

# HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15 June 2010

Membership: D Brunwin  
\*C Christofides (Chair)  
\*C Hindmarch  
\*D Lucia  
\*S Lynch  
\*M Thorne

*\*Denotes present*

In attendance: N Spenceley, Vice Principal  
S Young, Vice-Principal  
D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation

#### **292 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from David Brunwin who was on Jury service. Chris Christofides took the Chair for this meeting.

#### **293 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2010 were approved as a correct record.

#### **294 Matters arising from the minutes**

##### 294.1 Ofsted Focused Monitoring Visit

The meeting discussed whether Ofsted would inspect the college in 2010/11.

#### **295 Learner Attendance and Retention**

The Standards Committee received and considered the Principal's report on attendance and retention targets September 2009 – June 2010.

The committee noted that in 2008/09, the college's overall attendance was 89% (national average percentage attendance in sixth form colleges was 88%). The target for attendance in 2009/10 set by the Corporation was a minimum of 90%. The college's current overall attendance for 2009/10 is 91%. The Principal informed Governors that there are 16 teams on target to achieve 90% or better and 9 teams not. Governors received individual team attendance data.

The committee discussed how teams are working to raise levels of attendance.

The Principal presented retention data to the Standards Committee. Governors noted that retention in 2009/10 was 94.7%, an improvement on the 2008/09 figure of 93.4%. Governors received data on retention by age and level of programme followed and information on more programmes with retention rates below 90%.

## **296 Value Added**

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of the Principal on Value Added in 2009/10. The Principal reminded Governors that the college had positive value added across the college in 2002, then moved into negative value added until 2008/09. In 2008/09, the college moved back into positive value added. The College's CVA (Contextual Value Added) in 2008/09 placed the college in the top 25% of institutions in Essex at Level 3 programmes (AS/A Level, National Diplomas).

The committee noted predicted positive value added for 2009/10 for Level 3 programmes across the college and at individual programme level.

In discussion, the committee noted how the teams were working to raise levels of value added whilst retaining students who would provide the greatest challenge in raising value added. The committee discussed the importance of recruiting to the right programme and noted how staff were developing skills and strategies to raise attainment. The Principal reported on monitoring undertaken to identify staff not delivering value added and how this was being addressed.

The Standards Committee thanked the Principal for his report.

## **297 Implementing the Teaching and Learning Strategy**

The Standards Committee received the report of the Principal on the implementation of the Teaching and Learning Strategy through consideration of Quality Improvement Reports and Quality Audit Reports. The Principal described how these are compiled by the teams and then moderated by their managers.

The committee noted the audit report grades for all teams for 2009/10 and for 2008/09 for comparison purposes. The committee noted progress was being made and congratulated the Hospitality and Primary Programmes teams for achieving grade 1.

The committee discussed the outcomes of the audits and noted changes made to teams that had previously been graded 4.

## **298 Recruitment of Students 2010/11**

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of the Principal on recruitment of learners to date for 2010/11.

## **299 WESTVIC – Review of Progress**

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Principal on progress in the WESTVIC partnership with local secondary schools.

The committee noted that in 2010/11 the partner schools will offer eight A levels that will be delivered on school premises. The A levels include French, Art, PE and Graphics, which are not offered currently by the college. In response to questions from the committee, the Deputy Principal confirmed that the college was working with the schools to ensure the same level of academic rigour to ensure success.

The standards Committee thanked the Deputy Principal for his report.

## **300 Complaints Analysis**

The Standards Committee received and considered the analysis of complaints for the period 1 August 2009 – 31 May 2010.

The Principal confirmed that the analysis measured formal complaints made in writing to the college. There were 8 complaints received in the period concerned, down from 20 in 2008/09 and 33 in 2007/08.

The decrease in complaints was discussed and attributed, in the main, to staff working to resolve issues with their students before the point was reached where a student or parent decided to write to complain.

The committee discussed whether senior managers and the Board might miss issues being raised by students because they were being resolved. Mike Thorne informed the committee about the Anglia Ruskin University “Tell Us” phone line.

The committee noted that the annual report on safeguarding would be made to the October 2010 meeting of the Corporation. It was noted that this report would contain a break down of any complaint made about a member of staff on an issue of safeguarding. The committee asked that a fuller report be made on complaints to the October 2010 meeting identifying the complaint and the gender and ethnicity of the complaint.

The committee noted 7 compliments were received by the college in 2009/10.

## **301 Performance in Apprenticeships and Train to Gain**

The Standards Committee received the report of the Deputy Principal on the college’s success rates for Apprenticeships and Train to Gain.

The Principal reported that the college and its partners continue to increase the success rates for Apprenticeships, for both overall and timely success. The college and partners continue to exceed national benchmarks. The committee noted data published by the Skills Funding Agency that showed the overall success rate for the college-led partnership as 85% (national rate 71.1%) and a timely success rate of 74.1% against a national rate of 57.5%).

In discussion, the Principal informed Governors that the college was not satisfied with current success rates for Apprenticeships. Whilst significant improvements have been made that place the college above national performance, 15% of APEX apprentices fail. The Principal reported that the college had reorganised fundamentally the delivery of Apprentices with the performance of all partners scrutinised.

The Standards Committee noted the equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMS) for all apprentices. These impact measures try to ensure that no particular group of learners significantly underachieves in comparison to others.

The Principal presented the success rates for Train to Gain Learners. Governors noted that the overall success rate for the college and its partners was 92.7% against a national benchmark of 83%. The timely success rate for the college and partners was 79.4% against a national rate of 70%. Governors noted the EDIMS for Train to Gain.

The committee thanked the Deputy Principal for her report and the Principal for presenting it.

### **302 Student Satisfaction Questionnaire**

The Principal presented the outcome of the Summer term Student Satisfaction Questionnaire. Governors noted that the number of learners who rated their learning experience as 'very good' has risen from 28% to 31.6%. 45.1% of learners rated their experience as just below very good, with 1.4% stating their learning experience was very poor.

Overall the outcome for learning experience was broadly static in comparison to 2008/09.

Governors noted the outcomes for the Hospitality team which, in 2008/09, had received poor student satisfaction grades. This year the team received the highest score of any team for listening and reacting to needs (84%), quality of teaching (91%) and overall experience (95%). The committee expressed the hope that other teams would learn from the Hospitality team's example.

### **303 Any other business**

There was no other business.

### **304 Dates of future meetings**

Autumn Term 2010	Tuesday 14 September 2010	8.30am
	Tuesday 23 November 2010	8.30am
Spring Term 2011	Tuesday 22 February 2011	8.30am
Summer Term 2011	Tuesday 14 June 2011	8.30am