

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday 14 April 2011 at 6.00 pm

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Kate Allsop (Chair)
Asha Khemka
Professor John Holford

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Helen Gyles, Notetaker
Tricia Harman, Deputy Principal
Graham Lewis, Head of Web Technologies
Janice Hill, Director: Curriculum and Standards
Nikki Witham, Associate Director: Quality & Performance
Diane Lacey, Associate Director of Learning: Hair and Beauty

	ACTION by whom	DATE by when
<p>11.18 <u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA</u></p> <p>The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting interests held in any matters to be considered. No interests were declared.</p>		
<p>11.19 <u>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from James Stafford, Steve Carroll and Diana Gilhespy. It was noted that, although the meeting was not quorate, it could go ahead as no decisions had to be made.</p>	Clerk	14 April 2011
<p>11.20 <u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2011</u></p> <p>There were 2 points of accuracy:</p> <p>i) 11.11: Deputy Head should read Deputy Principal. ii) 11.13: Associate Director: Quality and Performance should read Director: Curriculum and Standards</p> <p>AGREED: With these amendments, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2011. There were no matters arising.</p>	Chair	14 April 2011
<p>11.21 <u>ACTIONS OUTSTANDING PROGRESS REPORT</u></p> <p>Members reviewed the schedule of items and agreed that it accurately monitored ongoing progress.</p>		
<p>11.22 <u>DEPUTY PRINCIPAL`S REPORT</u></p> <p>The Deputy Principal provided her update to the Standards Committee and drew the following to members` attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Integrated Quality Enhancement Review (IQER):</i> The final report had now been published on the QAA website. WNC had achieved the 		

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highest grades possible. Four areas of good practice were being disseminated. The full report could now be found on the Governors' Portal.

- *Healthy FE College Recognition:* WNC had now gained Healthy College recognition, which meant that it was recognised as being committed to taking forward the staff, student and community health agenda in a proactive and accountable way. A Steering Group had been formed to ensure that health initiatives for staff and students would be developed and extended.
- *Ofsted Good Practice Website:* This website was now up and running and case studies were being shared across the College.
- *Collaborative Provision Audit:* An audit team from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) would be visiting the College for a day in respect of the partnership with the University of Derby. The College was still part of the Leeds Metropolitan University's collaborative provision audit, but there would be no visit. Everything was on schedule and results would be brought to the Standards Committee.

The Principal brought to the Committee's attention that a number of previously 'outstanding' colleges had not retained their 'outstanding' status. From cycle to cycle, Ofsted changed its focus and its inspectors were currently spending more time in the classroom than previously. It would take a lot of hard work to sustain the College's 'outstanding' status and it must ensure that overall success rates and teaching and learning, wherever it took place, were excellent.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.23 IN YEAR RETENTION AND ANALYSIS OF STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

The Director: Curriculum and Standards presented her report, which provided information on the number of withdrawals and the effect on retention as at March 2011 and drew the following to members' attention:

- At the point of withdrawal from a programme of learning, information was collected relating to the reason for withdrawal of students.
- As many students were enrolled onto multiple qualification aims, one student withdrawing from a programme may result in several withdrawals in terms of the data. This year had seen a significant increase in enrolments due to the requirements of foundation learning in 2010/11.
- A comparison of College enrolments at March 2010 and March 2011 indicated an overall increase of 23%.
- The overall College percentage of withdrawals against enrolments had increased by 1% to 9%.
- The number of withdrawals for learners aged 16-18 had increased by 26% although the number of withdrawals for learners aged 19+ had decreased by 1% (but different levels of enrolment, ie foundation learning).
- In March 2010 withdrawals for male learners were 12% higher than females, reducing to 6% in 2011.
- In March 2010 withdrawals of white British learners were 86% higher than learners of other ethnicity, whilst in March 2011 this difference decreased to 81%. The number of enrolments by learners of other ethnicity remained low when compared with non-white British learners.
- The low number of withdrawals by learners declaring a learning difficulty or disability had increased by 10% in March 2011 whilst withdrawals of learners who did not declare had risen by 12%.

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- The highest increase in withdrawals was on entry level programmes at 41% due to foundation learning whilst withdrawals on level 3, 4 and 5 programmes had decreased.
- Five Schools of Learning were currently below the College's target retention rate of 92% whilst four Schools had remained static.
- Comparisons with the same period in 2010 show an overall decrease of 1% in the College's overall in-year retention. Contributory factors are the decreases of 5% in Hospitality, Sports, Leisure & Travel Studies and 2% in Business, Professional & Continuing Education and 2% in Engineering & Transport Skills.
- The retention rate for males and females had levelled to 91% in March 2011.
- In-year retention for white British learners and learners of other ethnicity had widened to 4% from 2% for the same period in 2010, as had the difference between learners declaring a learning difficulty or disability and those who did not. LLDD and other ethnicity learners had higher in-year retention.
- Retention had remained static at 91% across both years for learners aged 16-18 and 19+.

There was a need to know what `other` meant and this category should be better defined. The Director: Curriculum and Standards was working with colleagues to reduce this category. Withdrawal data was completed by tutors and processed by Learner Records. Learners who had withdrawn had recently been contacted in order to undertake a more independent survey.

If learners registered, but never attended, they did not count in the College's retention figures and did not impact on finances. In School Reviews, emphasis was put on retaining learners and achievement of their qualifications.

The report was felt to be confusing and the presentation of the figures should be looked at. A clearer picture would be achieved if the number of students was given instead of the number of enrolments.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report, but a clearer report to be brought to the meeting on 14 July 2011.

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11.24 DESTINATIONS REPORT

The Director: Curriculum and Standards presented her report, which provided information relating to the destinations of full time FE students who had completed programmes at the end of the academic year 2009/10 and drew members' attention to the following:

- The College surveyed actual destinations of full time learners during the period between September and January of each subsequent academic year, i.e. in this case 2010/11.
- Actual destination data was collected from three main sources: Pro-Solution for learners who had re-enrolled at WNC either at Further Education (FE) or Higher Education (HE) level; UCAS tracking information on progression to an external HE institution; telephone or email contact of all leavers not included in the above by their tutor.
- The highest proportion of students, 37.44%, progressed onto another, normally higher, FE level course at West Nottinghamshire College.
- Of the 331 students progressing to HE, 100 enrolled onto an HE programme within the College, indicating an increase of 33.3% on the

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previous year, whilst those progressing to HE at an external institution had remained largely static.

- The number of students progressing to full time employment had increased by 51 (1.32%) whilst the number of learners accepting part time employment had decreased by 8, a difference of 0.28%.
- Progression to another FE course at WNC by 16-18 learners was 16.57% higher than 19+, whilst progression to an HE programme was 9.89% higher for 19+ learners.
- A higher percentage of males progressed to another course at WNC whilst a higher percentage of females progressed to HE not at WNC.
- Progression to full time employment was 4.61% higher for white British students whilst progression to another FE programme at WNC was 11% higher for students of other ethnicity.
- Despite the unfavourable economic climate, the numbers moving immediately into employment had increased slightly.
- The continued increase in numbers of students progressing to HE within WNC was a highly positive outcome, particularly in view of the imposed capping of numbers in 2009/10.
- 10.99% of students indicated their intended destination was full time employment with 12.69% gaining full time employment, reflecting an increase of 1.7%.
- Although 48.8% of students intended remaining in FE at WNC, 37.44% achieved this aim. However 2.94% of students progressed to HE at WNC, an increase of 1.22% against 1.62% of students expressing this intention.
- The highest percentage of learners progressing to full time employment, HE at WNC or another FE programme at WNC were within Academic Studies and Computer Science, whilst the highest percentage of those progressing to HE at another institution were within Business, Professional & Continuing Education.

The Director: Curriculum and Standards was working with colleagues to reduce the number of `not knowns`. Accuracy was now better as every learner was being contacted instead of just taking a sample.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.25 LEARNER VOICE STRATEGY – SECOND TERM RESULTS (NATIONAL LEARNER SURVEY)

The Head of Web Technologies presented his report, which was intended to update the Standards Committee on the College's Learner Voice activity for the second term of the academic year 2010/11.

In the months January to March 2011, 11 formal complaints had been received, via letter, telephone or website. The complainants were 7 female and 4 male, 8 were made by 19+ adults, and 3 by or on behalf of 16-18s. Complaints arose mainly from a variety of perceived affronts caused by College processes and services, including fees, exams, security, disciplinaries, buses, and teaching and learning.

The 2010/11 FfE National Learner Views survey was underway with results expected to be published in November 2011. This year the College had permission to use a number of paper based surveys, in addition to the online template, which had helped gather feedback from employer responsive learners and partner providers. To date, approximately 1500 survey responses had been received.

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141 students had been appointed as course representatives across the College with a training day held in February. Two 'Your Voice' sessions and 8 student focus groups had been held. Issues from the students varied across each School of Learning. However, there had been consistent messages around the buses, EMA and wearing of College lanyards.

The SU had undertaken a bus survey prompting 355 learners to respond. The main issues surrounded cleanliness, lateness, leaving stops before the allotted time, public using the buses and behaviour. Issues raised had been investigated and responses fed back to student representatives. Whilst a review of the College's bus service was on-going, students had been reminded of their responsibility.

Issues concerning the wearing of lanyards had been listened to and the College had responded by inviting students to choose their preferred lanyard colour, size and design through a student representative vote and a College wide online poll hosted on Moodle. Results would be concluded in April.

Individual solutions for other issues raised had been explored and feedback communicated through the 'You said, we only went and did it' campaign available on the Learner Voice notice boards situated across College.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.26 INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESSES – HALF YEAR REVIEW

The Associate Director: Quality and Performance presented her report to inform the Standards Committee of the progress and outcomes of the Internal Review process to date. This process was reviewed each year to ensure it was fit for purpose.

The number of reviews completed as at 14 March 2011 were noted as:

Schools of Learning	8
Business Support	5
Partner Providers	21

On completion of each review, the management team of the area received a detailed written report. The report detailed the findings of the review team under the headings; strengths, areas for development and recommendations for further improvements. Members noted the summary of key strengths and areas to improve for those areas already reviewed.

Improvement plans had been developed by each management team and shared with the review team leader. The management teams would be required to evaluate and measure the impact of the improvement plan in the self assessment report 2010/11.

A review of the internal review reports indicated that each School, business support area and partner provider had different strengths and a different range of issues to address. There were some recurring themes and management teams had been advised where they could potentially work jointly to make improvements. The reviews provided a detailed and focused approach, providing the management teams with an objective set of findings which they were able to use as a basis for improving all aspects of provision.

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AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.27 SAFEGUARDING – REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS

The Deputy Principal: Teaching and Learning presented her report which provided the Standards Committee with information with regard to safeguarding activity. The following was brought to members' attention:

- Additional work had been undertaken in relation to safeguarding arrangements of partner providers for employer responsive provision. This included systematic data collection for each partner and the recording on a single record within the College. Arrangements to ensure appropriate training had been undertaken for different groups of staff had been agreed.
- In terms of safeguarding incidents, members were asked to note the following information:
 - During the period 1 January to 25 March 2011 there had been 9 reported incidents.
 - The incidents fell into the following categories: bullying (2), cyber bullying (2), physical (3), and inappropriate behaviour (2).
- There had been five disclosures to the Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection team. None had necessitated referral to the local Safeguarding Board; two had been referred to Children's Social Care and three referred to the police.

It was requested that the periods of the report be more consistent ie on a monthly basis.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.28 TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE

The Associate Director: Quality and Performance presented her report to inform the Standards Committee of the progress of the graded teaching and learning observation process for 2010/11 and drew the following to members' attention:

- In September 2010, 407 staff had originally been identified as requiring an observation in 2010/11 alongside re-observations of staff following a grade 3 or 4 at their initial observation. This figure was now 385 observations, due to staff on maternity leave, staff retiring, and ACLS staff with no allocated hours. To 7 March 2011, 235 observations had been completed.
- There had been a significant increase in the percentage of observations graded good or better and in the proportion of observations graded outstanding. There had been no unsatisfactory observation grades.
- Permanent staff had delivered 212 sessions with 188 good or better sessions. 21 of 23 sessional staff lessons observed were good or better. Sessional staff continued to have access to the sessional portal which ensured that they had access to all the latest ideas on teaching and learning and policy and procedure.
- The best teaching and learning had been seen at Level 3 where 98% of the sessions observed were judged to be good or better. 83% of Level 2 and 93% of Level 3 sessions were judged to be good or better.
- The strength seen most often in good or better lessons was questioning, either to confirm understanding or to promote further understanding. This same element of a lesson was identified as the

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most common area to develop in lessons that were satisfactory or worse.

