



Accrington and Rossendale College Corporation Board

Curriculum and Quality Standards Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held at
5.00pm on Tuesday 18th June 2013
in the Board Room, Broad Oak Centre**

Confirmed

Present:

Mr S Ireland	Acting Chair of this Committee and Independent Member
Dr M Lee	Independent Member and Chair of Corporation Board
Mrs S Taylor	Principal Designate

In Attendance:

Mr H Tallon	Vice-Principal (Quality & Standards)
Miss W Higgin	Director of Curriculum
Mr A Armiger	Clerk to the Corporation
Mrs N Tattersall	Minuting Clerk

Apologies were received from / other members not in attendance:

Dr A-M Coyne	Independent Member
Mr T Gill	Independent Member
Mr D Rintoul	Staff Governor

Draft Minutes Prepared by: NT-AA

Draft Minutes approved by Dr Mike Lee on behalf of the Chair:

Minutes Approved by the Committee:

Date:

24-06-13

24-06-13

19-11-13

.....*Steve Ireland*.....

Chair

01.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Dr A-M Coyne, Mr T Gill and Mr D Rintoul.

Due to the number of apologies received for the meeting the meeting was unfortunately not quorate. As Chair of Governors, Dr Lee took the decision, after consultation with the Clerk to the Corporation, to take Chairs action and appoint Mrs Sue Taylor, Principal Designate, to the Corporation Board with immediate effect as Mrs Mason, as Interim Principal would not be attending any further meetings. This Chair's Action will be reported to the full board on 9 July 2013.

Mr Ireland was appointed as Chair of the Committee by the members present

01.2 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

01.3 Terms of Reference for the Curriculum and Quality Standards Committee

The Chair advised that he believed these Terms of Reference (ToR) captured what the Committee work should be about. The Clerk confirmed that the same template as all other committees had been used and the changes made by the Vice-Principals and Dr Lee relevant to this committee were highlighted.

Members then discussed the terms of reference in detail and raised the following points:

- Student Governors – The Clerk advised that Student Members did not normally attend committee meetings, but members felt that their voice would be relevant to this committee.

As the committee was in its infancy, it was felt by members that it may be best to first gauge what impact student members may have on the committee by their absence as it conducts its business and review the situation after the first year. As an alternative, it was decided that the Chair of Governors and the Principal would have regular meetings with Student governors to keep them informed and gain their views which could then be brought to this committee.

- Dr Lee advised that there will be certain items brought to this Committee which will need to be addressed at the full Board. It was accepted that the Chair of the Committee would have a responsibility to brief other Board members at the Corporation Board meetings about the work of the committee.
- Members discussed other changes to be made to the Responsibilities of the Committee section and a final draft was agreed ready for Board approval on 9 July 2013. Members

- 01 RESOLVED** i) that the Clerk to the Corporation will organise, on a trial basis, meetings for the Student Governors with the Chair of Governors and Principal;

ii) that the Clerk to the Corporation will update the Terms of Reference for approval by the Corporation Board on 9th July

01.4 Curriculum Structure

The Director of Curriculum Development and Delivery presented an overview of the recent Curriculum restructure. Miss Higgin informed members that an initial review was undertaken during November and December 2012 for which the purpose was to:

- ensure the College has a curriculum offer that is sustainable into the future;
- to identify any underperforming areas to be withdrawn; and
- to identify areas for future growth.

Following the initial review, Miss Higgin advised members that the decision was made not to withdraw any curriculum programmes for next year 13/14, but that a revised curriculum management structure was proposed to provide better coherence for curriculum teams to enable growth & flexibility and align with the 3 aims identified.

Miss Higgins told members that following consultation it had been decided to reduce the number of Curriculum faculties from 9 to 6. Following that decision a selection process took place in May and the Heads of those new faculties were appointed.

A full list of the new faculty areas was provided to members. The new structure will be in place by 1st August 2013 and even though savings hadn't been a reason for the restructure being undertaken, cost savings will be achieved as a result of the process.

Miss Higgin confirmed that she is currently working with the Director of People & Performance to look at the structure underneath the Heads of Faculty, the Programme Area Leaders (PALs) to ensure maximum efficiency. The timescale for completing this review is 1st January 2014. To date PALs within two curriculum areas have been reviewed following requests for voluntary redundancy and it is unlikely that a decision on the structure within Business Solutions will be finalised before January 2014.

As Dr Lee understood the previous curriculum structure he was asked if the new structure looked in line with College operations. Dr Lee queried why Hospitality & Catering was in Business Solutions and Miss Higgin confirmed that this had come down to the size of the area and there is also a lot of commercial income tied up in Hospitality. The same query was asked about Care, Health & Early Years being within the Creative Faculty and this again came down to size. Miss Higgin reiterated that Heads of Curriculum had provided input on the new faculty areas.

