

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Boardroom at the Derby Road site on Thursday 14 July 2011 at 7.00 pm

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Tricia Harman, Deputy Principal: Teaching & Learning
Louise Knott, Director: Marketing & Communications
Janice Hill, Director: Curriculum & Standards
Nikki Witham, Associate Director: Quality & Performance
Diane Lacey, Associate Director of Learning: Hair & Beauty

	ACTION by whom	DATE by when
<p>11.32 <u>DECLARATIONS 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>11.33 <u>WELCOME, INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from James Stafford.</p>		
<p>11.34 <u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 APRIL 2011</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting and were approved and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2011.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	Chair	14 July 2011
<p>11.35 <u>ACTIONS OUTSTANDING & MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u></p> <p>Members reviewed the outstanding actions list at page 9. In relation to item 6, members were advised that the results of the National Learners Survey have not yet been received and will be presented at the next meeting.</p>	Dir: Mktg & Comms	13 Oct 2011

Signed : _____ Chair

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11.36 DEPUTY PRINCIPAL`S REPORT

The Deputy Principal introduced her detailed report and drew members` attention to the following:

- a) University of Derby Collaborative Provision Audit – an audit was carried out in May 2011. The meeting with the QAA reviewers was very positive and showed the College`s HE provision in a very positive light. The audit is of the University`s framework for collaboration and not an audit of the partner organisations.
- b) Leeds Metropolitan University Collaborative Provision Audit – confidential explanation was given that informal feedback so far suggests a limited confidence finding, although full details of this are not known at this time.
- c) League for Excellence and Innovation – the LfEI was formed by West Nottinghamshire College with four partner colleges. To date 169 (53 WNC) curriculum and business support staff from across the five colleges have accessed joint events. Following the events staff are encouraged to disseminate their findings with their teams or with cross College joint events, such as the Curriculum Managers` Forum or the Safeguarding Steering Group. The sharing practice events have provided the delegates with an opportunity to visit other Beacon colleges and enabled them to capture effective ideas and initiatives that can be adapted within the College.
- d) Functional Skills Inclusion and Success Rate Data – in 2010/11 functional skills will be excluded from the success rate data but included from 2011/12 onwards.
- e) Market Intelligence Exchange Service (MIDES) – MIDES is the market intelligence data exchange service, recently developed by RCU Research & Consultancy in partnership with the AoC. The reports provide a summary of the learner responsive outputs in year. Two learner responsive tools have been developed enabling comparison of retention and curriculum profile. 175 colleges (75%) have provided ILRs to RCU, therefore, although not comprehensive, the service provides a sound basis for comparison. The reports enable the College to compare retention at a set point in the year with other colleges` databases. The advantage is that this provides an in year retention comparison rather than an end of year data summary which is not available until well after the end of the academic year.

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f) Competitions – of particular note are:

- The Skillbuild competition for Construction students hosted at Station Park. James Evans was placed first in the Painting & Decorating section and will go on to the UK National Finals in September 2011 at Leeds College of Building.
- Hairdressing student Jurgita Belskeiene achieved first place in the regional heat of the UK Skills Competition.
- Su Ket Wong, Foundation Degree Communications and Network Technologies student achieved first place in the regional World Skills UK Microsoft IT Technician Competition. He will compete in the final in Scotland on 13 June 2011. It was noted that he scored 93% in the competition and is currently waiting to hear whether he has qualified for the national squad.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

11.37 IN YEAR RETENTION AND ANALYSIS OF STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

The Director of Curriculum & Standards introduced her report and drew the following to members` attention:

- The data presented shows withdrawals against the number of enrolments and not the number of students.
- At the point of withdrawal from a programme of learning, information is collected relating to the reason for withdrawal of students.
- As many students are enrolled on to multiple qualification aims, one student withdrawing from a programme may result in multiple withdrawals in terms of the data. This year has seen a significant increase in enrolments due to the requirement of foundation learning in 2010/11.
- The overall College percentage of withdrawals against enrolments has decreased by 4% to 7%. Some tutors have been unable to contact learners to ascertain the reason for their withdrawal. A high category of withdrawals is that described as 'other personal reasons and dropped out' with many learners being unwilling to disclose the reason or have it recorded.
- The percentage of withdrawals has decreased in all Schools of Learning with significant decreases in Academic Studies and Computer Science, Access and Inclusion and Creative Arts. It was believed that the College has managed to tackle some of the problem areas and has closed retention gaps seen in previous years.
- Comparisons with the same period last year show favourable decreases in the number of withdrawals in all age groups.
- The percentage of withdrawals between male and females is very similar with females being 1% lower than males.

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- There is only 1% difference in the percentage of learners who are White British (7%), and those of other ethnicity (6%) with both groups reflecting a 4% decrease.
- The percentage of withdrawals for learners with a disability or learning difficulty and those without has levelled at 7%.
- All levels of programmes show a decrease in the percentage of withdrawals with a significant reduction of 17% in HE provision and no withdrawals at level 5.
- Four Schools of Learning are currently at or above the College`s target retention rate of 92%.
- Retention in Construction and Building Services has risen by 7%, Hair, Beauty & Complementary Therapies by 5% and Academic Studies and Computer Science and Access and Inclusion each by 2%.
- Four schools have remained static, although Hospitality, Sports, Leisure and Travel Studies is 3% lower than 2010 and 7% below the College`s target in 2011.
- The College`s overall in year retention is 90%, which is 1% higher than June 2010.
- The gap in retention of 2% between male and female in 2009/10 has levelled to 90% for each gender.
- In June 2010 retention of learners with no learning disabilities or difficulty was 1% higher than those with LDD. This trend has been reversed, with retention of learners declaring LDD being 2% higher in June 2011.
- Retention of 19+ learners was 4% higher than 16-18 learners in June 2010 narrowing to 3% in June 2011.

Members reviewed the detailed data and questioned whether there was any particular reasons for the problems, which seem to be apparent in hospitality, sports and leisure. Members were advised that it is felt that there has been an element of 'overselling' of the course and its content and that this has been addressed for the new academic year. It was acknowledged by all that withdrawals and retention is a critical performance measure and that since inspection there has been a downward trend in success rates. All agreed that the College cannot take these problems lightly and there is a need to improve performance. Members were assured that the College is now undertaking much more significant follow up on withdrawn learners so that they can properly assess the reasons for withdrawal and action any provision concerns highlighted.

AGREED: to note the update in relation to In Year Retention and the Analysis of Student Withdrawals.

11.38 LEARNER VOICE STRATEGY – 3RD TERM RESULTS & COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS

The Director: Marketing & Communications introduced her report and confirmed that, at this time, she is able to provide a full year

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report for complaints. In terms of general patterns, she indicated that there were more adult complaints than those received from 16-18 year olds and that, generally, there is an even split between male and female. Of particular note this year, were complaints following unsuccessful applications to come to the College. Also the College has seen an increased number of complaints regarding student behaviour. The following information was brought to Members attention:

- A total of 51 formal complaints have been received throughout the year, which should be compared to 67 in 2009/10.
- Reasons for complaints are varied but, on the whole, relate to factors outside of teaching and learning.
- A range of focus group activities have been held throughout the year, key themes to come out and emerge from these meetings are:
 - a) Communication – work will be undertaken to improve communication with students for next year, this will include looking at specific information given to students to enable internal progression. It was acknowledged by all that this was a two way street and there had to be processes in place to enable students to meet staff half way.
 - b) EMA – many students have been concerned about the impact of the removal of EMA. 455 students signed a petition that was passed to the local MP.
 - c) College buses – a number of issues were raised throughout the year that will be picked up as and when required. The bus contract is currently out for tender and the College will ensure that the successful company is aware of expectations and has the capacity to meet them.
 - d) The lack of social and dining space – this has been raised as an issue by students primarily based at smaller sites. The specific issues about food choice and prices have been picked up throughout the year. The allocation of social space will be considered as part of the College’s accommodation strategy. Members were advised that at Derby Road, the College will be looking to relocate the Students` Union so that they have more than just a corner in West One, this should free up a little more social and dining space at Derby Road.
- The Students` Union have engaged in a number of activities throughout the year, culminating in a staff Oscars ceremony where 130 staff will be recognised for their contribution to students. Members` attention was drawn to page 26 which details the activities of the Students` Union, it was acknowledged by all that this has been a very busy year. It was noted that James Stafford has made a significant personal contribution to the SU Executive Team. Committee asked that their thanks be passed on to him.

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In terms of challenges for the new academic year, it was acknowledged that social space is a real issue and that this has to be tackled as part of a learning and communications strategy. Problems are experienced at Acorn Way and Sovereign Way which has very restricted space and innovative and quite different solutions will have to be considered to these problems.

Members were advised that the College has actually received the QDP survey information but that it was not ready to be sent out with this pack of papers. It was agreed that the QDP results and the National Learner Survey would be presented to the October meeting.

Dir: Mktg
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AGREED: to note the update provided in relation to Learner Voice Strategy and Complaints Analysis.

11.39 LESSONS OBSERVATIONS REPORT 2010/11

The Associate Director: Quality & Performance introduced her report and the following was brought to members` attention, the report covers the period September to 1 June 2011.

On campus:

- In September, 407 staff were originally 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 is now 359 observations due to staff on maternity leave, staff retiring and ACLS staff with no allocated hours. To 1 June 2011, 343 observations have been completed. The 16 delivery staff who have not yet received a graded observation are scheduled to receive an observation during June 2011 and, as a consequence, the target will be met.
- There has been a significant increase (10%) in the percentage of observations graded good or better and a 4% increase in the proportion of observations graded outstanding. There has been a considerable (11%) reduction in the percentage of observations graded satisfactory or inadequate to date this year. It was acknowledged that this progress is as a direct result of commitment seen by staff.
- The best teaching and learning has been seen at mixed level where 90% of sessions observed were considered good or better, at higher level there were 94% of sessions were considered good or better, and at level 3 where 93% of the sessions observed were judged to be good or better. The least strong teaching and learning has been seen at level 2, where 18% of lessons observed were considered satisfactory or inadequate.

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Off campus:

- In addition to observations of staff employed by the College, the College also carries out graded observations of teaching, learning, training and assessment delivered by our partner providers. This process currently operates on a two year cycle and underpins the College`s obligation to ensure quality.
- 107 graded observations have been completed to date (1 June 2011), during the two year cycle 2009 – 2011.
- To 1 June 2011, 49 graded observations have been completed this academic year. An additional 38 observations are scheduled to be completed June to August 2011.
- The overall profile of off campus teaching, learning and assessment this year has declined on the last year`s outcome at the same point. 78% of observed sessions were good or better in 2009/10, compared with 50% so far in 2010/11.
- The introduction of new partner providers and the introduction of new qualifications (apprenticeships) with established partner providers, have contributed to the decline in the overall grade profile.
- Improving teaching, learning and assessment with off campus partner providers will be a priority for the teaching and learning improvement team throughout 2011/2012. The highly effective activities and approaches that have been developed and successfully delivered to improve the teaching and learning profile for on campus provision will be adapted and enhanced to support the improvement needs of partner providers for off campus provision.

Members reviewed the data provided and accepted that there is a real issue to address relating to off campus delivery and that there is clear evidence of under performing partners. Members were advised that the change of delivery from Train to Gain to Apprenticeship frameworks has proved difficult and a big challenge for some providers and that the College is doing all that it can to support partners in the developing market. Members were assured that radical changes are in place and not simply ‘tinkering around the edges’ given the scale of the decline seen in lesson observations. Put simply, if partners do not improve, the College will cease to contract with them.

Members indicated that, in the next academic year, they would find it useful to have a three-year trend pattern and requested that data for 2009/10 and 2010/11 and 2011/12 be included in all reports so that they can clearly assess the significance of trends.

Members were also advised that the Teaching and Learning Improvement Team feel that when the College now engages with a new partner, there is real benefit in carrying out observations much earlier and this is being factored into the observation timetable.

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Members acknowledged the very difficult task of quality assurance and asked the Team not to lose site of College on campus provision as this was just as important as delivery by partners, although given the statistics seen, it was clear that the focus for improvement has to be on partners in the new academic year.

AGREED: to note the Lesson Observations Report for 2010/11.

11.40 SCHOOL REVIEW OUTCOMES TERM 2

The Director: Curriculum & Standards introduced her report. She indicated that the College is currently between termly reviews and therefore the data presented is fairly historic and relates to School reviews which took place in March 2011. She indicated that meetings were in place to review areas more often where poor performance has been identified.

The following information was specifically drawn to members' attention:

- School review 2 is a review of in year performance at the mid year point, with key data sets including retention rates by level and age group, and by gender, ethnicity and disability. Attendance and punctuality data, teaching and learning observations grade profiles, value added and a synopsis of external verifier reports are also reviewed. All agreed that this was a very useful tool for comparison.
- As at March 2011 the College's retention rate is 92%.
- The College has set a target of 91% attendance for 2010/11, 1% above OFSTED's rating of 90% being good. As at March 2011, four Schools of Learning were at or above the target, with five below.
- Schools have increased their rigour in marking lateness accurately with lateness recording for any learner arriving after the start of the class. All Schools confirmed their use of electronic registers.
- Courses performing below the 75th percentile were discussed and teams were asked to identify any emerging trends between performance, attendance, age groups for full time programmes and teaching and learning observation grades. It was noted that this information was used to agree courses to be provided in 2011/12 or discontinued.
- Functional Skills has become the sole Skills for Life qualification for full time learners in 2010/11 with in year retention remaining strong across the College.
- After attracting a negative value added score for A level and AS levels in 2007/8 and 2008/9, a positive score was achieved in 2009/10.
- The induction surveys were reviewed and learners' spontaneous comments confirmed how much they were

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enjoying College and learning and how well their tutors supported them.

- No teaching and learning has been observed as inadequate, grade 4 at the time of the School Review 2, (March 2011), although it was noted in the meeting that there have been some observations graded as inadequate since that time.
- School Management Teams were congratulated on the positive EV reports and confirmed that any action points have been addressed.
- When planning for 2011/12, teams were asked to be mindful of enterprise and employability qualifications as additionality, the use of e-portfolios, efficient timetabling, including staggered break times and the possibility of larger group sizes with joint delivery for common modules.
- Realistic expectations of the programme should be given rather than overselling of the course.

AGREED: to note the School Review Outcomes Term 2.

11.41 EXTERNAL VERIFICATION

The Associate Director: Quality & Performance introduced her report and explained that the purpose of the report is to inform members of the Standards Committee on how external verifier and external moderator reports underpin quality assurance and quality improvement processes.

The following information was specifically brought to members' attention:

- For the period 1 September 2010 to 31 May 2011 there have been 48 external verification and moderation reports. This compares with 63 reports for the same period in 2009/10.
- Awarding bodies have reduced the number of reports they provide and colleges have increased the rigour of their own internal systems. In particular Edexcel have introduced lead internal verifiers which has resulted in the College carrying out its own standards moderation in Academic Studies and Computer Science, Engineering and Transport Skills, Health, Care and Education and much of Creative Arts.
- Internal verification at the College has been very good for a long period of time. All reports received by the Quality Manager are logged on to a central record. Good practice and actions are gathered and progress with action plans is monitored.
- The quality, teaching, learning and performance team ensure that good practice is shared across all Schools of Learning and support is provided where necessary to develop and improve internal verification processes.
- Where awarding bodies apply sanction times to their reports, 13 reports improved their grading and two had a poorer tariff

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due to the technicality of learners work not been sampled at the visits. All other tariffs remain the same.