- In addition to observations of staff employed by the College, the College also carried out graded observations of teaching, learning, training and assessment delivered by its partner providers. This process currently operated on a 2 year cycle. There was a target to observe 50% of all identified assessors and trainers who were supporting WNC learners within each partner provider during 2010/11. The remaining 50% would be observed in 2011/12.
- The QTLP department were liaising closely with each partner provider to determine and confirm the number of assessors/trainers who were supporting WNC provision and to access timetables to observe these staff.
- To 7 March 2011, 30 graded observations had been completed.
- The profile had dropped compared with last year, but it was hard to draw overall conclusions from this as each observation was so different and dealt with such a wide range of different companies, environments, trainers and assessors. All providers were supported to improve the quality of teaching and learning and all observations graded 3 or 4 were followed up with support for individuals.
- The overall grade profile at this point of the year was significantly improved on last year's outcome at the same point. 82% of observed sessions were good or better in 2009/10 compared with 89% so far in 2010/11. The Teaching and Learning Development Team had provided a substantial amount of support across all Schools of Learning through the Teaching and Learning Coaching Strategy and through bespoke teaching and learning staff development sessions. The development of the 'Making the Grade' coaching session, specifically focusing upon the component of building an outstanding session in line with the Common Inspection Framework (2009) criteria for outstanding teaching and learning, had impacted positively on the overall grade profile and upon the learners.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.29 SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

The Director: Curriculum and Standards presented her report, which provided an overview of the range of support available to students and drew the following to members' attention:

- At the first stage of the interview process applicants were invited to attend an initial assessment. This bksb on-line assessment resource identified the applicant's general working level in English and mathematics from pre entry to level 3.
- Learners undertook the bksb diagnostic test within six weeks of enrolment and this highlighted the strengths and skills gaps of individual learners.
- An individual learning plan (ILP) was subsequently generated which tutors used to set targets and monitor learners' progress.
- bksb diagnostic assessments were used to identify learners who needed literacy and numeracy support, whilst Quickscan was used to recognise learners at risk of dyslexia.
- Some learners declined support even though the ALS team felt that they would benefit from it, and these learners were monitored by the School of Learning and offered informal support through tutorials. They may be referred back to the ALS team at any time during the academic year and support subsequently arranged.

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- 100% of learners who received specialist tutor support for literacy or numeracy in 2009/10 achieved their main qualification.
- Learners were stretched and challenged and there was an expectation that learners should aim for high grades rather than accept the norm, with targets agreed and regularly reviewed. The wide range of experience and expertise of staff provided a role model for learners, whose aspirations could be low due to lack of example within their social and family circles.
- Tutorials provided opportunities both on a 1:1 basis and in groups to explore issues which could be challenging to our learners and which may prevent them from achieving their full potential.
- Whilst pastoral support was provided by staff within Schools of Learning, specialist support was available through cross College teams or external agencies. The student health, welfare and safeguarding team helped learners overcome barriers to learning, which may be personal, social, health, family or financial.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.30 HE ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Deputy Principal: Teaching and Learning presented her report, which provided the Standards Committee with an overview of the meeting of the HE Academic Standards Committee held on 16 February 2011.

The key agenda items had been:

- Planned numbers for 2011/12 and the allocation to Schools of Learning using a risk based approach
- Annual monitoring process and report format
- Handbook templates for 2011/12
- Collaborative audit with University of Derby and Leeds Metropolitan University
- Retention and intercalators

There had been no issues arising from the meeting.

AGREED: To note the contents of the report.

11.31 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled for 14 July 2011 at 6.00 pm.

Meeting closed at 7.10 pm

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