The Principal Designate commented that the College was already seeing innovative ideas coming from the new Faculty Heads. Members

02 Resolved to note the report

01.5 Curriculum Plan for 2013/14

The Director of Curriculum Development and Delivery presented the Curriculum Plan for 2013/14. Miss Higgin advised that, following new funding methodologies, the curriculum offer and design was adapted accordingly to meet new requirements. This year the process has been improved from previous years. Feedback from the Heads of Curriculum is that this year's

process has been the best so far and work will continue and it will continue to improve the process further going forward to next year.

Miss Higgin advised that contained within her report was a table outlining the curriculum plan against contract values and whether the College was up or down against the funding allocations. In relation to apprentices the College is currently down and work is underway to increase this

Based on the learner numbers to date, Miss Higgin informed members that the 1109 learner allocation will be a challenge for the College. Historically 65% of offers made to potential students convert to actual enrolment. Work is ongoing to increase numbers with interviews being undertaken weekly, and Keep Warm Activities are also being undertaken during the summer to maximize the enrolment conversion.

The Chair asked why the conversion rate wasn't higher and it is thought this is mainly due to school leavers being advised to enroll with different organisations. The College continues to undertake telephone surveys with potential learners and engage with parents/schools who have an influence on where their child is educated. Free transport has also been an issue for the College, but minibuses are now in place for those learners who have transport problems.

Miss Higgin also advised that the dip in cohort sizes is likely to last longer than expected and it is unlikely we will see an increase for a further 3 years.

In terms of programmes within the curriculum plan, Miss Higgin informed members that 1 programme had been withdrawn – L1 and L2 Diplomas in Enterprise & Entrepreneurship and replaced with a pathway within Business. Some provision is also expected to be withdrawn in Computing – L1 and L3 due to issues with quality, learner experience and quality of staff. Applications are low for next year and these learners will be diverted onto appropriate programmes which are linked to Gaming and Media. Similar to the work undertaken a couple of years ago with Early Years and Health & Social Care, the Computing provision will be wound down to allow, as the College has done before, quality to be built back up in the area of study.

03 RESOLVED to note the report

The Chair thanked Miss Higgin for her attendance and her reports

The Director of Curriculum Development and Delivery left the meeting.

01.6 The Higher Education Strategy

The Principal Designate presented the new dynamic Higher Education Strategy which had been produced by the Dean of Higher Education. The previous strategy had been significantly fuller as required by HEFCE. However, the College has now been given the opportunity to produce a much more streamline and tighter document. Mrs Taylor confirmed that the Strategy had been reviewed by the Senior Management Team and feedback from members had been incorporated. The Strategy highlights the Colleges:

- Vision
- Mission
- Aims for Higher Education
- How the College will know it is succeeding
- Core Values

- Organisation Chart and Higher Education Committee Structure

All members of the Committee agreed that the Strategy was a short, sharp and precise document. It mirrors equivalent documents for the College and members agreed that it is a clear, well thought out document which demonstrates the direction Higher Education in the College is moving towards.

The Chair asked Mrs Taylor to extend the Committees thanks to the Dean of Higher Education for producing such an excellent strategy document.

Dr Lee highlighted a small number of changes within the “Aims” section he felt would enhance the document and which Mrs Taylor noted and agreed to forward to the Dean of Higher Education to update ahead of the Strategy being presented to the Corporation Board for approval. Members

04 RESOLVED to recommend, once Dr Lee’s comments had been incorporated into the document, the HE Strategy to the Corporation Board for approval.

01.7 Performance Management of Individuals through the Professional Practitioner Process

The Vice Principal (Quality & Standards) presented a report outlining the performance management of individuals through the Professional Practitioner process. Mr Tallon advised that all teachers and assessors undertaken a performance review 3 times a year following team reviews. Individuals are then scored during their approval using a four colour coded scale under key headings which are linked to the role of a professional practitioner. The aim is to have all areas green which is outstanding:

- Management of Assessment
- Session Observation
- Feedback from Learners
- Learner Attendance
- Learner Attainment
- Learner Success Rates
- CPD
- Programme for further study or employment

Mr Tallon then informed members about the outcomes of all teachers and assessors performances following the January 2013s review in the following areas:

- Walkabouts
- Learner Attendance
- Learner Attainment
- Learner Success Rates
- Management of Assessment

Mr Tallon advised that the College is looking at different ways of closely aligning the process with Staff Development to make the performance management more dynamic

and robust. Strategic priorities for teams and individuals will be set out and industrial updating will be also be more closely monitored.

Dr Lee asked how staff obtained professional updating. Mr Tallon advised that it has been inconsistent in the past and left to staff members to organise themselves. Criteria will now be set to ensure that there is evidence of industrial updating and work placements have taken place. Mr Tallon also confirmed that a more formalised CPD programme is expected to be completed by September 2013. Members

05 RESOLVED To note the report

01.8 Raising the performance of Curriculum Teams through the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

The Vice Principal (Quality and Standards) updated members in relation to raising the performance of curriculum teams through the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment process. Mr Tallon advised that there are currently 7 programmes in Special Measures and updated members on the progress of the teams currently being supported through this process

Reports had been circulated to members which outlined the work undertaken with Teams in Special Measures. Members found these reports both well-structured and informative.

In terms of Computing, this team has recently been placed into the Special Measures process following complaints received from parents, unsatisfactory reports from learners and concerns regarding staff. Interventions have now been put in place.

Members advised that having reviewed the reports provided, the intervention methods put in place by the College appear to be working to turn programme areas around. Mrs Taylor noted that being in Special Measures could have implications on success rates year on year and it's a credit to the systems in place which have helped to maintain the College's Success Rates.

Mr Tallon informed members that the College learner retention rates overall are much better than the average at this time of year. However, Travel & Tourism is emerging as a problem following staffing issues at the start of the year. Members

06 RESOLVED to note the report

01.9 Annual Teaching and Learning Report

The Vice Principal (Quality & Standards) presented the Annual Teaching and Learner Report and advised that a comprehensive and robust lesson observation programme is in place. The focus of observations continues to be on prioritizing new staff, teams with emerging retention problems, teams in special measures including individuals where issues for further investigation have been identified through student satisfaction surveys. Mr Tallon advised that the observation reporting documentation has also been updated to reflect the changes to the Common Inspection Framework and now includes reference to learner progress, equality and diversity, Maths and English, health & safety and Employability.

The Clerk to the Corporation made a suggestion at this point that it might be an opportunity for Governors to observe a Grade 1 class in order to help them understand, through first hand

experience, as what constitutes “Outstanding” teaching. . Dr Lee advised that he had no objection to Governors observing classes, but felt that in doing so was close to the line of starting to impinge on operational matters and Governors have always trusted the judgment of SMT on what is outstanding. Dr Lee went to suggest that if Governors wished to observe classes then it should perhaps include an unsatisfactory class as well.

The Chair felt that he would welcome the opportunity to observe classes from a personal point of view in order to gain a better understanding of what goes on in terms of “getting to know your college”.

It was agreed that the discussion about attending classes would be tabled at the next meeting for further discussion.

Mr Tallon then went on to advise that contained within his report was a paper which explained the processes in place in terms of the Observation Programme. This included information on the work involved in the planning stage, the actual observation and the management processes in place for those staff who receive a Grade 3 or 4. Members

07 RESOLVED **i) to note the report; and**
ii) to discuss further, at the next meeting, Governors attending lessons to observe outstanding teaching

01.10 Safeguarding – Monitoring Update

The Vice Principal Quality & Standards provided members with a review of progress within Safeguarding and Protecting procedures and their outcomes. Mr Tallon explained that Safeguarding & Protecting was no longer an “outstanding” requirement by Ofsted; they now merely looked to ensure that the College complied with statutory requirements.

In terms of the number of cases dealt with by the Safeguarding Team during this academic year, there have been 154 cases. These fall into a number of categories which were noted within the report.

Mr Tallon then updated on the following areas:

Death Panel Meeting – unfortunately following the death of a learner the College had to participate in an enquiry.

Domestic Abuse – as knowledge about domestic abuse was limited, training is now in place for the Safeguarding Team.

Disclosure & Barring Services – new procedures are in place and training is planned for staff.

Criminal Convictions – more individuals are applying to the College, some with serious past histories and the College has to make the decision whether to enroll them on programmes or not. A panel has been set up to make the decision and so far 5 enrolments have been declined due to the nature of conviction and license conditions.

Members commented that the College should be commended for the number of applicants who have been able to enroll with a conviction. Mr Tallon was asked if he could analyse the Success Rates for these learners.

The information contained within Mr Tallon’s report showed that there are robust systems in

place for Safeguarding & Protecting and that there is a tremendous amount of work that goes into these procedures. Members

- RESOLVED**
- i) To note the report; and**
 - ii) The Vice Principal Quality & Standards will analyse the Success Rates for learners with Convictions and report it to the next committee meeting**

01.11 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The date and time of the next meeting is to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm