

MINUTES

Quality & Standards Meeting No 39

Date: *11/11/2014 (Tuesday)*

Time: *18:00–20:00*

Venue: *Rural Business Centre*

Committee: *Quality and Standards*

Notes: *Refreshments will be served from 5.30pm*

Present: *Allan Foster (Vice Chairman), Ann Turner (Principal), James Hodgkinson, Marion Nuttall (Chairman), Naveed Sharif (Co-opted Member), Robert Robinson and Steve Rigby*

Attending: *Alison Robinson (Vice Principal)*

Clerks: *Ron Matthews (Clerk) and Susan Whiteside (Deputy Clerk)*

Public Minutes

Item number:
(and category)

38.14 *Attendance of College Staff*

Decision Welcome James Hodgkinson, Student President and Robert Robinson, Staff Governor were welcomed to their first meeting of the Quality & Standards Committee

Attendance of College Staff Section 8.2 of the current Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Quality & Standards Committee states: "College management and / or Consultants may attend meetings by invitation in an advisory capacity."

Resolved:

That College Management be invited to attend the meeting.

39.14 *Apologies for Absence*

Record Apologies for absence were received from Naveed Sharif.

40.14 *Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman for the Academic year 2014 / 2015*

Decision Following due process it was

Resolved:

- I. **That Marion Nuttall be re-appointed Chairman of Quality & Standards Committee for the academic year 2014 / 2015 with immediate effect.**
- II. **That Allan Foster be re-appointed Vice Chairman of Quality & Standards Committee for the academic year 2014 / 2015 with immediate effect.**

41.14 *Minutes of Previous Meeting*

Decision The public and confidential minutes (now in the public domain) of meeting number 38 held on Tuesday 8 July 2014 were confirmed and signed as a true and correct record.

42.14 *Declaration of Interests*

Record There were no declarations of interest.

43.14 Strategic Plan Progress Report

Consulation Consideration was given to the final Strategic Progress Report relating to Quality & Standards for 2013 / 2014. The data presented to Corporation at its meeting in September 2014 had been updated and was now final.

Consideration was given to the new Strategic Plan targets relating to Quality and Standards Committee which were agreed. Key performance indicators were listed beneath the headings:

We will continue to build and enhance our brand and reputation for excellence within the land-based & sports sectors.

We will provide an outstanding teaching and learning experience.

We will create opportunities for all to succeed.

The Vice Principal supported the discussions and responded to questions:

Teaching and learning targets continued to increase in line with College performance which Management believed was sustainable and necessary to reach 'Outstanding'.

For future reports the HE and FE lesson observation targets and results would be shown separately and indicate numbers achieving Grade 1 and Grade 2.

The parameters for the number of research publications had been modified so reporting was limited to those accepted for higher level publications. As a result, the target was reduced; members noted the emphasis on quality.

Targets set for grade 1 lesson observations, Mathematics and English GCSE results, and success rates for long level 3 courses were aspirational and challenging. The latter being due to changes in the assessment framework for BTEC courses.

Members noted recent Ofsted proposals concerning the inspection regime indicated the College could be inspected in Spring / Summer 2016 for its further education provision. Such an inspection would consider the 2014 / 2015 data.

The Committee accepted the targets were challenging and aspirational but did agree them as continuing improvement and good performance was necessary to the Strategic Aims and to achieve 'Outstanding'.

Resolved:

I. That the final Strategic Plan Progress Report for 2013 / 2014 be received

II. That the Key performance Indicators for 2014 / 2015 be agreed

44.14 Performance Reports Further Education (FE)

Consul Final Data Report FE 2013 / 2014 tation

Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the final overall success rate and were pleased to learn overall success was 90% made up of 89% overall success for long qualifications and 93% for short qualifications which matched the previous year. The results were a credit to the College's staff and the results placed Myerscough in the top 10% of colleges. Final clarification would be when full benchmarked data is published in Spring 2015.

Members commented on the good results and that the strong focus on the Teaching and Learning had brought an improvement in standards. With improvement from some pockets of underperformance the final success would have been even higher.

Quality & Standards Committee noted that 19 plus ethnic learners (low numbers) achievement was significantly lower than their counterparts and overall 19 plus learners across all Centres needed greater support.

Current FE Position 2014 / 2015The Vice Principal supported member discussion and questions:

Management and staffing had been strengthened at Croxteth, an Assistant Principal now heading the Centre. Lines of communication and accountability back to Heads of Areas had been emphasised. New staffing was in place which included appointments to new support services roles.

