

## HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on Thursday 25 March 2010 at the Middleton Campus

<b>Present</b>	Phil Chadwick	Robert Clegg (Chairman)	Derek O'Toole (Principal)
	Linda Feerick		
<b>In Attendance</b>	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Michelle Green (Curriculum Head of HSC) (Part of 28/09 only)	Dave Kilpatrick (Curriculum Head of Engineering) (Part of 28/09 only)
	Claire McGuire (AD (Quality))	Janet Meenaghan (VP (Q&S))	

### 15/09 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND APOLOGIES

The meeting was quorate, no notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office and there were no interests declared.

### 16/09 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last meeting held on the 15 October 2010 were confirmed and signed.

### 17/09 MATTERS ARISING AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- a. There were no matters arising.
- b. There was no urgent business agreed.

### 18/09 SUCCESS RATES AND MLP – OUTTURN 2008/09

- a. The success rate had been less good than that expected at the last meeting with an outturn figure of 74.1% against the national benchmark of 78.9%. The LSC had confirmed that the new success rate methodology, which had had changed for 2008/09, had depressed the rates by c2%, thus to compare against the 2007/08 rate of 74.8% would have shown a slightly positive move but still below target. The committee challenged these results and it was agreed that this represented a depression below expectations and in results. The key areas of underachievement were detailed in the accompanying documentation and were individually considered and all were currently the focus for improvement programmes. Short courses, traditionally a source of high success rates, have declined annually as more priority provision had replaced them, changed rules had not been well managed by the Princes Trust, which had reflected badly on the results and Community ICT had not improved; this will be removed from offer next year. Overall it was agreed these numbers were disappointing particularly in the light of the effort spent in moving them upward, however the removal of A Level and other sluggish provision would show an effect next year. Additionally, analysis of other related issues showed that long course starts continued to fall, although the number of FT students had remained relatively static the LSC had required a reduction in additional qualifications. LR success rates were then examined using RAG indicators: Level 1 long course had declined, however L2&3 long courses had improved, although the overall showing of Red was noted.
- b. However, the MLP performance was considerably better with only 1.9% of long course hours below the MLP threshold, again using RAG assessments only L4+ showed Red and this was an area of low statistical significance. Improvements in local performance had significantly and positively affected the position regarding MLP: the weighted success rate stood at 76.7% (73.4% 07.08); only 4.71% (15.6% 07.08) of provision was below the minimum threshold; apprenticeship frameworks were well above the threshold and TTG success was now 95%. Headline Improvement Targets for 2010/12 based on current performance and anticipated national average rises were then considered; if met, targets for L1-3 would enable success rates to be 2% above national average by 2012.

c. Generally, although success rates had risen annually for 5 years, improvement had slowed and a revised and robust system of performance management had been introduced. An important element was the introduction of Special Measures Panels which would focus on areas failing against notified PIs and these panels were supported by a series of strong corrective actions, if necessary internal Notices to Improve would be issued. Departmental PI reports would also be generated against each area to enable objective assessments and it was agreed that these would be circulated to Corporation focus members in advance of their regular visits to inform discussion. Examples of pilot Departmental PI Reports and NTI were attached at Annex.

a. **The information was received.**

b. **PI Reports and other information would be passed to Corporation members for information.**

#### **19/09 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANALYSIS**

The recently appointed Equality and Diversity Manager (Nimisha Mistry) had drafted the Equality and Diversity Learners' Performance Report. The appointment reflected the increased focus on this vitally important area and a good start had been made towards raising awareness locally. The comprehensive report was considered and the findings were noted, Concerns were expressed in the report that retention amongst mixed or dual heritage learners was below the 83% overall college rate and that those remaining performed below both the 90% achievement and the 75% college success rates, White British retention was 73% and success 69%. Possible reasons for these numbers were then closely discussed and it was noted that further analysis would be completed and the information sent to the committee. More detailed information was displayed graphically and was considered. Priorities and key challenges were clearly listed, were closely examined, challenged and explained. It was unanimously agreed that the comprehensive report was well presented, easy to understand and was commended.

**The information was received.**

#### **20/09 EWR – REPORT**

The EWR was designed to acquaint and inform against OfSTED operating parameters and accordingly, alterations had been made to the process in line with the notified changed emphasis in the OfSTED inspection process (from detail to themes). Two EWRs had been completed, Engineering from 2-8 December (Grade 2 recurring) and Health and Social Care from 18-22 January (Grade 2 from Grade 3), the reports had been fully externally validated and showed significant improvements in "good or better" teaching, 26% and 37% respectively. The detail of the comprehensive reports was discussed item by item.

**The Curriculum Heads of Engineering and the HSC joined the meeting.**

Michelle and Dave presented background to the reports and took questions; the main elements of the exchanges were.

- (i) Michelle explained that, on assuming management of HSC, had experienced some challenges with hourly paid staff motivation. That situation was remedied through positive action, which had precipitated a surge in team building and the staff were now a strong cohesive unit with a common aim. That aim was reflected in the advancement of the overall assessment from Grade 3 to 2. There was no doubt that external observations had helped tremendously in enabling the advance.
- (ii) Dave explained that his first year in charge had proved challenging, many staff had set ideas on how best to accomplish the task and there was resistance to managerial change. These challenges also were remedied through positive action and the leaner, fitter team that had emerged was motivated and now worked together. Student voice was particularly strong and welcomed. Retention remained a challenge since students tended to accept offers of employment when a level of competency, not necessarily the qualification, was achieved.

The Chairman and Committee recorded thanks and appreciation to both and took comfort from the positive tone of the session.

**The Heads of Engineering and the HSC left the meeting.**

The individual submissions were considered and it was agreed that if the tenor of those views were reflected across the college then the future could be faced with confidence. Best practice must become a shared resource and individual areas should neither resent accepting advice (not invented here) nor keep good ideas to themselves (Silo mentality).

**The information was noted and received.**

**21/09 TEACHING AND LEARNING REPORT**

Numbers of lesson observations had been increasing over recent years, this had been consciously planned and the reasoning was detailed and discussed. Improvements to the monitoring of T&L in line with the now revised aims, which were clearly laid out in the accompanying paper, were fully discussed. It would be possible to reduce the number of observations for those whose teaching reached a high standard and thereafter introduce a random spot check system, which would allow focus of attention on the more challenging subjects. Details of the observation profile were explained and the RAG analysis was closely considered. Robust assessment of "Good or better" teaching had risen by 12% to 62% with a strong expectation that it could rise to the uppers 60s, en-route to the target to 74%; all reports were now moderated and standardized. These numbers were heartening but the remaining 3% of "Unsatisfactory" was challenged and the follow on process of re-observation and targeted support was explained.

**The information was received and noted.**

**22/09 14-19 CURRICULUM REFORM**

Plans to reform education and training had been detailed in the White Paper, 14-19 Education and Skills; the aim was to provide education in the right subjects and in the appropriate style and level for the individual learner. Four national routes to achievement would enable these aims and these were explained and discussed. The approach was designed to facilitate the aspirations of the 60% who enjoyed the practical approach equally with the 40% of those favouring learning activity. The scheme would be available across all entry levels and was based on the acquisition of QCF units and consequent credits. The system was fully detailed in the accompanying papers, was fully discussed and noted.

**The information was agreed and noted.**

**23/09 URGENT BUSINESS**

This was the Claire McGuire's (AD (Quality)) last meeting since she would shortly be leaving to take up a promoted post as DP at Holy Cross College and University Centre in Bury. Claire had been an outstanding AD, had been central to the raising of standards and richly deserved the appointment; she would be sorely missed. The Committee recorded thanks and best wishes.

**24/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be at 1000 on 17 June 2010.

Signed.....

Date.....