

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Tuesday 15 February 2011

Membership: * C Christofides (Chair)
* R Abela
* C Hindmarch
* D Brunwin
D Lucia
M Thorne

* denotes present

In attendance: N Spenceley, Deputy Principal
D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation

328 Apologies for absence

The Standards Committee received apologies for absence from M Thorne.

329 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made. The meeting discussed the circumstances when conflicts of interest could arise.

330 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Standards Committee received and approved the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 November 2010.

331 Matters arising from the minutes

331.1 Recruitment 2010/11

The Principal informed the Committee that the recent return to the Skills Funding Agency showed that the College had exceeded its learner target for young people aged 16-18 years. The College was continuing to recruit young people who are NEET.

An allocation had been received from the Young People's Learning Agency for 2011/12. In response, the College has made a business case to the YPLA for a greater level of funding for the coming academic year.

332 Harlow College Ofsted Inspection Report, Post Inspection Action Plan and Quality Improvement Report

The Standards Committee received and considered the Harlow College Ofsted Inspection Report, the Post Inspection Action Plan / Quality Improvement Report for the College. Nick Spenceley reminded Governors that each year the College is required to submit a Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for the previous academic year with a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) produced to address the issues identified in the SAR. In years when an Ofsted Inspection occurs, there is also a requirement for the College to produce a Post-Inspection Action Plan (PIAP). As there is a close correlation between the issues identified in the SAR and the

recommendations from the Ofsted report, the College has produced a single document to cover the QIP and PIAP. Governors noted the content of the document which follows the structure of the inspection framework.

Governors discussed the process for submitting the report to Ofsted and noted that it will not be scrutinised until the next inspection visit. Having moved to “good” there was no indication when this visit would take place. It was noted that there would be changes to the school inspection framework and this would inevitably impact upon college inspections. The Standards Committee agreed that the PIAP should be the main driver for raising standards for the coming year.

The Standards Committee received the Quality Improvement Report for the College, which indicated teams’ progress in putting in place key aspects of the College’s strategy to achieve its objectives.

The Standards Committee thanked Nick Spenceley for his report.

333 DfE Post 16 Schools and Colleges’ Performance tables 2009/10

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of the Principal on the DfE Post 16 Schools and Colleges’ Performance tables 2009/10.

The Principal reminded Governors that there are four ways of measuring college performance:

- i. Success rates
- ii. Contextual value added score
- iii. Total points per student
- iv. Average points per subject (average grade)

The DfE measures the performance of all providers on all these measures.

Governors noted that success rates for all providers for 2009/10 were not yet available.

The Principal reported that value added compares the total points a student achieves at key stage 5 (‘A’ level or equivalent) with their total key stage 4 points at GCSE level. Harlow College’s score for contextual value added is 1043.4, up from 1019.9 in 2008/9. This score places the College in the top 2% of all providers in England and the top 1% of state providers. Comparing Harlow College’s score against published data for all other FE/tertiary Colleges moves Harlow College from 30th position in 2008/9 to 2nd in 2009/10. Of the top 7 providers in the 11 authorities in the East of England, 5 of the top 7 are independent schools. Harlow College is placed 5th.

The Principal reported that, in essence, the average points per qualification entry shows the average grade. The College’s score for 2009/10 is 229.5 up from 213.5 in 2008/9. A comparison of Harlow’s results against all other FE/tertiary colleges’ results places Harlow College in 6th place. Comparing Harlow College’s results against other Essex providers’ results, Harlow College is placed 11th out of 79 providers. Of the 10 providers with a higher average score 7 are grammar schools, 2 are independent providers, one is a school.

The Principal reported that the College’s average point score per student has risen

from 622.9 in 2008/9 to 658.7 in 2009/10. This result places the college in 44th position compared to all other FE/Tertiary colleges. Whilst this was a somewhat less impressive result, it derived from the College's strategy to produce high average grades per qualification entry rather than focusing on adding on qualifications that would simply add on extra points e.g. General Studies.

The Committee noted that of the top 12 colleges for value added figures, as published by the DfE, two – Harlow and Runshaw – have high success rates, 3 have average success rates and 7 have low success rates. Strategies to deliver very high success rates often lead to low value added. Strategies to deliver very high value added often lead to low success rates. The Principal reported that from the data reported, only two colleges, Harlow and Runshaw, produce both high success rates and high value added.

334 Harlow College Dashboard

The Standards Committee received the report of Nick Spenceley on the Harlow College Dashboard.

Nick Spenceley reported that the Quality Improvement Report had grown to include a large range of questions. Some of these, such as attendance figures and observation grades, were measures that are already collected and reported centrally. Their removal from the QIR would give the teams more time to reflect on the judgements required for other indicators that involved team discussion.

The single page "Dashboard" had therefore been developed to allow regular central review of key indicators, so that early intervention can be targeted where necessary, and other reports, such as the QIR and Audit Reports, can be validated against objective data. The Dashboard had been piloted since October. Whilst not all columns were yet populated, it was hoped it would furnish governors with a regular overview of key data to help them in their monitoring role. The impact of this on the teams was to reduce the QIR by half thus giving staff greater time to consider responses to the remaining questions.

335 Complaints against the College

The Standards Committee received the latest analysis of complaints and noted that 11 complaints had been received to date. The low number of complaints enabled a table to be produced to show their nature and resolution. The Committee discussed the number of methods that existed in the College that enabled the learner voice to be heard and issues acted upon.

336 Any other business

David Brunwin informed the Committee of his retirement in July 2011. The Committee congratulated Mr Brunwin, noting that there would be further opportunities to thank him for his support for the College and Corporation.

337 Dates of future meetings

Summer Term 2011	Tuesday 14 June 2011	8.30am
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