

HERTFORD REGIONAL COLLEGE
QUALITY, STANDARDS & CURRICULUM PLANNING COMMITTEE
6th February 2014.

Present:

Viki Cooper (Chair)
Eleanor Kenworthy
Andy Forbes (Principal)

Stephanie Benbow

In Attendance

Sarbdip Noonan (VP Curriculum & Quality)
Olive Oliver (VP Technology and Information)
Nicola Conibear (Director of Academic Quality & Development)
Lesley Atkin (Item 561 only)
John Fowl (Clerk to the Corporation)

553. To Receive Apologies For Absence.

Apologies were received from Susan Pember and Josh Williams.

554. Declaration of Interests and to Notify Part2 Agenda Items..

There were no declarations of interest and no confidential items notified.

555. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 16th November 2013.

The minutes were approved.

556. Matters Arising.

- a) Sarbdip Noonan confirmed that she had followed up with the University of Hertfordshire for Maths and English undergraduates to help as mentors for HRC students but disappointingly there had been no interest shown from them. AF confirmed he would also follow this up with University colleagues.
- b) Members requested that the Head of Department for the areas subject to a mini-inspection should subsequently attend the Quality & Standards Committee to discuss the outcome.
- c) It was agreed that the QSR success rates would be updated at the next meeting.
- d) It was agreed that the outcomes of the survey commissioned to follow up applicants who did not enrol would be shared at the next meeting.

557. To Receive a Report on Curriculum Planning & Implementation 2013-14.

The Board had received a presentation on this from Bob Hill at the Governors Development day on 24th Jan 2014. Sarbdip Noonan outlined the steps taken by the College to encourage improved outcomes for learners following level 1, 2 & 3 programmes. Each level has 540 hours and these are distributed according to level of need, complexity of the vocational qualification and each level is tailored to meet the needs of the learners. Level 1 learners are very needy and more time is allocated to the tutorial, so that their personal and social development can get the appropriate time and also the development of functional skills. A proportion of the hours from the main programme is allocated for independent learning and at level 1 this is limited and increased at level three where learners are more disciplined to work by themselves, although this is called independent learning it is directed learning that is supervised by other staff.

The main vocational hours are being delivered using a three tiered structure: the lecturer, senior and a junior facilitator. This type of delivery is intended to move to a minimum of 25% facilitator and 75% lecturer and for the tutorials, the hours will be divided according to the needs of the learners between lecturer and learning mentors.

Members were informed of the steps taken to make the curriculum more exciting and innovative by developing vocational routes and traineeships.

The Committee suggested that the views of the students should be sought on the revised programme structure.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

558. Moving Quality of Provision from 'Good' to 'Outstanding' 2013-14.

Improving the quality of Teaching & Learning is now the centre of everything the College is doing. Ofsted had identified that there was high quality teaching taking place but that there needed to be more consistency. Effort had been made to ensure all staff are aware of what constitutes exemplary teaching. Staff are encouraged to use video recording of their classes for self-reflection by reviewing themselves to see how they might improve what had been done. This is to empower staff to make the appropriate steps to improvement. Peer observations are conducted and students are also asked for their opinion of the way in which the lecturer had delivered the lesson.

An Action Plan has been made with actions identified that were expected to improve the quality of Teaching & Learning.

The Chair expressed the opinion that there may be a role for the Link Governor to feedback to lecturing staff.

It was suggested that the Action Plan should include a column to identify the 'impact' outcome of the action as some actions simply demonstrated progress made rather than a recorded impact.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

559. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2013-14.

The QIP addresses the key areas for improvements needed and identified in the self-assessment process. Each area for improvement has targets and actions aimed at bringing about the improvement and these are closely monitored.

The Governors asked whether the College was able to compare the progress students make against what they had when they left school but were told this was something still to be developed for all students. Members discussed methods of assisting learners to develop their learning skills rather than just learning a specific subject.

The view was shared that perhaps 'independent learning' techniques could be something the College and Secondary schools should discuss with the aim of agreeing a joint approach and Sarbdip Noonan will follow up on this.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

560. Report on Assessment of Learners.

Nicola Conibear presented a report which showed that the College carries out a vast range of assessment practices and considers them to be 'Good'.

Members were led through the process used by the College to assess student on entry, during and at the end of their study programme.

Eleanor Kenworthy confirmed that the Student Council have discussed this and provided feedback.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

561. Report on the Introduction of English & Maths 2013-14.

Lesley Atkin stated that the College was still trying to recruit suitably qualified staff to work on the delivery of these subjects but that the recent recruitment drive had not attracted the well qualified applicants targeted. The staffing problem meant that more of the delivery is being undertaken by agency staff. The College was now seeking to 'grow' its own specialist for Maths and English teaching.

A new timetable grid has been proposed for next year to ensure that Maths and English lessons are dovetailed into the other programmes. This is to be presented to the SLT for final approval.

The Committee received the breakdown of student numbers and level of study of those that were required to undertake Maths and English.

It is too early to provide governors with retention and absence data as the registers have not as yet been put on the computerised system. Likewise it was too early to predict outcomes as the first exams will not be taken until February 2014, revision classes are being offered.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

562. Support from Student Services – Autumn Report.

Student Support is now split into three teams; Learning Support; Financial Support and Learner Services. The report covered the work of the first two teams.

Members noted the number of students who self assess themselves as needing learning support and the level of support needed.

Detail of the learning support provided was noted by the committee.

The College is now promoting the theme of a ‘learning solutions team’ as there has been a reluctance on the part of students to appear to need ‘support’. To measure the impact of Financial Support a survey is to be undertaken of all students involved.

It was Resolved that the Report be Received.

563. Any Other Business.

There was no other business

564. Date of the next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Thursday 15th May 2014

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date.....