

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CURRICULUM, QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2013**

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Attendance & Apologies for Absence

Membership: Ketan Sheth (Chair)
Karen Tyerman
Antonio Weiss (From Item 2)
Mumtaz Van Der-Vord

In Attendance: Jayne Chaplin (Clerk)
Chris Faux
Lee Janaway (Item 2 only)
Steven Porter

Apologies: Abs Malik

1.2 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

1.3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2012, were confirmed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

1.4 Matters Arising

None.

2. COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT SESSION

A presentation was received from the Head of Department for Business providing an update on progress in the Implementation of the Department's Quality Improvement Plan.

After summarising the focus of attention in response to the issues identified and progress to date, there was discussion of:

- 2.1 The timescales over which it was expected for improvements to manifest, noting that it was anticipated for this to be over a 2 to 3 year period.
- 2.2 The underlying factors identified were reviewed noting success rates, at 72%, were 6% below the national average, with a corresponding decline in student numbers.
- 2.3 Those areas forming the subject of attention, noting in response to questioning that it was anticipated that improvements would follow in response to a focus on improvements to teaching and learning and the introduction of refreshed, more exciting provision and the overall student experience.

- 2.4 Teaching and learning, noting that with the outcome of lesson observations not correlating with learner outcomes or success rates, focus was now on more student centred teaching. It was reported working with an Advanced Practitioner was encouraging staff to engage with more innovative and engaging teaching styles and methods of delivery, the setting of more aspirational targets, closer monitoring of progress and relevant enrichment activities. Giving consideration to the extent of any positive movement in response to the changes being introduced, members were advised that retention had improved in comparison with 2011/12, improvements in teaching and learning were emerging and student feedback to date was mainly positive. Responding to questions regarding the latter, it was reported that ensuring consistency in delivery had been highlighted and was now also the subject of attention.
- 2.5 Plans for a more refreshed curriculum offer through improved links with employers, specific business pathways and recognised qualifications.

Following questioning, the Chair extended members' appreciation for an interesting and informative presentation.

Lee Janaway left the meeting at this point. Antonio Weiss Joined the meeting.

3. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Quality Improvement Plan

The Quality Improvement Report was presented summarising progress with the College's quality improvement initiatives.

The report was summarised and there was particular consideration of:

- 3.1.1 The marginally improved student satisfaction levels highlighted by the First Impressions Survey in the context of the feedback obtained in focus group meetings, observing the more positive feedback arising from discussion in contrast with a potentially more muted response from the written survey format.
- 3.1.2 The recently published Key Stage 5 performance tables based on results for 2011/12 for 16-18 year olds on Level 3 programmes only, noting the College's positioning, considered reflective of the relatively poor performance of the cohort. In contrast, it was noted that performance over the 12 indicators reported in FE Choices, when compared with the 10 nearest FE colleges, showed the College to be in the top three for eight of the categories.
- 3.1.4 The Lesson Observation Audit of six Subject Sector Areas, noting that other than Construction the areas had been graded at 2, Good, with Construction graded as a 3. Discussing the benefits of the audit in further detail, members were advised that the verification of the grades had provided a degree of comfort regarding the accuracy of the Observation Scheme; and identified where further improvements would be made, particularly concerning the College grading system to ensure identification of any underperformance.

The report was noted.

3.2 Annual Marketing Report

The Annual Marketing Report was received.

The report was summarised and there was particular consideration of:

- 3.2.1 The College's declining recruitment of 16-18 year old learners over the last three years, observing the Colleges main competitor's 25% increase in such learners over the same period and noting the work being undertaken in investigating their marketing activities.
- 3.2.2 The decline both in the number of enquiries and enrolments, discussing the factors potentially inhibiting the conversion to enrolment and noting the need to focus on clearer processes and practices to improve the conversion rate.
- 3.2.3 The growing importance of the College website and social media in increasing engagement with all target audiences and the need for more effective use of data for targeted marketing campaigns linked to the College strategic objectives.

The report was noted.

3.3 Annual Staff Development Report

The Annual Staff Development Report was received presenting the staff development activities undertaken.

Summarising activity there was particular discussion of:

- 3.3.1 The overall investment in development activities and in particular those for teaching and learning improvement.
- 3.3.2 The extent to which development activities were evaluated and any correlation with improving performance, noting that whilst evaluation did take place, ascertain the impact of activities proved harder to measure.

The report was noted.

3.4 Partnership Monitoring Report

The quality monitoring report of sub-contracted provision was presented.

After summarising and noting activity to date, there was particular discussion of the prioritisation of delivery with local providers and those factors forming the subject of consideration important when reviewing opportunities with a more regional and/or national impact.

The report was noted.

4. CURRICULUM MATTERS

4.1 Curriculum Strategy: Update Report

A report was presented updating members on progress with the College's Curriculum Planning and Development Strategy.

In the context of the College's Curriculum Planning and Development Strategy's key outcomes, remaining unchanged for the coming two years, the key significant changes within the Sector were summarised, noting that:

- 1.1.1 These were underpinned by fundamental changes and reduction to government funding aligned to a major shift in direction towards employer driven curriculum, training and job outcomes in addition to new Programmes of Study for 16-18 year olds.
- 1.1.2 Whilst opportunities were available for the College to reposition itself locally, regionally and internationally, continued significant reduction in all government funding would need to be overcome whilst simultaneously introducing, growing and sustaining alternative income streams and developing sustainable links with employer organisations.

Reviewing progress to date, members were advised that some inroads had been made in supporting the unemployed, work-based learning and international recruitment but that new 16-18 learners had reduced; and that this area continued to be the subject of further research, the outcomes of which would then to be used to inform recruitment for 2013-14.

After discussion the report was noted.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

5.1 Any Other Business

There was none.

5.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 12 June 2013, 5.30pm.

6.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.