

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 21 APRIL 2008

1. PRESENT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs H Wright (Chair), Mrs P Smith, Ms S Daley, Mr J Rees, Mr M Locking and Mrs L Ladds.

Ms J Mooney took the minutes in Mrs J Hemmant's absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Gallagher and Ms B Ward.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2008 AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 28 January 2008 were reviewed and approved and the following points noted:

- JR informed the Committee that Inspection preparation is continuing however the College has not yet been notified of a date and do not anticipate it being prior to September. Regular Briefings will be sent to Governors and this will be arranged with effect from the next meeting.
- LL informed the Committee that Tenders for ESF bids with East Midlands and the East of England have been submitted. The East Midlands tender has been successful at £3.7M and will be shared with Lincoln College. Boston College have also secured a contract for a Skills for Jobs bid at £1.5M. The College is now entering into two national contracts with Yorkshire and Manchester.
- LL further informed the Committee that the College is now looking at 'self-employment for assessors' which is considered to be more flexible and an Open Evening is currently being arranged. PS raised the issue of liability and LL gave reassurance that these considered actions had been taken into account. More staff will need to be employed in this area to ensure we can deliver as it is a substantial and growing area.

3. CURRICULUM REVIEW AND PLANNING PROCESS 2008-09

JR informed the Committee that a wholesale review of the complete curriculum portfolio had recently been carried out which had been more in-depth than in previous years. The curriculum review has made each area more aware of the necessity for a 'whole' college approach.

The most significant outcome was some of the AS level provision is being rationalised to make the courses viable and successful.

Overall the College has broadened the offer rather than reduced it (quite difficult in the current financial climate) in order to retain choice.

A common timetable, after much consultation, has now been produced and will enable more cross-college opportunity for learners.

4. **QUALITY ASSURANCE LESSON OBSERVATIONS**

ML gave an overview of his paper and said that the prediction is that we are achieving better than last year. Ofsted inspection data is now 4-5 years old and is not being used as a benchmark any more.

The College has bought-in seven consultant inspection days from Protocol this year which have been invaluable.

ML said that the real impact on learners following the lesson observations would not be known until the end of the academic year.

Re inspection: It was felt that Ofsted will probably not be carrying out so many lesson observations when they inspect colleges in the future but will rely more on data.

The College observation model is rigorous: we observe new teaching staff in their first year which not all colleges do and in addition teaching staff are not informed of when these observations will be carried out.

On reviewing the graph information within the report PS suggested that the College should show 'outstanding' as well as 'unsatisfactory' grades which would give a fuller picture. This was discussed and agreed and ML will speak with Marketing to ensure the information is reproduced in the College Prospectus.

ML

5. **IN-YEAR RETENTION ANALYSIS**

ML gave an overview of the graphs within section seven of the papers. Overall the retention position is very good and is an improvement on last year's performance.

6. **STUDENT PERCEPTION OF COURSE ON PROGRAMME SURVEY SPRING 2007 (SPOC B)**

The results of this survey show that generally the position is positive against benchmark and the national average. However, it does show that there are a few issues which need addressing. Some of the issues may be due to a misunderstanding of the question posed and may need to be worded differently.

PS felt that the SPOC is looking a little old fashioned now and may need revamping. Discussed and agreed that this would be looked into post inspection and in the context of Framework for Excellence requirements.

7. **PEER REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT**

A number of staff had been involved in this process the result of which it was felt was a lot had been learned and it was an overall positive experience. The Peer Review had been undertaken with South Leicestershire College, Derby College and Tresham Institute. Very good relationships had been forged particularly with Derby College who had recently undergone a full inspection.

JR recommended that Boston College continues with the Peer Review even though current funding is coming to an end. Discussed and agreed.

8. QUALITY STRATEGY (tabled at the meeting)

Appx 1 distributed by JR at the meeting with a request that the Committee reads the content outside of the meeting. This issue will be discussed in full at the next meeting.

It is a governmental requirement that the Corporation formerly approves a Quality Strategy.

On looking through the document PS requested that a 'key' be appended with regard to acronyms used. Discussed and agreed – JR to update prior to the next meeting.

JR

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None raised.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

4.00 pm on 18 June 2008 in the Rochford Conference Room.

Meeting closed at 5.35pm.