

## GOVERNING BODY

### QUALITY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 6:15 pm at Parkshot, Richmond

Present:	Mr Geoff Varrall (presiding in the absence of Sally Field) Ms Christina Conroy OBE, Principal and Chief Executive Mr Alberto Esguevillas Lete Mr Sebastian Scotney Dr Mike Sevitt
In attendance:	Ms Gabrielle Flint, Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) Ms Louise Ellis, Director of Quality & Assessment Mr Paul Coveney, Clerk to the Governing Body & College Secretary
Apologies:	Ms Sally Field (Chair) Ms Lesley Kirby, non-Governor member Ms Judith Potter, Vice Principal (Finance & Corporate Services)

#### Part I: Non-Confidential Items

##### 1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

##### 2. MATTERS ARISING

- Item 5: the Committee requested that the College give a demonstration of Moodle (its e-learning environment) at the Governing Body meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

Clerk

##### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

##### 4. CLASS OBSERVATIONS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) reported that it had proved difficult to schedule particular classes for Governors to visit. She suggested that a better approach might be to arrange a guided tour (perhaps three hours), during which Governors could visit a number of classes, with a feedback session at the end. The Committee agreed that this could be an attractive solution, and asked the Clerk to invite Governors according to their availability.

Clerk

##### 5. COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2009/10

The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) made a presentation summarising the SAR, its importance to the College, the findings, and the main areas for development it identified. She reported that the overall grades were (unsurprisingly) the same as those Ofsted had assessed at its full inspection in May 2010, and drew particular attention to:

- The significant improvement since 2008/09 in success rates for Employer Responsive and Schools provision
- Success rates for Adult Learners which were comfortably above national benchmarks, despite a change to different learner groups which were sometimes challenging for the College
- The success of the College's volunteering programmes in providing to a significant number of people not only vocational qualifications, but also work experience and a reference
- High learner satisfaction levels,
- Generally high quality of provision (but with issues identified for improvement in the Skills for Life area and some areas of Business Support that are only satisfactory)
- 24% of teaching was graded as no more than satisfactory, but this was perhaps not surprising: the College had targeted grade 3 provision in 2009/10 which had skewed the data slightly
- HR systems are developing in line with the second stage of the organisational development strategy and are vital in supporting management controls on teachers
- MIS systems are still only satisfactory and reporting systems need to be developed to inform learner management and the curriculum
- Excellent leadership and management

- Good safeguarding and Equality and Diversity systems so there were no grade limiting factors
- Excellent financial management and value for money
- The need for an IT curriculum strategy, and
- The need for improved targeting of fees and learner requirements.

In particular, the SAR identified the need to develop a differentiated approach to meeting learner needs. For example, leisure courses should be fun and affordable, with light touch quality systems, vocational pathways should offer significant progression, possibly over an extended period, and learners with disabilities should be offered real progression to work and community engagement, all at clear cost.

Staff and information management systems required development to raise the quality of teaching in some “satisfactory” areas, to enable effective management of a large and diverse part-time teaching workforce, and to help develop teachers into managers.

IT systems, support and services were also an area for development: the new IT infrastructure should be used to enable a strong IT curriculum strategy, including the use of e-learning where appropriate, and developing the IT skills of the teaching workforce. There were large amounts of e-material available which could be procured and tailored (where necessary), and then offered in a diverse range of different course types.

Finally, a major area for development concerned information and communication: improved market and learner information was needed to support the development of a much more differentiated fee structure, and to identify attractive new vocational and leisure courses. There would then be the need to communicate the College’s courses as the right offer to the right people. For instance, it was a waste of resource to offer NVQ’s to those who had no need for, or interest in, such qualifications.

Principal

The Committee asked what progress there had been with pricing and customer management systems. The Vice Principal (Curriculum & Quality) replied that these did not yet provide the degree of flexibility which the College needed to develop. The Principal added that the College had issued an invitation to tender for targeted market research to inform a new and differentiated fee policy: it was hoped to present a draft to the Governing Body in March 2011. There was a need to recognise that different types of flexibility could attract different types of learner, and also that simply to keep trying new ideas without a supporting evidence base was likely to result in a high level of abortive work, absorbing resources to no real benefit. There was also a need to establish with absolute clarity what financial and other support was available to different learners, and from where it was available.

***The Committee recommended the College Self Assessment Report 2009/10 for approval by the Governing Body.***

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.

The meeting ended at 8:05 pm

**CHAIR**