head teachers and sharing with them data on their past students. These were presented to the Standards Committee and the reports gave governors information by school showing student enrolment numbers, the types of courses they studied and their success rates. From these meetings a number of school/college activities are planned including the development of a gifted and talented programme for local schools.

A discussion was held around the data and the need for the College to publicly promote student destinations.

The Standards Committee noted the paper on school recruitment, success rates and

destinations.

493 Staff Development – English, Maths and Coaching

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of Louise Turner, Vice-Principal, on staff development.

Governors were updated on the College's two-year plan to upskill as many staff as possible to deliver English and maths. 20 members of staff have completed an FE GCSE mathematics enhancement programme and a similar scheme is being developed for English. Staff in each academy have been trained to deliver GCSE English and maths.

The College has been successful in securing £80,000 of funding for a Core Maths programme which will deliver level 3 qualifications.

Governors also received an update on the coaching programme which is designed to work with grade 3 and 4 staff to improve their observation grade and improve the College's overall profile.

The Standards Committee noted the paper on staff development.

494 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

495 Dates of Future Meetings

The Standards Committee received the calendar of meetings for 2014/15 and noted that the format of some of the meetings will be changed, with a focus on governors supporting the College's self-assessment process.

Autumn Term	TBA (1 st meeting to be combined with the Resources Committee).	
Autumn Term	Tuesday 18 November 2014	08.30am
Spring Term	Tuesday 10 February 2015	08.30am
Summer Term	Tuesday 18 June 2015 (combined with Resources Committee)	08.30am