

CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
QUALITY COMMITTEE
24th FEBRUARY 2009

PRESENT: Janice Maclean (Chair)
Charles Myers
Elizabeth Wood
David Law (Principal)
Heather Clarke

IN ATTENDANCE: Caroline Williams (Director of Quality & Learning)
Alison Moles (Assistant Director of Quality & Learning)
Richard Davis (Head of Data & Communications)
Marco Iciek (Head of Sixth Form Centre)
John Fowl (Clerk to the Corporation)
Joanne Saward (Minuting Secretary)

201 APOLOGIES

Phil Bridge

202 TO DECLARE IN ADVANCE ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

There were no declarations.

203 TO DECLARE ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

204 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4th NOVEMBER 2008

Under item 198 it was agreed that the first sentence of this minute should be changed to read "During the year 239 observations had been carried out however the summary college observation profile reports on the best grade for each teacher (150 observations) with 70% of the observations graded good or better. Additional peer and developmental observations had also been conducted". With this amendment the minutes were approved.

205 MATTERS ARISING

Members were informed that the organisational chart for the college was now included at the rear of the college Self Assessment Report. The college SAR had been validated at the full board meeting in December and so the special meeting of Quality committee members had not been required.

206 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE FOUR YEAR PERFORMANCE TRENDS IN A LEVEL PROVISION

Marco Iciek drew attention to the low achievement rates on these courses in the early years. To address the problem the college had established an 'A' level group with the intention of targeting 'A' levels and to monitor the developments necessary to bring achievement up to at least national average standard. Governors were pleased to see that GCE 'A' level results were now 3% above the national average and the results for AS levels were at the national average level. The college was now working to raise AS level achievements above national averages. Members noted that the success rate for AS

levels had fallen back slightly for the year 2007/08 but this was felt to be due to the exceptional year the college had experienced during 06/07. It was noted that the achievement rates had still achieved national average standards. Governors were pleased to see the trend of improvement that had been achieved over the past three years.

Liz Wood asked how many students progressed from the AS level to 'A' level in GCEs and it was confirmed that the majority did progress. It was also noted that the AS level students from other institutions joined the college to continue to A2.

At present the college had concerns on the performance of GCE 'A' Level Psychology and ICT and these areas were being closely monitored to ensure the necessary improvement occurred.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

207 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT ON RETENTION AND ATTENDANCE 2008/09

Student attendance had improved from 76% in 2004/05 to 87% in 2007/08. In the current year attendance was 89%.

Retention in 2004/05 had been 83% and this had improved to 88% by 2007/08. The current data for 2008/09 was showing that retention in the college was at 97% although this was expected to reduce by the end of the year.

Members were informed that all the data had been extracted from electronic registers and therefore were considered to be accurate. Richard Davies explained how the use of attendance and withdrawal data would affect the final attendance percentages but that the college was aiming to achieve a minimum 92% average attendance. The college register system flagged a single absence automatically to course tutors so that they can monitor individual students.

The attendance rate in Construction was 85 % and this was regarded as low. This had been discussed at the Governors Away Day and Marco Iciek expressed the view that this was due at least in part to the students taking on more work during the current economic climate and missing college as a consequence. It was noted also that the Construction courses included a higher proportion of part time employed students and these students were often pressurised by employers to stay at work on the days they would normally attend college. The college was monitoring the position and would take action as necessary.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

208 TO RECEIVE THE QUALITY AND LEARNING REPORT

The use of Performance Review Boards in the college was entering its second year and these review boards monitored each subject sector area and compare the in-year data with the performance data of recent years.

The governors were advised that it was the intention to introduce Performance Review Boards into the business support teams and this will involve the business support managers and team leaders the intention being to improve the practice of self assessment in these areas as well as in the teaching areas.

Members were informed that the college used Quality Monitoring Panels which were chaired by Caroline Williams or Alison Moles. At these panels departmental heads were challenged on the performance of their area.

Continuing Professional Development was seen as central to the college's improvement strategy and the new online booking system for CPD had been introduced and gives managers the ability to analyse participation rates and the impact on their curriculum area.

A submission for TQS accreditation had been made in 2008 but the college had been informed it did not fully satisfy the TQS criteria. It was noted that to achieve the standard the TQS criteria would need to be applied college-wide and not just in a single curriculum area.

Alison Moles informed the governors that the Peer Review developments for 2008/09 were progressing well and that the next planned review would be at South East Essex College on 5th March 2009. This meeting will look at the specific areas within the South East Essex College self assessment process. The two main areas for the college action plan were identified as being to encourage the formation of a new Peer Review Group and to produce a case study of best practice.

Members were advised that the college had received funding from LSIS for equality and diversity monitoring and is using this funding to look at ethnicity and gender in respect of success rates in the subject sector areas with predominantly male or female learners. Peter Harrison the ex Deputy Principal of Oaklands College had been employed as a consultant to assist with this work. In addition Mike Ashley an engineering specialist had also been employed.

In March 2009 a number of staff from West Suffolk College would be visiting the college to view the online CPD system employed at Chelmsford. In addition, the Director of 14-19 Student Support and Quality from Southampton College is visiting Chelmsford College to learn more about our quality systems.

Members noted attendance by the Quality team at a number of external events.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

209 TEACHING AND LEARNING OBSERVATION SCHEME (TALOS)

Members were informed of the number of observations undertaken during 2007-08 and that 70% of observations were graded good or better. In 2008/09 the college had adopted a different approach in its use of the TALOS system and now if a lecturer consistently achieves a grade 1 they will be observed just once per year. If they achieve grade 2 it will be twice per year and a grade 3 will be observed upwards of three times per year. Those achieving grade 4 would be observed as often as necessary in order to achieve the improvement required. The target for 2008/09 for teaching observation grades of good or better will be 77%. The college was currently concentrating on those staff graded 3 or 4 in their observations so the data in the report currently presented to the committee was "skewed" due to this factor. Later in the year an analysis of TALOS by sector subject area will be presented to the governors.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received.

210 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) REPORT

The college conducts two CPD weeks per year which includes all staff. During the week the 5th – 9th January 2009 a CPD week had taken place. The aim was to improve the quality of provision for students. Staff had reviewed the action points in their SARs and attended a range of training activities delivered by a total of 26 different internal staff and three external trainers. The week had given all staff the opportunity to share good practice. 77% of the participants graded the activities delivered by internal trainers as either good or outstanding with the external trainers judged as 75% satisfactory.

Members were informed that the college had been fortunate to obtain the services of Geoff Petty for the January 2010 CPD event. Governors will be invited to attend this.

Heads of Department are producing reports to evaluate the impact of the CPD events and these have been used during the Recent Performance Review Boards and will again be used at the Quality Monitoring Panels.

Early indications are that the CPD weeks are worthwhile and highly effective in promoting improvement and provide value for money.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received

211 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that the student perception of course (SPOC) data would be reviewed at the next meeting and an item on employer responsiveness.

212 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 19th May 2009 at 2:00pm

(Chair)

(Date)