
**Minutes of the Students, Curriculum & QA Committee
held on Thursday 13th October 2011 at 4:30 pm
in the Board Room, Art & Design Centre**

Present:

Lynette Cutting (Principal)
Henrietta Dalton (Student)
Rishma Dattani
Jenni Ord (Chair)
Tracey Pearce (Staff)
Tim Sunter (Vice Chair)

In attendance:

Louise Jones (Vice Principal, Curriculum & Standards)
Elaine Giles (Vice Principal, Students & Corporate Devt)
David Beasley (Clerk)

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 All members were present. The Chair noted that this was an inaugural meeting in some ways; it was her first meeting as Committee Chair, Tim Sunter's first as Vice Chair, Rishma Dattani's first as a member of this Committee, and also the final meeting for Henrietta Dalton as she had decided to focus on her studies and not continue as a Student Governor for a second year. The Chair thanked her for her contribution to the Committee over the year and wished her well in her second year at the College. The Clerk advised that an election was underway for two new Student Governors.

2 Declaration of Interests

- 2.1 None declared.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting**3a Approval**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2011 were approved and signed as a true record.

3b Matters Arising

- 3b.1 Committee Compliance vs TORs The Committee Compliance Report was being updated so that it was aligned with governors' responsibilities, along with those of the other Committees, at the same time as the Corporation's work programme was being updated.
- 3b.2 Report Content The Chair noted that the Report template had been modified and that the 'Keynotes for Governors' was helpful.
- 3b.3 Equality Impact Assessment Elaine Giles confirmed that the EIA for the Student Involvement Strategy was in hand, and that it would only be brought back to the Committee if a significant issue was identified as a consequence.

4 Reports for Recommending to Corporation for Approval

4a Draft Self-Assessment Report 2010-11

- 4a.1 The Chair thanked Louise Jones and her staff for the efforts that had gone in to getting the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) to its present state. Louise Jones reported that in the light of the feedback from governors on the very early draft, several changes had been made to the document including the presentation of both the Learner Responsive and Employer Responsive performance by Sector Subject Area. She explained that the structure of the SAR was based on that of the Common Inspection Framework. The five top-level grades had been assessed as Good; some of the strengths and areas for improvement were being reviewed by the College Executive Group and might be amended, along with a few sections highlighted in yellow including the Equality & Diversity content. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was linked directly to the SAR.
- 4a.2 The Chair said that she was pleased that the College had taken account of the governors' observations and noted that refinement was continuing in some areas. She suggested that the contextual value information in the report could be brought out more at the front and asked if there was anything that could be added that gave a view on how the College contributed to the local economy. Elaine Giles suggested that the local Level 3 and Level 4 results could be highlighted more. The Chair asked if more support was needed in tutorials; the Principal said that such support needed to be tailored to the particular courses or projects. It was agreed that this was an area that should be reflected in the opportunities for improvement in the SAR and reflected in the QIP.
- 4a.3 Governors echoed the Chair's view of the SAR as a whole, particularly in showing the Employer Responsive/Learner Responsive split. Governors raised questions on the correlation between some of the data and the associated narratives; Louise Jones said that these would be cross-checked. The Chair summarised the discussion, saying that the SAR was a much improved report, noted the key links to the QIP and the actions agreed. Governors agreed that the grades arrived at looked to be a realistic assessment. Louise Jones confirmed that governors would receive a copy of the final version of the SAR following the Corporation meeting on 20th October.

The Committee Resolved:

To recommend the Self-Assessment Report 2010-11 to the Corporation for approval, noting that the Report was subject to a final set of updates.

[The Quality Improvement Plan was discussed at this point in the meeting; see item 6am recorded in these minutes in accordance with the agenda sequence.]

4b Student Council Constitution

- 4b.1 Elaine Giles explained that the updated Student Council Constitution was based on the latest National Union of Students' template. The constitution was required to be reviewed at least every five years and approved by the Corporation. Henrietta Dalton said that some changes had been made to the template to reflect a Student Governor's term of office as either one or two years. The Chair said that she hadn't found a reference to the auditing of the Student Council Accounts; Elaine Giles said that this was done by the College Finance group and she would check the document.

The Committee Resolved:

To recommend the Student Council Constitution to the Corporation for approval, subject to confirmation that the topic of the auditing of the Student Council accounts was covered.

5 Reports for Approval: none

6 Reports for Review/Information

6a Draft Quality Improvement Plan 2011-12

- 6a.1 Louise Jones introduced the report and advised that a number of additional actions had been identified and agreed since the draft version of the QIP had been circulated to governors for this meeting. The Chair noted that the majority of the actions had target completion dates in the autumn term. Louise Jones confirmed that this was intentional, as they were important, and that a RAG status would be used in future iterations of the QIP, with progress reports being brought to each Committee meeting.

The Committee Resolved:

To note the Report.

6b Student Involvement Annual Report 2010-11

- 6b.1 Elaine Giles introduced the report, which covered student involvement under the headings of: the Student Council, the annual Student Conference, Student Focus Groups and Student Surveys. Governors asked if the students felt that they were listened to. Henrietta Dalton said that whilst the Student Surveys provided a lot of information, students didn't always feel that there was follow-up action on all the issues that were raised. The Principal suggested that more attention needed to be made to the general points raised during the student surveys and an assessment made on how to improve feedback to students so that they felt that their issues were listened to. The Chair said that some suggestions had been made for the Executive to consider and asked if the SAR was sufficiently strong in this area. The Principal replied saying that the current Student Survey would complete at the end of the week and that it would be worth liaising with students concerning the content of the SAR.

The Committee Resolved:

To note the Report.

6c Staff Development & Training Framework 2011-12

- 6c.1 Elaine Giles introduced the Report and referred Governors to the Staff Development and Training priorities for the year. Governors asked for confirmation that specific targets were in place such as the number of qualified teaching staff, and that monitoring of progress would take place throughout the year. Elaine Giles confirmed that training & development actions were automatically triggered as required and that the outcomes would be reported to the Committee in the associated annual report.

The Committee Resolved:

To note the Report.

6d Safeguarding Annual Report 2010-11

- 6d.1 Elaine Giles advised that the key elements of the Safeguarding Annual Report were reflected in the SAR. The number of safeguarding incidents had increased and this reflected the increase in awareness throughout the College. There weren't any benchmarks for the FE sector, but the College was in the process of defining some. The Chair said that it was a positive report, and that it was encouraging to see the use of external advisors. She suggested that it would be worth recognising the fragmenting of the NHS in the policy. Governors agreed that it was a good report.

The Committee Resolved:

To note the Report.

6e Safeguarding Strategy & Action Plan 2011-12

- 6e.1 The Chair observed that the Safeguarding Strategy focused mainly on the safeguarding of young people, and asked concerning the College's approach for staff. Louise Jones confirmed that this aspect was covered in the Health & Safety Policy. The Chair suggested that it was worth recognising that the safeguarding policy applied to all people who visit the College. The Governors said that they were content with the Report.

The Committee Resolved:

To note the Report.

7 Any Other Business

- 7.1 No items raised.

8 Dates of Future Meetings

Tuesday 22nd November 2011

Tuesday 28th February 2012

Tuesday 8th May 2012

Tuesday 26th June 2012

The meeting closed at 18:00.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chair