

FAREHAM COLLEGE

**MEETING OF THE
TEACHING, STUDENTS, CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE**

13th May 2015

MINUTES

Present: Miss E Champion
Mr N Duncan
Mr D Hart (Chair)
Mrs N Nageon de Lestang
Mr C Magee
Miss L Quelch
Mr A Ramsay
Miss K Smith
Mrs P Tilt

In attendance: Mr V Adams (Director TL&A)
Mr S Dingsdale (AP/MD CEMAST)
Mrs J Eayrs – (Clerk)
Ms L Palmer – (Director Curriculum)
Mrs C Middleton – (Business Development Manager)

14/15 Curriculum Area Presentation

Members of the Committee received a presentation on “Subcontracting and Partnerships Update” from Mrs Middleton, Business and Development Manager. The slides used during the presentation are attached as an **Appendix** to these minutes. In addition, members were provided with the Subcontracting Policy Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy 2014/2015.

During the presentation Mrs Middleton drew the following points to members’ attention:

- The College was not currently ‘actively’ seeking new partners. However, if it were then the flow-chart process outlined on page 4 of the Subcontracting Policy would be followed;
- There was a discussion about the level of Governor involvement following the publication of the new Funding Regulations 2015/2016;
- It was agreed that the process to appoint new contractors would be delegated to the College (as the it was not deemed appropriate to have Governors directly involved in operational matters) but the TSC&Q Committee would receive reports based on KPIs;
- Mrs Middleton confirmed that contractors were now involved in the SAR Validation process to ensure the performance was monitored and reviewed;
- The Chair highlighted the fact that the performance and retention were ‘good’ and he questioned whether there were any lessons that the College could learn from the contractors? Mrs Middleton responded by saying that many of the courses were ‘short courses’ and, therefore, the success was expected to be higher than normal. She confirmed that good practice was shared where appropriate;
- Members were advised that the annual Employer Survey had recently been completed and the results would be analysed in due course.

The Chair thanked Mrs Middleton for her presentation and she left the meeting.

15/15 Annual Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mr Hart and Mrs Nageon de Lestang were duly elected as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively to serve until the first meeting after the 1st April 2016, in accordance with the Corporation's Standing Orders.

16/15 Declaration of Interests

Members of the Committee were reminded of the need to declare any personal or financial interest in any items of business to be considered during the meeting. No interests were declared.

17/15 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr Kew, Mr Briscoe, Mr Cooper, Mrs Sommers and Mr Marsh.

18/15 Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th March 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on the 4th March 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

19/15 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 4th March 2015

- (i) **Minute 28/14: Mid-Year Survey** – The Principal confirmed that the College had met the target for student participation on the OFSTED survey previously reported and had not had to repeat it. He reported that the outcomes of that survey had been very positive although some areas for development had been identified. In addition, he advised members that the target had also been met with the Employer Survey which had closed on the 7th May 2015 and he confirmed that the results of both surveys would be circulated to the Committee;
- (ii) **Minute 08/15(ii): Destinations** – The Principal provided an update on the position regarding the data collection of student destinations and the option to use an external agency which was being explored. He went on to say that some agencies had been claiming a 90% 'hit rate' which was actually closer to 60% and, as a result, the benefits of engaging an agency to complete this work were questionable. Members were advised that the College Alumni had recently been launched and students were being invited to login to the College Association to claim some free benefits in exchange for providing information about themselves. Ex-students had also been invited to follow the College on Twitter and Facebook. The Principal concluded by saying that significant progress had been made but further development was required.

20/15 Termly Report of the Academic Standards Committee

Members of the Committee noted that the meeting of the Academic Standards Committee had taken place on the 6th May 2015 which was the date the TSC&Q papers had been dispatched to members. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the minutes to members when they were available.

21/15 Termly Report on Risk Management – May 2015

Members of the Committee received a paper on Risk Management which outlined the top risks which were the responsibility of the Committee to monitor and review. The Principal spoke to the paper and advised members that the Risk Register had recently been thoroughly reviewed by the

Risk Management Group. He went on to draw members' attention to the 7 'red risks' under the heading of Teaching and Learning which related to:

- Poor student attendance - The Principal reported that attendance had been a challenge this academic year (14/15) and had been 'pulled down' by English and Maths attendance (74% and 68% respectively) which was a significant issue for the College. He went on to say that there were currently 900+ learners on those programmes and reminded members that English and Maths was now a limiting grade with OFSTED. He referred to a number of strategies which were currently being developed to secure improvement in this area which would be discussed later in the meeting;
- Poor achievement in English and Maths – There was a general discussion about English and Maths and how the College could work with the local schools to address the current situation. Governors expressed the view that difficulties seemed to appear around the age of 12 or 13 with it being almost 'cool' to declare oneself as 'not good at Maths'. Members discussed how the negative image linked to Maths could be reduced. Members explored how lessons were being timetabled and this could be improved which included:
 - exploring the possibility of a 4 day learning week;
 - to 'sandwich' English and Maths between other topics;
 - to avoid large gaps in the timetable so that students did not leave campus and not return;
 - exploring the possibility of starting later in the day which would better suit the 'teenage brain' but would not prepare students with the necessary employability skills and employer expectations.