The new national requirements in the delivery of GCSEs and Functional Skills were challenging from various perspectives including recruiting and retaining staff, delivery arrangements and for the student. This challenge shows in the drop in success at level 1 Functional Skills, where the step up for progressing students was proving a barrier. It was anticipated around a thousand students who had not achieved a grade C at GCSE were required to take Mathematics and English exams.

The use of subcontractors does help the College meet its recruitment targets but makes management of quality more difficult. It was noted the College will only work with quality providers and the main area of this delivery is for Sport subjects. Rigour and due diligence processes take place before contracts are agreed.

Work continues to embed equality and diversity good practice throughout the College.

Quality Review Boards had been set up to support consistency of practice around marking and internal verification.

Overall the performance of students' aged 19 plus, though above national benchmarks, was below College targets. Management continued with initiatives to address this.

Due to changes in the sector which included the introduction of the 'Local Offer' and changes in practice by local authorities, this year's student intake included a significantly higher number with 'High Needs' than expected. Management continued to liaise with the relevant bodies and funds were coming in to support the associated additional costs and additional staff were being appointed.

The Chairman of the Quality & Standards Committee had attended the validation day for the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR). She reported on an informative day and reminded members of the SAR training day arranged for 2 December 2014.

Resolved:

- I. **That the FE Performance Reports for 2013 / 2014 be received.**
- II. **Final Data Report FE 2013 / 2014 .**

45.14 Performance Reports Higher Education

Consul

tation Final Data Report 2013 / 2014

In year Performance 2014 / 2015

Recruitment at this point was similar to the previous year. There were some pockets of low recruitment on full time courses in Agriculture, Horticulture, Photography and some Sports courses. Internal progression was being promoted, marketing materials, and progression activities developed. Initiatives continued to promote the College and ensure required resources. A new College website was being developed.

Overall attendance was high. The continuous monitoring had shown a drop in Animal Studies and Arboriculture class attendance which was being investigated.

There was focus on utilising in year assessments to avoid leaving submissions until semester three.

Five new post graduate programmes were being developed to enable progression and were going through the approval process. These courses would utilise some existing modules and complemented current provision.

The College has been chosen as one of fifteen colleges in the UK to participate in an AoC project funded by HEFCE to £150k to develop a national framework for scholarly activity in college based higher education.

The percentage high grades for part time students had reduced though still compared favourably externally. In the main these students were in employment. Reasons and strategies for a drop in part time online Sportsturf success had been identified.

QAA Review External Comparison

Myerscough was still top of the league as the number of Colleges inspected increased. Quality & Standards Committee commented on this excellent result, external validation, performance of the staff and noted that the Assistant Principal Higher Education, Mick Cottam had recently been appointed as a QAA reviewer.

Resolved:

- I. That the Final Data Report 2013 / 2014 be received**
- II. That the In year Performance 2014 / 2015 be received**
- III. That the QAA Review External Comparison be received**

46.14 Performance Reports Work-place Learning

Consul Final Data Report 2013 / 2014O

tation Overall success was 79% and timely success was 67% which were above national averages.

In year Report 2014 / 2015

Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to an overview and update on key developments and the targets that had been set.

Amongst the discussions it was noted:

Work-place learning was a complex area to manage due to impact of national delivery, employment factors, age grants and off-site staffing. The College continued to perform very well in comparison to the national benchmarks but aspired to greater success.

There was considerable review work within the area looking at cohort sizes and consistency in work load for the staff.

There had been impact on Animal Studies student results due to employment difficulties and age grant issues.

Employer satisfaction rates remained high.

There had been some staffing issues with arboriculture that had impacted on timely success rates.

Resolved:

- I. **That the Final Data Report Work-Place Learning 2013 / 2014 be received**
- II. **That the In year Report Work-Place Learning 2014 / 2015 be received**

47.14 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report

Consulation The report provided a summary of key developments, initiatives and impact for the start of the academic year in line with the College strategic aim to provide an outstanding teaching and learning experience.

Management responded to questions and discussions on a wide range of topics. In particular members noted:

There were challenges associated with changes to BTEC from the perspectives of learners, staff and impact on success rates.

There was a positive student response to Induction captured by survey results.

Peer observations for teaching had led to a mixture of reactions from teaching staff and the message continued to go out that this was about opportunities for personal development. Feedback goes to the CPD Team, score grades are not seen by management, the aim being to promote a positive culture.

A termly CPD booklet is being issued which also advertises the College App.

