

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 18 June 2015

Membership:

- * Sotirios Adamopoulos
- * Chris Christofides (Chair)
- * Nishall Garala
- * Myrtle Prodger
- * Karen Spencer
- Mike Thorne

**denotes present*

In attendance

D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation (from 523)
B Gamble, note taker (to 523)
T Greenall, Head of 6th Form (part)

519 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mike Thorne. C Christofides welcomed Tracy Greenall to the meeting.

520 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

521 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2015 were agreed as a correct after one amendment was made to the first paragraph after the bullet points on page 5.

522 Matters Arising from the Minutes

515 School and College Performance Tables

Tracy Greenall attended to report to on the dip in A-Level performance. Tracy informed the Committee this could be due to the national restructure for A-Level exams with no mid-year results from January exams. It could also be that some learners are not coping with taking 4 A-Levels. The College had not increased entry requirements for A-Level and admitted some students in on lower grades. There were some issues with cover staff due to maternity leave, affecting Chemistry and French.

The 6th Form staff are talking to students to offer the option to move to BTEC alongside their A Levels where such a combination is possible. Tracy attends all student interviews to ensure that they know that if they do not meet the entry requirements they should consider and discuss their options which could mean taking BTEC.

Value added was discussed and although the college dipped in 2013/14, the college remains positive for value added. Learners will continue to take AS next year as this gives the college an official indication of likely results.

The mix of A-Levels and BTEC will start with 2 courses, Science and Sport.

523 Quality Report

The Standards Committee received and considered the Quality Report and appendix, presented by L Turner, Vice-Principal. This concerned the three Es: e-learning, English and employability. All three 3 Es have a big impact on what the College delivers.

523.1 E-Learning

The committee was updated on the e-learning strategy.

- Students need to learn how to apply on line, enrol on line, apply for jobs and it also gives us contact when the students leave.
- The college has carried out a full survey on wi-fi and knows the hot spots.
- The college is spending £50,000 improving the specification for the college.
- The college has put in place a budget to purchase devices (mini iPads) for all full time students and iPads for all teaching staff. The network must therefore be resilient. This is planned for the autumn term.
- Training will go alongside this new equipment and Apple has offered 65 days' free training.
- The size of the iPad depends on the course and recommendation from the teams.
- The college was spending £400,000 for maintaining the fixed technology therefore it costs less to give every full-time student a mini device.
- On a visit to Portsmouth College the staff saw their use of IT champions and student champions.
- Using this equipment will teach good life skills as our students need these computer skills to make them valuable as employees.
- Insurance is included in the package and there are parental controls on the devices.

523.2 English and Maths

The Committee was updated on English and maths provision.

- The College has met funding requirements in respect of English and maths. All students with grade D at GCSE have been enrolled onto a GCSE qualification along with students who completed functional skills at level 2 last year.
- Teams have organised delivery with the majority of both functional skills and GCSE teaching undertaken by non-specialist staff from their vocational area. 44 non-specialist staff deliver maths and 43 non-specialist staff deliver English for approximately half a day a week each.
- As well as filling timetable gaps, the specialist staff have provided extensive CPD for all staff delivering English or maths. Take up of this support is strong.
- Academies have created their own timetable model around the needs of the learners and the nature of their main provision. Some deliver in one day per week, others in sessions throughout the week including twilight sessions.
- Attendance overall has been slightly lower than for students on their core programme, however, analysis shows that attendance is best when

students are taught by staff from their own team, next best when taught by the specialist core staff and worst when students are taught by staff 'borrowed' from other teams.

- Predicted grades C and above for GCSE Maths are 39% and for GCSE English are 15%. Predicted progress in English is lower than maths and can be partly explained by the removal of the speaking and listening marks from the overall grade and the challenges of completing seven controlled assessments within seven months. The reliability of these staff predictions will be reviewed at results time and are being treated with caution.
- Arranging for 550 students to sit GCSE English at the same time was a challenge, particularly since 46 required their own room for concessions or health reasons. The College made extensive use of teaching staff, managers and learning support practitioners as readers, scribes and invigilators.
- As part of our curriculum planning for next year teams have been asked to review their delivery models for English and maths, some of which have been more successful than others and we require a more comprehensive e-learning package to enable more personalised learning.

523.3 Employability

The Committee noted developments in raising learner employability through Steps to Working Professionals programme.

The Standards Committee thanked Louise Turner for her report.

524 Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee

The Standards Committee considered the Terms of Reference and Governors made the following Changes:

- I. To change the Committee name to Standards and Curriculum Committee.
- II. Delegated power (a) to read "To receive and consider annual reports on performance against targets including those specific targets set by the Government for the Performance Tables."
- III. To insert new delegated power "To maintain oversight of study programmes and the structure of the curriculum".
- IV. Non-delegated power (f) to read "To recommend to the Corporation annual targets for student retention, attainment, progress, English and maths and destinations at levels of aggregation appropriate to meeting the Corporation's requirements."

525 Any other business

There was no other business.

526 Dates of future meetings

To be circulated at the Corporation meeting 2 July 2015.