Members felt that English and Maths almost sat outside the quality improvement mechanisms and processes due to its importance. It was suggested that something very innovative was required and the College should try to present English and Maths in a non-traditional way. Members discussed establishing a Maths and English Working Group to undertake this work

- Poor OfSTED visit leading to poor publicity and a reduction in student numbers –
- Serious IT failure;
- Delay in completion of building works;
- Poor retention leading to poor success outcomes;
- Finance: Lack of understanding of student number targets leading to complacency regarding application numbers.

Members of the Committee reviewed and noted the contents of the paper and the mitigation in place to reduce the risks identified.

22/15 QAA HE Review Outcomes

Members of the Committee received and reviewed the final QAA HE Review Report. Mr Adams, Director for Teaching, Learning and Quality spoke to the report and confirmed that this was the final draft unless the College decided to appeal the final judgement (Appeal to be lodged by 1st June 2015). He went on to say that he did not disagree with the recommendations made by QAA but the key issue was about the nature of the report which appeared to be measuring the adherence to the quality code rather than to be a measure of the quality of the teaching/learner experience. He concluded by saying that Universities were still embedding the code so it was no surprise that an FE institution was doing the same. Members were advised that Mrs Nageon de Lestang had been appointed as Head of HE to oversee this area and, although it had been onerous, the review had been a beneficial developmental process.

Members reviewed the recommendations arising from the QAA visit which had been included in a Post Inspection Action Plan. Mr Adams assured members that the College was meeting a high percentage of the Code requirements and there was nothing in the Action Plan which would be a cause for concern.

Members of the Committee reviewed and noted the Final QAA HE Review Report.

23/15 TSC&Q Summer Term Report – May 2015

Katie Smith left the meeting during this item (7.45pm)

Members of the Committee received a detailed summer term report which provided an overview of the developments and plans in train in relation to Teaching, Students, Curriculum and Quality. The report outlined the work and performance and the significant developments and challenges facing the following key areas to date:

- Teaching, Learning and Quality;
- QAA Higher Education Update (discussed under a previous agenda item)
- Students and Recruitment;
- BRC Curriculum;
- CEMAST;
- Business Development & Partnerships.

Each Director spoke to their relevant section of the paper and drew the following to Governors' attention:

(i) **Teaching and Learning:**

- Annual observations were now complete and all teachers who had been observed had received 3 action points to develop;
- The introduction of an ungraded, more supportive process, had resulted in a 'cooling' and, as a result, quality had taken a slight dip;
- Although no longer graded, feedback and evaluation from observations had indicated that approximately 80% of teaching would be rated 'good' or better in an inspection which would support a self-assessment grade of 'good'. However, Mr Adams highlighted the fact that the College needed to demonstrate an awareness of the issues one of which was consistency;
- The new OFSTED Common Inspection Framework and Inspection Handbook were expected to be published imminently. Information already published indicated that the College was due to receive one of the new short inspections in the 2015/2016 academic year;
- Members were referred to the action plan on pages 2 and 3 of the report which outlined clearly the actions in train secure continued improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

(ii) **Students:**

The Principal spoke to this section of the report in the absence of Mrs Sommers:

- **Successes** – Members reviewed and noted a number of successes and good news stories for the College which included:
 - 3 day STEM fair held at CEMAST;
 - FC student won the 'Friends of the Earth' Debating Competition;
 - A business breakfast for local employers with guest speaker, Mark Hoban MP;
 - The annual hair and beauty showcase;
 - The Purple Trees Theatre Company put on a spectacular musical, Beauty and the Beast;
 - Risque won Solent University's Solent Sound competition with their medley of 80's classics.
- **Student Support (Emotional)** – Members noted that 125 students had sought advice and support from the Support Team. In addition, members were advised that a recent visit from Barbara Piddington, HCC Local Area Designated Officer, confirmed that the College's processes were robust and complied with all safeguarding guidance;

- **2015-2016 Recruitment** – Members were pleased to note that recruitment for the 2015-2016 year remained buoyant and was 27% up compared to the same time the previous year.

(iii) **BRC Curriculum:**

- **Retention** – College overall retention rate 92.8%;
- **Introduction of CPD** – Mrs Palmer, Director of Curriculum (BRC) confirmed that there were currently 52 students studying on the Careers and Personal Development Programme. She went on to say that some students had worked with the CPD team and had then been successfully integrated back in to their home department. It was acknowledged that without the CPD unit, those students would have withdrawn and been ‘lost’;
- **Attendance (BRC)** – Members reviewed and noted the analysis of attendance by department. The Director Curriculum confirmed that cross-College attendance was currently the lowest it had been for a number of years. She went on to explain that all HODs/PMs had their own departmental attendance incentive schemes but these would need to be initiated at the start of the new academic year 2015/2016 to have a significant impact and secure improvement;
- **BRC Curriculum Strategy Update** – Members reviewed the summary of the rationale for the introduction of a four day Study Programme as outlined on page 10 of the report;
- **English and Maths** – Members noted the English and Maths Strategy for 2015/2016 which was summarised on page 11 of the report but which referred to embedding, contextualising and making E&M relevant to students’ future careers and the E&M team working collegiately with curriculum teams.

(iv) **CEMAST:**

- The part-time offer had now been planned for 2015/2016 and the draft prospectus was being checked;
- Mr Dingsdale advised members that there had been some changes to the CEMAST part-time curriculum and its delivery for the 2015/2016 academic year. He went on to say that there was an emphasis on blocking delivery over a shorter period of time and also building in weekend delivery. In addition, a Saturday club was being promoted to attract the younger audience to partake in fun engineering to develop their STEM skills;
- Growth for next year was currently predicted further growth of approximately 20% for the 2015/2016 year;
- The Education Business Partnership would be hosting the TeenTech event on the 14th May 2015 and it was anticipated that over 300 STEM focussed school children would be attending the event;
- Classroom based learning retention for 2014/2015 was noted at 93.6%;
- Classroom based learning attendance for 2014/2015 was noted at 91%;
- Classroom based learning Success rate for 2014/2015 was forecast to be 89%/90%;
- Employer responsive retention rate for 2014/2015 was forecast to be 82.1%;
- Employer responsive timely success was noted at 80%.

Members of the Committee reviewed and noted the contents of the termly Report.

23/15 Marketing Strategy for the 2015/2016 Academic Year

Members of the Committee received the Draft Marketing Strategy which had been developed to underpin the College’s Strategic Plan and which would be used to drive the production of a detailed Operational Plan to ensure effective planning and delivery of all campaigns, publications, materials and activities on an annual basis.

Members reviewed and noted the ‘Goals’ of the Strategy which were to:

- Build the profile and reputation of the Fareham College brand;
- Raise awareness of its values and appeal to target audience(s);
- Position Fareham College as a leading provider of further education in Fareham and Gosport and to encourage the community to engage and participate in its various offerings;
- Achieve specified 16-18 application targets and facilitate future uplift in full-time recruitment.

The Principal spoke to the paper and advised the Committee that:

- The Strategy presented was a 'refreshed' version of the existing strategy;
- The Marketing Working Group had been established to provide advice and guidance on the College's Marketing and Communications;
- The Marketing Team was currently being developed to best serve the College and the delivery of the Strategic Objectives.

Members of the Committee reviewed the draft Marketing Strategy and noted that it was due to be presented to the Senior Management Team for final consideration.

**24/15 Biennial Review of the following Strategies: Teaching and Learning Strategy
Curriculum Policy and Strategy
Learner Involvement Strategy
Curriculum Quality Strategy**

Members of the Committee received and reviewed the above strategies following the biennial review. In reviewing the documents the following comments were provided by members:

- The Strategies presented (which covered a 2 year period) should not be 'cast in stone' to enable the newly appointed Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality) the flexibility to influence, develop and contribute to them. The Principal commented that the further education sector was so fluid at the moment the strategies would be adapted going forward as required;
- The Strategies should be made to look the same and the owner of each Strategy should be added;
- The Strategies needed to be linked to the Strategic Plan which should be clearly reflected in these documents.

The Principal concluded by saying that he felt the updated strategies now reflected the prevailing requirements of the College which included:

- Reference to the LEP;
- Changes to the Common Inspection Framework;
- The arrival of the English and Maths challenge;
- The introduction of directed independent study.

Members of the Committee endorsed the Strategies presented with the inclusion of the feedback/comments outlined above.

25/15 Annual Review and Evaluation

Members of the Committee undertook the annual review of the Terms of Reference and the Annual Cycle of Committee Business. Two amendments were proposed related to the addition of an Annual Review of Student Destinations and the inclusion of the Deputy Principal to the membership of the Committee (in attendance). Members agreed to recommend the updated Terms of Reference and Annual Cycle of Business for approval by the full Corporation at its meeting on the 24th June 2015.

In addition, members undertook an annual review of the performance of the Committee against the agreed performance indicators and concluded that the work of the TSC&Q Committee had added value to the work of the Board during the 2014/2015 year.

26/15 Dates of meetings in 2015/2016

Members of the Committee agreed the following dates of meetings during the 2015/2016 year for inclusion in the Corporation Calendar with all meetings to start at 5.30pm:

- 11th November 2015;
- 2nd March 2016;
- 11th May 2016.

Post minute note: The date of the 11th November 2015 meeting was subsequently changed to Friday 13th November 2015 at 4.30pm to accommodate the dates of the Area Review briefings.