There had been some changes at Croxteth, Sport removed from the curriculum, a counselling service and strengthened support and welfare in place, a significant number of new staff, strengthened communications and lines of accountability. This was considered value for money and was expected to convert to improved success through an enhanced experience for both learners and teachers. In response to questions there had been low numbers on the Sports courses in an area where other providers had higher quality provision. The decision was based on business and reputation.

City and Guilds courses were being trialled in Animal Care and Greenspace at Witton, East Lancashire.

Quality & Standards Committee had some concerns on learning that it is expected that 10% on line delivery will become a funding requirement and wondered how students would view this.

It was noted there was focus on Personal tutor training, tightening up of the staff probationary scheme, a broadening of the CPD offer and trialling of a new Manager induction programme.

Resolved:

That the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report dated November 2014 be received.

48.14 Research Report

Consul Quality and Standards Committee gave consideration to the booklet, 'Myerscough
tation Research, Research for Practical Applications' which was handed out at the meeting

The publication served as a showcase, featuring key themes and projects to illustrate the College's specialist position to various stakeholders including students, institutions, funders and organisations the College collaborates with.

Research at Myerscough is structured under three Centres:

- * The Centre for Research in Sustainable Agriculture and Arboriculture
- * The Centre for Research in the Welfare of Managed Animals
- * The Centre for Research in Sports Performance

The review gave an overview of the research, outlined the impact to industry and looked at its influence on education.

Research Conference - The Quality and Standards Committee Chairman had attended the ninth Annual Myerscough Research Conference on Friday 7 November 2014. The event was well supported, full to capacity, with notable positive involvement from students.

College continued to focus on specific areas and was attracting funded research.

Quality & Standards Committee wished to formally record their acknowledgement of the excellent event and pass their congratulations to the Director of Research, Dr David Elphinstone.

Resolved:

That the Research Report 2013 / 2014 be received

49.14 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report 2013 / 2014

Consul The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report for 2013 / 2014 is linked to the
tation College Mission Statement, Strategic Plan and the Equality & Diversity Policy, which all contribute to the College's vision for equal opportunities for all to succeed.

The purpose of the document is to report on the College's equal opportunity objectives and on progress against statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force in April 2011.

The Annual Report will be published on the website and provides transparency on progress in equality and diversity and outcomes. The College gives due regard to:

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited.

In response to member questions and discussions it was noted:

Ofsted does refer to Colleges' Equality and Diversity Annual Reports.

Myerscough has an active Strategic Equalities Group which cascades information and strategies throughout the College.

There is key staff training around Equality and Diversity with challenging course tutorials delivered by the Equality & Diversity Coordinator which stimulate discussion, feedback and awareness.

Staff are more confident in embedding good practice, sometimes stopping a lesson to highlight or act on an issue showing the top down approach is being subscribed to.

External assurance of the Colleges progress in this area is evidenced by the recent Landex report which described, 'phenomenal progress'.

Key performance data now shows there are not significant achievement gaps between males and females and will pick up on other differences beyond the agreed parameters.

More multi faith Initiatives with students are planned.

The Student President commented positively on the above points noting marked cultural changes during his time at Myerscough.

Quality & Standards Committee commented on the makeup of the Board which would be further explored at a future meeting of Audit & Governance Committee.

Members were invited to pass further comments on the draft report directly to the Vice Principal. The final report would be submitted to Corporation at its meeting on 16 December 2014 for approval and would be published on the website in January

2015.

The Internal Equality & Diversity Action Plan was nearing completion and would be submitted to the next meeting of the Corporation and the next meeting of the Quality & Standards Committee.

Resolved:

That the Draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report 2013 / 2014 be received and the final report be submitted to Corporation for approval

50.14 Continuing Professional Development Annual Report 2013 / 2014

Consul Quality & Standards Committee gave consideration to the Continuing Professional **tation** Development (CPD) Annual Report 2013 / 2014. The report showed details and cost of training and provided judgments on its impact.

In response to a question about the attendance and opportunities for part time staff it was stated that these staff did receive payment for attending and delivery was at different times of day and some in the evening. The CPD Team monitor training, some of which is mandatory and were accountable through their area SAR.

Members sought assurance that allocation of expenditure and choice of training met the staffs CPD needs and received responses on how this was agreed. There was continuing dialogue in the dissemination of CPD to ensure coverage for the Centres and Support Staff. Currently the results of a staff Survey and Communication Audit were being analysed.

A minor amendment would be made to table 3 in the report.

Resolved:

That the Continuing Professional Development Annual Report 2013 / 2014 be received

Confidential Minutes (no items available)

Strictly Confidential Minutes (no items available)

Chairman: Marion Nuttall

Signed:

Date: