

The College of West Anglia
Minutes of Performance Review and Quality Committee
8 October 2008 – 10.00 am Board Room

Present	Kate Atherton	Chair
	Paul Cotton	
	Cheri Crosley	
	Roger Ward	
	David Pomfret	Principal
Attending	Andrew England	Head of Organisational Development and Quality
	Arlene Clark	Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning
	Mark Reavell	Assistant Principal, Employer Engagement (part)
	Jill Francis	Executive Director, Customer Services and Cambridgeshire Liaison (part)
	Hilary Reid	Clerk to the Corporation

1 Apologies

Di Atkinson, Chris Barnes, Kate Barnett.

2 Minutes of the previous Meeting –21 May 2008

The Minutes of the meeting of 21 May 2008 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3 Matters Arising

(i) Page 1 – item 4 MLPs in Work Based Learning

The Principal advised that the College had secured contracts for work-based learning provision with the exception of Health and Social Care in Cambridgeshire. Overall Work Based Learning success rates were in excess of 70%, significantly higher than benchmark.

4 Appointment of Vice Chair

The Clerk invited nominations for the position of Vice Chair from within the membership of the Committee.

Roger Ward proposed Paul Cotton, seconded by David Pomfret.

There being no other nominations, **Paul Cotton was duly appointed Vice Chair of the Performance Review and Quality Committee for a further year.**

5 Train to Gain (T2G) Review

The Assistant Principal, Employer Engagement, provided a review of T2G supported by a Powerpoint presentation. He highlighted the following points:

- **Key Performance Indicators** – In 2007/08 there were 679 starts against a target of 900; 386 were due to achieve; 102 candidates withdrew; 40 remained on programme.

In December 2007, the College had been asked to leave the Forward Skills Consortium and a further three months elapsed before a new direct contract could be agreed with the LSC.

The College remains the best performing college within CB4N but does not hold such a strong position within its Forward Skills Contract (an on-going contract for existing recruitment).

- **Faculty Performance 2007/08** – Care was the largest contributor to T2G figures (249). A number of issues had arisen which included a higher than normal number of withdrawals (63) and higher than normal number still in learning past their end date (23).

49 of 66 Business and Retail candidates achieved and in Sport, all 3 students, achieved.

Of the 20 Hospitality candidates 15 achieved a good performance. In Technology there had been a high level of withdrawal (14) and a high number still in learning (12). These outcomes adversely affected the College's performance statistics.

- **Future Expectations** – Last year the College performance level was, on average, 2% below the MPL which will apply this year. The College is now acting independently and minimum level of Performance for 2008/09 has been set at 65%. Target for starts is 1000 and for Skills for Life (S4L) and ESOL 20% of that total (200).

To date 150 vocational NVQ's and 50 ESOL/S4L have been identified and a large number of partnership arrangements are in the early negotiation stage.

The targets for 2008/09 are challenging.

- **Issues around T2G:**
 - Inconsistent practice across the College which is being addressed.
 - Contractual changes made this year.
 - All employer-responsive work will be under the T2G banner.
 - A new customer relations management system has been purchased which will be launched across the College by October 2008.
 - Losing students prior to completion of study.
 - Employers' expectations for their staff cannot always be met by the College.

The Principal explained that there was an emphasis around internal structures to address some of the problems identified. A new College quality procedure had been implemented clearly setting out cross-college expectations and monthly monitoring mechanisms had been instigated to ensure data tracking was more sophisticated than in the past.

The report was noted.

Mark Reavell left the meeting at 10.30 am.

6 The Self Assessment Process – Writing the 2007-2008 Self Assessment Report (SAR)

The Head of Organisational Development and Quality (HoOD&Q) provided an update on the Self Assessment Process. He explained that the LSC had recently provided new guidance which may require revisions to the SAR process. The guidance had been received but was yet to be scrutinised and matched with the College's SAR model. The Framework for Excellence – due to be published in the Autumn with final detail – could result in a need to adapt the College's SAR framework in the future.

It was noted that, because of the achievement of Beacon Status and a responsibility to spread good practice, a further section had been added to the SAR entitled "Sharing Best Practice".

The Committee was asked to consider deferring future meetings to consider the SAR to the end of October to enable more accurate data to be presented in the draft. **Agreed.**

Action: Clerk

The SAR would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on 17 December 2008.

Action: AE

The current position was noted.

7 Complaints received within 2007-2008

The Head of Organisational Development and Quality presented a paper analysing complaints received in 2007-2008 and comparing that data with available benchmarks produced by a consortium of 25 colleges. The following information was of note:

- 166 complaints were received in 2007-08 (158 in 2006-07)
- 97.5 was the average number of complaints received across the consortium.
- For every 1,000 fte students, the benchmark was 23.5 complaints – CoWA's figure was 34.9.
- 42% of complaints were from the Isle Campus.
- Complaints clusters were around Estates (26.5%); On-course Administration (24.7%); General Administration (13.8%); Exams/Assessment (10.8%); relationships between staff and students (9.6%); IT (7.3%), and Student Transport (6%).
- 77% of complaints were responded to within 15 working days. The average across the consortium was 14 working days. To be in the top quartile complaints would need to be closed down within an average of 7 working days.

The Chair commented on the possibility of identifying some of the cluster issues within the student survey and drilling down into the problems in more detail in order to correlate the data. The HoOD&Q agreed to consider when the new questions were determined for the February survey. **Action: AE**

8 Complaints Received from May 2008 to September 2008

The Head of Organisational Development and Quality presented an analysis of complaints received during the period May 2008 to September 2008.

31 complaints had been received. Of note was the number of complaints received from Isle Campus for the second consecutive period. The Managers at Isle had been made aware of the issues and advised that further exploration of this trend would be undertaken.

Of the 31 complaints received, on-course administration received most – a continuing trend. 8 complaints around exams were received.

Governors requested further information on 5 of the complaints listed and the HoOD&Q provided explanations which were acknowledged by the Committee.

The report was noted.

9 Student Survey Spring 2008

A paper summarising the main findings from the Spring Student Survey was presented by the Head of Organisational Development and Quality. Of note were the following points:

- 16-19 full-time students were below the norm when compared to the rest of the college, as last year.
- Six Faculties were identified as scoring lower than the norm - HE remained in the same low scoring situation as last year.
- Students in King's Lynn and Milton were less positive than last year.
- Compared with other colleges, students perceive they have opportunities for trips, engaging with sports teams and know what to do if they are unhappy about their course.
- When compared with other colleges CoWA is in the lower quartile for catering outlets and cleanliness of buildings.

The high-level report provided detailed data regarding the sources of the responses; an analysis of which questions were asked of different types of students and of students on particular study programmes. Further detailed analysis by subject, site, demography, ethnicity and disability had been carried out and actions were being built on the findings.

Student perceptions on programme by Faculty had been shared with Heads of Faculties.

The Appendix to the report demonstrated the College's position in relation to others nationally. CoWA's results appeared mainly in the "mean" position with very little in the upper quartile.

In conclusion, the HoOD&Q noted the opportunity next year to compare data nationally across subject areas. Further, that a new concept was being developed around a number of students who were willing to participate as a group and respond to specific questions from time to time. There was a potential to follow the students as they left college and moved into jobs.

The Chair commented on the high response rate to the survey, at around 90%, and suggested the Students' Union may wish to become involved in the new group.

The report was noted.

10 Session Observations undertaken in 2007-2008

The Head of Organisational Development and Quality presented a report analysing all the observations undertaken in the academic year 2007-2008. The observation data was taken from several sources, including the session observation team, BW Consultants and Faculty Managers. The findings were benchmarked with national data from a consortium of colleges.

Observations for full-time and hourly paid staff had improved significantly – the total Grade 1 and 2 observations for full-time staff and Grade 1 observations for hourly paid staff were above the national average. Full-time and fractional staff had exceeded the national average by about 6 percentage points on grades 1 and 2.

Overall results were noted as follows:

- Level 1 observations – below national average
- Level 2 observations – about national average
- Level 3 observations – above national average, particularly in Grade 1
- Level 4 and ACL observations – significantly above national average

The HoOD&Q referred governors to the action plan for 2008-09 and invited their endorsement of the strategies proposed.

The Committee noted the outcomes from the Session Observations and agreed the action plan.

Jill Francis joined the meeting at 11.50 am.

11 Safeguarding Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy September 2008 (Amended)

The Safeguarding Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy, presented by the Executive Director, Customer Services and Cambridgeshire Liaison, had been amended to align it with the model put forward by the County Council. The original document had been approved by Corporation at its meeting on 9 July 2008.

Comments were invited from the Committee.

The Chair commented that, from research undertaken, it was evident that the financial abuse of people with learning disabilities was a growing problem. It was suggested that this should be reflected in the Policy document.

Further, the flow chart did not incorporate the actions relating to the retention and secure storage of documents and written records referred to at paragraph 10.1 and 10.2. and should be corrected.

The section dealing with allegations against members of staff (paras. 4 and 5 refer) should be included in the Governor's induction pack.

Roger Ward proposed recommendation of the revised Policy document to Corporation for approval, subject to the three actions noted above. Seconded by Cheri Crosley and agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk/JF

Jill Francis left the meeting at 12 noon.

12 Any Other Business

None.

13 Chair's items for briefing to Corporation

- Complaints
- Student Survey
- Safeguarding Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

14 Date and time of next Meeting

17 December 2008 – 10.00 am.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm