

QUALITY and STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Minutes of a Meeting
2.00pm Monday 18th November 2013
Gordon Canning Room

Present: Mr David Crawford (DC) (Chair)
Mrs Rosamund Blomfield-Smith (RBS)
Mrs Barbara Buck (BB)
Mr John Deane (JD)
Mr Ben Grieve (BG)
Dr Beri Hare (BH)
Mr Edward Keene (EK)
Mr Russell Marchant (RM)
Mr Chris Moody (CM)
Mr Luke Rake (LR)
Professor Ron Ritchie (RR)
Mr Graham van der Lely (GvdL)
Mr Charles Whitehouse (CW)

Apologies: Mr David Barnett (DB)

Minutes: Miss Emma Curnow

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
1. Apologies	Apologies were received from Mr D Barnett and Mr R Lee. The Chair welcomed Mr J Deane, Mr B Grieve and Mrs B Hare to their first meeting.		
2. Declaration of Interest – Paper QS02/11/013	There were no declarations of members interests for agenda items.		
3. Minutes of the Last Meeting – Paper QS03/11/013	Minutes of the meeting held on 22 nd May 2013 were agreed to be a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.		

		ACTION	ACTION DATE
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1. (7.0.) Discuss Report on Graded Teaching Observations Semester 1 2012-2013. Paper QS4.1/11/13</p> <p>JD advised that observations were conducted by external observer, Ann Rumpus. From the back of the report staff will be asked to submit applications to the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme.</p> <p>BH advised that it is very interesting as conclusions tend to talk about the process; the last bullet is about actual teaching quality and is fairly general. JD advised that he will continue the next steps to develop staff and Ann will be returning next year to observe staff. BH asked what the particular strengths are that make HE outstanding. From the report you don't get that picture.</p> <p>RR advised that the main issue was the too high standard of teaching in FE. The issue for HE is somewhat different as the impact on external quality judgement is different.</p> <p>4.2. Discuss undergraduate success rates according to disability status. Action from February 2013 Meeting. Paper QS4.2/11/13</p> <p>JD advised that the overall achievement was 5% lower for students with disabilities. RR advised that the data was encouraging.</p>		
5.	<p>Discuss and recommend for approval the Self-Assessment Report 2012-2013. Paper QS05/11/13</p> <p>LR proposed that due to recent feedback from an Ofsted inspector and in light of the new Common Inspection Framework the SAR should not be approved at the meeting. This is a unique occurrence but LR stated he felt that there would be more appropriate ways to present the data and outcomes externally and he had discussed this with the Chair and the Principal prior to the meeting. In light of the Landex process and data only being verified less than 2 weeks ago it was not as strong a format as it could be and he requested to re-write it in a different format.</p> <p>LR referred to page 39 which explained the success rate and retention rate and noted that headline success rates had declined to a position where they were broadly average, which is disappointing. However, disaggregating the data allows a more precise evaluation of why this had occurred. Core provision at 16-18 remains very sound, with outstanding retention and grades (value-added) at BTEC. A levels are performing at a broadly average rate, which given the sports demands of students should be regarded positively as this value-added has improved since last year.</p> <p>Other causes of reductions in headline success rate are an increase in volume at AS level, some retention issues in pockets of BTEC provision and some poor complementary studies success rates, where students had been given the option to sit exams rather than this being made mandatory – in the cases where they sat the exams the achievement rate was still extremely high, as it is across all BTEC provision.</p>		

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<p>Governors interrogated the data rigorously and the meeting went through course by course to determine areas of improvement required, and areas that were still clearly outstanding.</p> <p>LR explained data for each core curriculum area and outlined where action had been taken in areas of poor performance, including performance management and dismissal from post if required.</p> <p>Specialist Sport, Football and Rugby Subsidiary Diploma are a less academic cohort; some do disengage from the programme and there are examples of students who had failed the programme, but by being retained they had achieved professional sporting contracts, thus implying the programme had still provided value for them.</p> <p>Outdoor Adventure and UPS are broadly the national average, students that do complete Outdoor Adventure and UPS achieve outstanding grades, and very strong value-added.</p> <p>General Sport has a success rate of 91%, which is an outstanding achievement. Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma Fitness achieved 76.47% due to a number of students leaving to directly enter employment.</p> <p>Equine has been a challenging area in the last 2 years. We do more duties than any other college in the land based sector. There was no single reason for students leaving college based on analysis of all withdrawals; however there has been feedback from students about the demands of the yard and the atmosphere there. This is supported by some data as Level 3 Extended Diploma Business achieved 93.75% and Equitation achieved 64.58%. Business students do not perform yard duties. In response to incipient issues, in the last 6 months there was a reorganisation in the department, a change of staffing and a recalibration of how duties are delivered - so far the retention is 100% this year, suggesting the action had been successful in resolving underlying issues.</p> <p>In Animal Care, most retention issues clustered around the Subsidiary Diploma where we had staff with an unexpected life-threatening illnesses and then another who was summarily suspended and then dismissed due a number of issues. It's clear this group required more stability.</p> <p>Level 3 Diploma Agriculture enrolled 30 students and 96.3% completed and passed, which was phenomenally high. The only area with poor success rates in the department was Game, which had significant issues with staffing resulting in 3 staff having to leave the college – we now believe this is stable and resolved.</p> <p>Given the nature of the CIF, and focus on certain factors, LR explained that the Ofsted inspector working with Landex suggested this did not communicate the narrative clearly enough for an external audience.</p> <p>There is much to be proud of in FE, indeed the majority of students experience comfortable Grade 1 provision and it is our contention that we are an outstanding institution. Evidence for this view was presented – namely, extremely high retention rates, well in excess of the sector, extremely high value-added for BTEC students, who comprise 85% of all FE fulltime provision, statistically well ahead of national means.</p>		

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<p>Similarly, achievement rates are extremely high with BTEC. A Level performance has improved but sits at broadly average national levels. There is a challenge for us here as our A level provision is highly niche and therefore we perhaps struggle from incorrect comparators.</p> <p>DC raised level 3 courses, A Level and BTEC and asked if it is feasible to present them separately before combining the data.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that LR will provide members with data.</i></p> <p>RBS asked LR where the problem was. LR advised that there are clustered issues as outlined above.</p> <p>EK advised that if there was a problem in an area, it needed to be addressed sooner rather than later and asked if there were procedures in place to address things more rapidly, so the students can attain grades. LR said students have chosen to disengage from the course, the College acts as quickly as we can and are very audit focused. LR stated he believed the College has acted rapidly in every case.</p> <p>BH asked if A Levels aren't doing as well as BTEC and are more inclined to do sport, why they are being allowed to enrol on the programme. LR advised that the reason students don't do BTECs is because the BTEC subjects we offer do not allow them to progress to their desired outcomes at University.</p> <p>RM advised that A Levels can progress onto a degree course; our BTEC may not give them access to that. We put students under a lot of strain, some exceed well and some struggle. We have taken money out of the sport academy scholarship fund and employed a lifestyle coach to support them.</p> <p>RR advised that the issue is perhaps not being confident enough about what outstanding means to us. LR advised that it is hard to determine how to truly recognise Outstanding as this is a subjective term. Furthermore, we are very self-critical so we would tend not to consider provision outstanding here when in reality is perhaps better than most other institutions. GvdL advised that the question is how we measure that and taking it into consideration how profitable it is or not, and whether it has credibility in the eyes of Ofsted.</p> <p>CM advised that he believes Hartpury is outstanding but it is about making sure it is realistic, looking at the report and presenting it. The concern is performance management of staff and achieving the best for students. We need to ensure we get a handle on it early, so we are not damaging students. LR advised that the last 12 months have been very strong performance management of staff e.g. Agriculture had a change in staff and are now a grade 2 department. CW raised the situation in Animal Care relating to long term sickness and the situation in Agriculture. The illness in Animal Care was unexpected and also permanent so the two situations were not comparable.</p>	LR	12.03.14

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<p>CW asked if Agriculture is moving forward. LR said absolutely and he was now confident it was a grade 2 department with grade 1 within reach in 1 year. RM advised that they are a fairly young team and have handled it extremely well.</p> <p>GvdL referred to page 37 and advised that it was a surprise for him to read the last 2 year increase in funding change in a way to give more qualifications to students. If that were the case why was there not such a success. LR advised that it was clustered in Animal Care and Equine, there were 2 very large complimentaries that impacted on the long success rates by 2.5%. There was capacity to build the funding stream and unfortunately the success rates were not good. BH advised that it depends on how relevant it is with students. They opt with their feet and the trick is to find one that's relevant for the student. LR agreed and recognised that FE had tried something new and this always carries risk. Unfortunately this had not worked as well as we would have liked last year, so we have changed what we are doing this year and will not be running those courses again.</p> <p>RBS asked if there was an issue with the MIS data. LR advised that MIS are under pressure but very effective in his view. Monitoring of MIS data is timely. RBS said it is important to know what is happening, it's our own system, so it should be possible to have net data. LR said in terms of attendance and retention we are comfortable with data but there were some middle management choice that in retrospect were ineffective. LR reminded the committee he had been seriously ill, resulting in permanent disability, in the Easter of 2013 and also without a deputy for much of the year.</p> <p>RR questioned within A level whether we really setting high enough expectations. LR responded that the A level team have very high expectations indeed, but we need to recognise the bulk of their students are not doing recreational sport or even enthusiast levels, they are effectively professional athletes with 20 hours training a week in addition to their studies. There have been studies saying that doing in excess of 15 hours part-time work during Sixth Form reduces grades by an average of 1. A level value added is broadly in line with others so this should be regarded as a very positive outcome for students at Hartpury College.</p> <p>DC advised that he doesn't recognise the idea that you can't study A Level and top level sport. RM advised that if we really go into detail there is plenty of evidence. If you look at the elite sport cohort some students are very academic and some struggle. DC advised that the challenge is to help push them forward. RM advised that Ruth Owens-Evans who is a lifestyle management coach has been with the College for 3 weeks and expects to see some impact next year. CM asked how much specialist coaches share ambition academically from them. DC advised that Phil de Glanville said the academic side is just as important and if students are not performing they are pulled from games.</p>		

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	<p>RR advised that what we haven't heard is the message about value and opportunities to students. LR advised that the data doesn't reflect an outstanding college or what we see day to day which is clearly of a very high quality, and proposed to completely re-write it, so there is more narrative and bring it back to the committee in March.</p> <p>JD advised that Phil de Glanville is meeting with Jo Ronald and Chris Potter to discuss academic performance. BH advised that the self-assessment could now be much smaller than the large document LR had produced with clear bullet points and key messages. We will need to get something on the Ofsted portal for January, LR responded he was aware of this and was proposing to get a draft statement plus appendices by Christmas.</p> <p>GvdL advised that the one thing that is obviously still outstanding is the level of achievement and it needs to be at the front of the SAR.</p> <p>RM proposed that LR and RM agree a concise summary and circulate it to the group. If it is acceptable it will placed on the Portal before Christmas. The larger document will be submitted at the next meeting.</p> <p><i>It was suggested that LR would complete a revision and present at the next meeting.</i></p>	LR	12.03.14
6.	<p>Review FE Data</p> <p>6.1. Attendance Paper QS06.1/11/13</p> <p>LR advised that attendance is high, KPI is 95% and the overall attendance rate is 97.2%. There were issues with registers last year for Functional Skills, but this has been resolved and attendance is now much stronger.</p> <p>6.2. Retention Paper QS06.2/11/13</p> <p>LR advised that retention is extraordinarily strong. Anecdotally the raising of the entrance criteria has had a positive effect.</p>		
7.	<p>Review HE Balanced Scorecard. Paper QS07/11/13</p> <p>JD advised that overall withdrawals are 10.5%. There are a range of strategies in place and we are trialling modules. Overall 10.5% is good and we benchmark against other organisations.</p>		
8.	<p>Review the HE Student Voice</p> <p>8.1. HE National Student Survey 2013. Paper QS08.1/11/13</p> <p>JD advised that that the survey was completed by all final year students. There is an upward trajectory overall. Nationally overall satisfaction is 85% and the College's satisfaction level is 82%. The new HE structure is in place, with changes to staffing to focus on student experience.</p>		

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	<p>CW questioned the last column and said it was significantly down. JD advised that this was due to a replacement of staff. The Student Union will now be in-house, engagement with the Student Union has been better than in previous years.</p> <p>BG advised that he had been a member of the Student Union since year 1. Geographically we were left out and unable to hold events due to low numbers and unable to attend the AGM. Part of the TDAP plan will enhance student experience.</p> <p>8.2. Minutes of Student Council Meeting. Paper QS08.2/11/13</p> <p>BG reported that there was good attendance at the meeting. A few matters have been raised with various areas.</p>		
9.	<p>Review Governor Training Initiatives as Outcomes of Governor "Mock Inspection Interviews". Paper QS09/11/13</p> <p>LR advised that the paper will be re-visited at the next meeting. RR requested a briefing on key data.</p> <p>GvdL advised that A Levels have evolved. The strategy is a bit muddy in the eyes of the Corporation and it is important it is revised outlining why we deliver them and what the benefit is.</p> <p>LR advised that there was already a clear strategy for A levels which had been presented to both the Principal and two Governors of the Q&S 12 months ago, however it might now be the case that the Governors in general would wish to revisit the overarching aims of the centre (growth, size, curriculum mix etc.) it would be interesting for A Levels to discuss with Governors of their strategy and this could be achieved at Corporation in January. BH advised that it is important that the document links in with the SAR. LR noted this and would incorporate in the SAR revision.</p>	RL	12/03/14
10.	<p>Review Guidelines for Structure of Link Governor Departmental Meetings. Paper QS10/11/13</p> <p>LR advised that Head of Departments have been instructed to contact Link Governors.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that Link Governors will provide LR with feedback after meetings.</i></p>	Link Governors	Ongoing
11.	<p>Review analysis of complaints for 2012-2013. Paper QS11/11/13</p> <p>LR advised that there was an increase in the number of complaints due to rejecting student applications. This was largely due to changes in residential status for level 2 courses during the year.</p>		

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12.	<p>Note staff development since last meeting. Paper QS12/11/13</p> <p>BH advised that there appeared to be little recorded on teaching, learning and assessment.</p> <p><i>It was agreed that an internal paper on this would be submitted at the next meeting.</i></p>	LR	12/03/14
13.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>No other business was reported.</p>		
14.	<p>Dates of Future Meetings all to be held at 2.00pm</p> <p>Wednesday 12th March 2014 Thursday 26th June 2014 Wednesday 19th November 2014 Thursday 12th March 2015 Tuesday 23rd June 2015 Thursday 29th October 2015</p>		

Professor Ron Ritchie
Deputy Chair Quality and Standards Committee

12th March 2014