

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 20 September 2011

Membership: * Riccardo Abela
 Chris Christofides
 * Colin Hindmarch (Chair)
 * Mike Thorne

**denotes present*

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

351 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Christofides. The meeting proceeded with Colin Hindmarch in the chair.

352 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

353 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2011 were approved as a correct record.

354 Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

355 Draft Success Rates 2010-11

The Standards Committee received the report of the Principal on Draft Success Rates for 2010-11. Governors noted that whilst final results are not known until early November 2011 (students on courses due to finish at the end of the 2010-11 academic year have until early November to complete) the college's current prediction of end year out-turn for inspection view success rate is 93.4%. The Principal reported that he had expected steady progress would be made but some areas had made rapid improvement.

The Committee noted the college's A2 success rate of 99.52% (up from 94.5% 2009/10, national benchmark 92%) and AS success rate of 91% (up from 88% 2009/10, national benchmark of 74%). The Principal informed Governors that for A2 provision the college has improved its high grade outcomes, ie grades A*/A/B, from 36% in 2009/10 to 41% in 2010/11.

The projected success rates for apprenticeships in the APEX Partnership are 84.2% for timely success rate and 86.3% for overall success rate. This is a good improvement from results in 2008/09 which were 68% and 71.1% respectively.

Of particular note is the rise in projected overall success rates for Harlow College based apprenticeships from 81.9% in 2009/10 to 89.1% in 2010/11. The College was now outperforming its APEX partners.

For Train to Gain the projected results for the APEX Partnership are 92.1% for timely success rate and 93.6% for overall success rate.

The Standards Committee discussed those teams that had performed comparatively poorly (although their outcomes were above national benchmark) and the Principal confirmed the measures that they were taking to ensure better performance in 2011/12.

356 Draft Value Added 2010-11

The Standards Committee received the report of the Principal on value added for 2010/11.

The Principal reminded Governors that value added, currently, is primarily calculated for level 3 courses in particular National Diploma, AS and A2. A value added of 0 means that the average student on a course emerges with exactly the grade you would predict from their GCSE or level 2 course grades. At individual subject/course level a value added of +1.0 means that the students' results (based on expected results from their GCSE results) are better than those gained by 84% of providers for that subject or course. Value added of -1.0 means that students' results are poorer (based on expected results from their GCSE results) than those gained by 84% of providers. The target set for college teams was to improve, on average, their value added for each individual subject/course by 0.2 (of a grade).

The Principal reported that draft value added for National Diploma courses indicates a rise from +0.5 in 2009/10 to +0.72 in 2010/11. For A2 courses, data indicates a drop from +0.3 in 2009/10 to +0.27 in 2010/11. for AS courses, data indicates a rise from +0.1 in 2009/10 to +0.4 in 2010/11

The Committee discussed the drop in value added at A2, the poor value added for 9 subjects at A2 and 8 subjects at AS and noted measures being taken to remedy this.

Governors noted that the government has decided to discontinue the use of value added as a national benchmarked measure, although the College will continue to use it as a measure of team performance.

357 Learning Observation Grades 2010-11

The Standards Committee received the report of the Deputy Principal on learning observations and grades for 2010/11.

Nick Spenceley described the process of learning observations and the team of staff who undertake them, including training and development and moderation of grades. He reminded Governors of the 2007 Ofsted judgement that the College had “Too much satisfactory teaching” – meaning not enough good teaching. The current 2010 report commends the good teaching, but suggests that Ofsted would like to see more outstanding teaching.

The observations undertaken in 2010/11 show that there has been a steady rise in the proportion of teaching judged to be good at 49% or outstanding at 25%. The proportion of satisfactory has declined to 24% with the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching at 2%. Governors noted that staff graded unsatisfactory complete action plans with re-observation, or exit the college. Much work remains to be done to increase the numbers of staff graded good or outstanding.

358 Complaints Analysis – 2010/11

The Standards Committee received and considered the analysis of complaints received in 2010/11. Sue Young, Deputy Principal, reported that there had been an increase in the number of complaints received, although at 19 this was relatively small for an organisation the size of Harlow College.

Sue Young reported on measures proposed to be undertaken via the Virtual Learning Environment to obtain learner feedback more frequently and at an earlier stage in the year.

359 Recruitment of Students to mainstream funded programmes 2011-12

The Standards Committee received and considered the report of the Principal on the recruitment of students to mainstream funded programmes in 2011-12.

The Committee noted that the College had enrolled 2,334 learners aged 16-18 against a target of 2,200-2,300. Enrolments will continue and the Principal anticipates that the College will meet its funding target. It was noted that FE Week newspaper was reporting other Colleges experiencing a drop in enrolment.

The Committee discussed the position of young people who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) and the demise of the Connexions service in Essex and Educational Maintenance Awards. It was likely that the number of NEETs in Harlow will increase.

360 Proposed New Quality Assurance Procedures for Direct Delivery Teams

The Standards Committee received and noted the report of the Deputy Principal and noted proposals for new quality assurance procedures for the College. Governors also noted the summary of changes to the Ofsted framework of inspection for Colleges.

361 Any other business

361.1 National Student Survey

The meeting discussed the National Student Survey to be undertaken by HE students of the College. Mike Thorne informed the Committee of the importance of the survey and the need to agree in advance how it should be undertaken and the method of reporting its outcomes. Governors asked Nick Spenceley to liaise with key staff at Anglia Ruskin University to make arrangements for the survey.

362 Dates of future meetings

Autumn Term 2011:	Tuesday 22 November 2011	8.30am
Spring Term 2012:	Tuesday 21 February 2012	8.30am
Summer Term 2012:	Tuesday 12 June 2012	8.30am