- Areas of good practice were noted as good support for learners, good record keeping, use of Onefile e-portfolio system, range of assessment methods and internal verification processes. Areas to address are standardisation and developmental feedback.
- The areas to address will be a key feature of the Teaching and Learning staff development sessions, the Teaching and Learning Coaching Programmes and Sharing Practice Initiatives throughout 2011/12.

AGREED: to note the External Verification Report provided.

10.42 TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY 2011/12

The Associate Director: Quality & Performance introduced her report, she confirmed that the intention of her paper was to inform the Standards Committee of the impact of the Teaching and Learning Strategy 2010/11 and to introduce a Teaching and Learning Framework 2011/12 and the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Partner Providers 2011/12. Given the importance of improving partner provision, she confirmed that the frameworks for 2011/12 have been split into two parts so that there can be clear focus and planning in relation to partner delivery improvements.

The following information was specifically brought to member`s attention:

a) Impact of the Teaching & Learning Strategy 2010/11

1. The Teaching & Learning Strategy 2010/11 was launched in 2010. All Schools of Learning were required to implement the strategy for September 2010. The impact and success measure, as identified within the strategy, confirms that the Teaching and Learning Strategy was embedded within all Schools of Learning. Furthermore, where the strategy is well embedded in the area, the strategy is having a significant impact. It was acknowledged that the strategy document has really supported the teaching and learning experience.
2. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of observations graded good or better and a 4% increase in the proportion of the observations graded outstanding. There has been a considerable reduction in the percentage of observations graded satisfactory or adequate to date this year.
3. 100% of deliverers who initially received a grade 3 or 4, have received intensive improvement coaching, which is mapped to the Teaching and Learning Strategy. All staff have improved their profile. When surveyed, 99% of the

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staff had used the check list and guidance contained within the Teaching and Learning Strategy 2010/11 to structure the learning experience for the students.

b) Teaching & Learning Framework 2011/12

1. The 2010/11 strategy has been adapted to make it fit for purpose. The Teaching and Learning Framework has been revised for 2011/12, to include guidelines and objectives to provide a framework for the improvement of teaching and learning as identified through the classroom observation process and reflect the guidance in the Common Inspection Framework September 2009.
2. The Teaching and Learning Framework applies to all provision, (all delivery staff, on and off campus delivery), delivered by West Nottinghamshire College staff.

c) Teaching, Learning & Assessment Framework: Partner Providers 2011/12

- This is a new framework, it used to be blended with College provision, but is now a very specific targeted document.
- Key aims of the framework are that, by the end of 2011/12, partner providers will have achieved the following:
 1. Teaching will always be good for every school, every partner provider and every course with all deliveries aiming to be outstanding.
 2. Learning and assessment are personalised to students needs, flexible and responsive, enabling all students to maximise their potential.
 3. All delivery staff to work with students to negotiate and set smart targets, students will know the progress they are making and will receive timely support enabling them to succeed and progress in work or further study.
 4. All staff to engage in staff development that is relevant to their responsibilities to deliver every aspect of this framework.

In terms of measuring the progress of the objectives, Members were advised that the implementation of the Teaching and Learning Framework 2011/12 and the review of the progress of the success measures will be undertaken through the Quality Assurance and the Quality Framework for schools.

In terms of monitoring the developmental work required, it was agreed that a mid year report would be presented illustrating the impact of both frameworks, to be at the meeting scheduled for 26 January 2012.

AD: Q&P

26.1.12

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AGREED to:

- 1) note the contents of the Teaching & Learning Report for 2010/11,
- 2) approve the Teaching and Learning Frameworks for 2011/12 and,
- 3) receive a mid year report detailing the impact of the Teaching and Learning Strategy at the meeting scheduled for 26 January 2012.

11.43 HIGHER EDUCATION

The Deputy Principal introduced this report and confirmed that the intention of this agenda item was to provide an overview of the meeting of the HE Academic Standards Committee held in June 2011 and to outline the process for review and revision of the HE Strategy. Members` attention was drawn to page 63 which summarised the content of the HE Academic Standards Committee meeting. In terms of the HE strategy for 2011/12 – 2013/14, it was explained that because of the significant changes seen in the HE sector, the College has had to totally review its strategy and that this cannot be done until there is a full review of the recently published white paper and the Board`s position is known in relation to HE fees. It was agreed that the HE Strategy would be presented at the first meeting in the new academic year.

Deputy
Principal

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AGREED: to note the HE update provided and receive a review HE Strategy for 2011/12 – 2013/14 at the next meeting.

Members` attention was drawn to paragraph 4.10 on page 66 and the stated indication to target second year students for bursaries. Members were advised that the College has been advised that they are not now able to do this, therefore there will be a slight change to reflect this.

11.44 QUALITY ASSURANCE & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORKS

The Associate Director: Quality & Performance introduced her report, she drew members` attention to the summary data provided on pages 67 and 76. Members all agreed that the data presented was impressive and showed a clear commitment to Quality Assurance and Quality Improvements. Members all agreed that staff were being exceptionally well supported and that the College had a number of really innovative initiatives in place.

AGREED: to note the report presented in relation to attainment of Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement frameworks for 2010/11 and to improve the Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Frameworks for 2011/2012.

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11.45 SAFEGUARDING

Members were reminded that the Safeguarding Action Plan for 2010/11 was developed under the strands of safe learning, safe environment, safe recruitment, protecting of young people and vulnerable adults and governance and reporting. It was confirmed that very good progress had been in the year against the action plan. Members` attention was drawn to appendix a, which details the progress against each aim and objective. Members were advised that the Safeguarding Development Plan for 2011/12 will be formulated at the start of the next academic year and that this will be presented at the first meeting of the Standards Committee in 2011/12. A key focus will be the continued work with partners.

Patricia Harman

13 Oct 2011

Members were advised that there has been one disclosure to the Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Team in the period 26 March – 30 June 2011, exact detail was cross referenced with paragraph 5.5, it was confirmed that this has been reported directly to the Board and that the incident did not necessitate referral to the local Safeguarding Board or to Children`s Social Care.

Members` attention was drawn to the appendix a action plan, where it was confirmed that all items in blue have been completed, but that they will remain on the action plan for continuing monitoring. It was reiterated again that the key focus for 2011/12 is partner provision. Members reviewed paragraph 5.5 at page 100, which gives trend analysis for all reporting periods/months. It was agreed that for a College of this size, there are relatively few reportable safeguarding incidents/occasions.

AGREED: to note the update provided and receive at the next meeting, a Safeguarding Development Plan for 2011/12.

11.46 COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE 2010/11

Members all agreed that 2010/11 had been a very busy and productive year.

- a) Members questioned whether the timing of the meeting had led to the most effective attendance and contribution. Members were reminded that the meeting had been scheduled immediately after the Board meetings with the intention being to invite other Board members to come, it was agreed that perhaps this message had not clearly got out to all Governors. The Clerk was requested to make sure that all Governors know that they are invited to all meetings of the Standards Committee on the days that they align with Board and that there would be food available immediately after a 15 minute break. It was also suggested that the unpredictable end point of the Board meeting may be a factor in effectiveness and participation.

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- b) Membership 2011/12 – members agreed that for the 2011/12 academic year membership should be Asha Khemka, Kate Allsop, John Holford, Philip Lancashire, Nigel Cooper-Fowkes and James Stafford.
- c) Terms of Reference – members reviewed the existing Terms of Reference and agreed that they continued to fully support the operation of the Committee and that there were no changes that they wished to seek from the Board.
- d) Work Plan 2011/12 – members were happy to approve the work plan proposed. It was noted that the scheduled meeting of 26 January 2012 had been missed from the second page of the agenda sheet.

11.46 AOB

There were no items of additional business.

11.47 DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

For the sake of clarity, the Clerk confirmed that the scheduled meetings for the next academic year were:

- 13 October 2011
- 17 November 2011
- 26 January 2012
- 26 April 2012
- 12 July 2012

Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Signed : _____Chair

Date: