



**Minutes of the
Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee Meeting
held in the Boardroom at the Moat House (Sutton Coldfield Campus)
on Thursday 10 December 2009 at 8.30am**

Present:

Dr J Rimmer (Acting Chair) (Chair)
Mr D Gould (DG)
Mr D Latham (DL)
Ms S Binning (SB) (Student Member) (from 9.05am)
Dr C Braddock (Principal)

In Attendance:

Mr R Minett (Executive Director of HE and International) (RM)
Ms K Wood (Executive Director Quality Improvement) (KW)
Ms K Pankhurst (Director of Quality Improvement) (KP)
Mrs C Bennett (Clerk to the Corporation) (Clerk)

Apologies for Absence:

Ms R Boyne (RB)

Item 1* - Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 May 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2009 were approved.

Item 2 – Self Assessment Report (“SAR”) and Quality Improvement Plan (“QIP”)

- 2.1 KW presented a paper on this item explaining that the College is required to produce the SAR and QIP for 2008/09 and to upload it onto the LSC Gateway for use by the LSC and Ofsted.
- 2.2 KW explained that there are changes to Ofsted’s Common Inspection Framework (CIF), the main changes being to Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity as well as Every Child Matters and Teaching and Learning.
- 2.3 KW provided an update on progress so far. She explained that Training for Managers took place in early July 2008. Each Directorate was asked to carry out plans. KW explained that Student Action

Groups have also been held for every sector which will contribute to the SAR and QIP.

- 2.4 KW explained that SAR judgments cannot be finalised until all achievement data has been recorded on the Management Information System (MIS) and at the current time there were over 4,000 achievement outcomes not yet recorded. KW explained that there is an internal review taking place in early February 2010 and matters will be progressed prior to and during this time. KW also added that judgments about Equality and Diversity would be incorporated into the SAR once the data is finalised.
 - 2.5 The Principal stated that the present Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee meeting had fallen in the wrong cycle and that the outcome of SAR and QIP could not be reported at this time but it was felt that it was important to keep the Committee and the Corporation updated. The Principal also explained that there is a mock inspection taking place the last two weeks of January 2010 at which time everyone will be required to get themselves up to date.
 - 2.6 DG asked if it was normal to be in this position. KW explained that the outcome of this issue would normally be reported on in February and that it is a huge data processing exercise. The Chair asked if all data processing systems were in place following the merger and whether any additional staff/equipment were required? An explanation was given by both the Principal and KW about how the College was currently operating on two platforms which were due to be harmonised during 2010 and that once harmonised, this exercise would be much more straightforward.
 - 2.7 There was a general discussion about the first draft of the SAR and it was suggested to KW by members present that whilst it was very well presented, it might be more helpful if it was more analytical with additional statistics rather than being too descriptive. KW said that this was a first draft and as more statistics became available, it would become more analytical.
 - 2.8 DG stated that Ofsted now define what is meant by "majority" and "large majority" and it may be worth including such language in the SAR.
 - 2.9 The Principal added that following the mock inspection, the first draft of the SAR would change dramatically.
- SB joined the meeting at this point.
- 2.10 DG made the comment that on page 5 of the draft SAR, the core priorities need to be in the correct place.

- 2.11 It was also noted that as set out on page 6 of the SAR, the Corporation are required to approve the final version of the SAR.
- 2.12 KW went on to explain that in Ofsted's CIF Self Assessment (including Governor Self-Assessment) was of high importance. The Principal added that whilst there was a lot of business to cover at the December 2009 Corporation meeting, SAR could be the substantive item.
- 2.13 It was agreed that any thoughts/comments on SAR in general be directed to KW.

Resolved:

- (i) Member comments made at meeting to be considered and where applicable incorporated into the SAR;
- (ii) Executive to ensure that Corporation approve the final version of the SAR;
- (iii) Clerk to ensure SAR to be a substantive item at December 2009 Corporation Meeting;
- (iv) Any comments in relation to the SAR be directed to KW;

Item 3 – Achievements 2008 – 2009

- 3.1 This item was presented by KW. KW said that the results so far are not outstanding but qualified this by explaining that again, not all achievement data for 2008/09 has been finalised but the College was working hard to ensure that the data was on the system as soon as possible.
- 3.2 The Principal added that the 6 week rule is a penalty and the College needs to ensure that data is dealt with promptly which is another challenge for data management.
- 3.3 KW then went on to explain how the data is set out on the paper accompanying this item.
- 3.4 KW went through individual subjects and benchmarks as set out in the accompanying paper.
- 3.5 KW went on to say that this year, the national benchmarks had risen significantly as it was felt that the sector had been too successful. The six week rule has been applied to last year's data which means that any learner who attended for more than six weeks on long courses will appear in the statistics. Audit rules have also been tightened to remove loopholes which many providers have used to improve success rates which could have an effect on lowering benchmarks at the end of this academic year.
- 3.6 KW explained that final outturn data must be produced by January so that the FO5 achievement report can be submitted to the LSC.

- 3.7 The Principal explained that at this stage, whilst so much data remained outstanding, the College was not overly concerned and that as queries were being dealt with, improvements in the data should emerge.
- 3.8 KW explained that Ofsted had identified a trend that on merger, there may be a dip in performance but the College was hoping to be able to buck that trend. There then followed a general discussion about resources and data processing as with the previous item.

Resolved:

A full output report to be brought to the next Academic Standards and Quality Development Committee Meeting.

Item 4 – Learner Voice

- 4.1 This paper was presented by KW and KP. KW explained that there are two aspects of learner involvement, the first being to involve learners in the life of the College in order to develop their confidence, esteem and wider skills and the second being the “Learner Voice” and how learners are listened to and involved in the running and decision making of the College.
- 4.2 KP explained that the CIF is a starting point for judgments that inspectors will make during an inspection and therefore effective student involvement is vital.
- 4.3 KP also explained that a rather scientific approach is being adopted in order to try and obtain information from students and the use of surveys was considered a favourable approach. The purpose of the surveys would be to simply identify issues and instigate discussions based on those findings.
- 4.4 KP went on to explain the feedback lines for student involvement as set out in the diagram in the accompanying paper to this item. The Campus Committee represents the views of learners from all directorates and its remit is to identify areas for improvement. The outcomes of the Committee will be discussed at action groups consisting of staff and managers from the service area and students who are particularly interested in the service concerned. An action plan leading to improvements results from these groups and the action groups report back to the Campus Committee.
- 4.5 A general discussion took place amongst those present in relation to resources that may be of use to students being able to put their viewpoint across. The use of Moodle and Sharepoint were considered useful tools. It was also suggested that the new plasma information screens and METnews be utilised more in order to let students know

what the feedback lines are but also to let the students know what has been done so that they are assured that they are being listened to.

- 4.6 There was some discussion about whether the approach was consistent across all campuses including the smaller satellite campuses and KW confirmed that a more consistent approach is being taken.
- 4.7 The Principal also suggested that a governor attend one of the action groups to get an idea of how they work.
- 4.8 The general consensus from members present was that the College's approach to learner involvement was very good and the depth and complexity of the processes in place was welcomed.

Item 5- Update on the Inspection Process

- 5.1 KW presented this item. She explained that the new CIF had been introduced for this new round of inspections that commenced in October 2009 and the College is now making preparations for any inspection that may take place. Ofsted provide only three weeks' notice of inspection.
- 5.2 KW went on to say that Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity are of critical importance and key actions have been put in place. KW also explained that lead managers have been identified to deal with various aspects of the College as set out in the table on the accompanying paper to this item.
- 5.3 A discussion then took place amongst those present with regard to the importance of CRB checks being in place for all and the fact that Ofsted place a huge emphasis on this.
- 5.4 A discussion also followed in relation to the importance of all staff and governors completing the online Safeguarding Training. It was agreed that it be arranged for the governors to complete this training in the near future.

Resolved:

The Clerk to arrange online Safeguarding Training for Members.

Date of Next Meeting – 11 March 2010

Any Other Business

The Principal said that although the next meeting is due to take place in March 2010, if the College receives an inspection notice, an earlier meeting may need to be called.

The Principal also stated that 2008/09 had been a successful year in terms of achievements with awards being made at the Beacon and Star Awards, HE Awards and the College being nominated for BECTA and LSIS Awards.

The meeting closed at 9.45am

Signed (Chair) *J. Rimmer*

Date *11.3.10*