

BOSTON COLLEGE**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON
21 JANUARY 2015**

1. PRESENT

Helen Wright (Chair), Iwona Lebedowicz, Orla McMahon, Jayne Mitchell, Amanda Mosek and Kieran Smith.

Also in attendance: Peter Cropley (Corporation member), Fiona Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality), David Hanson (Corporation member), Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation) and Vicki Locke (Quality Manager)

Attendance 86%

2. ACTION LOG

All items had been dealt with.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2014

The minutes were reviewed and discussed. It was agreed that the note in item 1 should be corrected to say Bishop Grosseteste University.

Discussions with Managers had taken place about improving response rates for surveys. Fiona Grady gave verbal feedback about the on-programme survey in progress at present. Student representatives had also been asked to stress the importance of surveys.

Although A-level success rates for individual institutions have not yet been published, the College results compared with National and Provider Group (similar colleges) averages for 2013-14 are as follows.

Qualification	College	Provider Group	National
A Level	98.4%	94.3%	95%
AS Level	70.8%	75.6%	80.4%

The success rates for all colleges are expected to be published in March 2015.

4. SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

Fiona Grady outlined the process undertaken and how comparators are considered. She advised that it was not just outcomes which inform the grades. Validation panels had considered the detailed information and validated grades.

David Hanson asked if the report is shared elsewhere. Fiona advised that it was now for internal use.

Peter Cropley queried comparative gradings of computing and AS/A2 and Fiona explained how these had been determined.

Orla McMahon queried impact of 1 year AS international learners and Fiona responded that the results were very similar with their data in or out.

Amanda Mosek also explained the influence of national comparators and context.

Peter queried the leadership and management grade and Amanda and Fiona explained the reasoning behind it.

Helen Wright queried the Sport overall grade and the rationale was explained.

Jayne Mitchell said that she found the commentaries extremely helpful in explaining the judgement calls.

Peter Cropley asked why sub-contractors did so well on English and Maths functional skills. Fiona advised that they are well managed, selected carefully and usually have specialised delivery.

Kieran Smith asked if those being weeded out on quality grounds were replaced. Amanda advised that the reduction in Adult Skills Budget impacted on this and allowed changes without replacement. The College also looked at what can be learned from Partnership delivery.

Peter Cropley left the meeting

Helen asked if there were now less sub-contractors which was confirmed. Amanda confirmed that the College always looks out for quality provision.

Jayne queried Engineering and Construction concerns and asked if that is a long term trend. Fiona responded that construction had had problems for a number of years but not on outcomes. Some issues had improved but the results were disastrous. Construction/Engineering/RSW have relatively new management and are complex so there is a focus on supporting and challenging.

Vicki Locke is meeting with managers to focus on additional work needed to improve staff buy in and move forward. Construction and Engineering had huge issues getting staff. Orla suggested 'management triangles' might help. Vicki agreed to look at this. David queried how this works and it was explained.

Helen queried L3 construction provision and Fiona confirmed that there was none due to staffing. For most areas dips in results related to staffing.

Jayne queried whether activities to improve were likely to succeed. Fiona explained that a lot of work is going on with apprenticeships. Most recent starts are looking good but prior starts still had impact on the data. Jayne felt that committee should look for improvement in these areas. David queried if it was an issue wider than this College which was confirmed. Fiona advised that overall rates are ok but there are areas of concern. Funding for apprenticeships is planned to go to employers but the timescales for this are unclear.

Iwona Lebedowicz said that she found the report clear and transparent. Iwona asked about the impact of migration and if the number of migrants is up or down. She advised that there is a need to be careful of definition of Eastern European, EU etc. Amanda advised that the College's profile is 6% Polish 6% Lithuanian and 4% Latvian.

Jayne queried performance on Access to HE in support of growth of Higher Education. Fiona advised that the benchmark for Access is really low and the College is well above it. Fiona explained how the College supported learners and how the impact of external changes affected learner motivation.

Fiona also explained a debate about how to categorise Access learners for analysis. Helen queried their funding and was advised that most are through 24+ loans. Data does not include international access where results are good.

Helen felt that it was a very good report which was easy to understand.

5. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Fiona Grady presented key points from the plan. Each programme area has these in their Quality Improvement Plans. An area which is one of the more challenging is tracking and work is focussed on ILPs. Fiona ran through areas being reviewed including long course adult retention (at present looking good).

Iwona Lebedowicz queried targets and Fiona responded that these were mostly national averages.

Jayne Mitchell queried whether there was a proportion of staff in mind to undertake functional skills/GCSE. Fiona identified that numbers were currently too low and the College was considering how to encourage participation. Jayne queried whether timescales needed to be adjusted and this was agreed.

Orla McMahon was surprised at the numbers of staff not having level 2 English/Maths. Amanda responded mostly this was in craft areas.

David Hanson asked about the Quality Improvement process which was explained.

Jayne queried the priority to improve the use of Management information. It was explained that there was to be a meeting with the MIS supplier next week to move this forward.

6. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

It was reported by Fiona Grady that these are mostly on track.

David Hanson queried how well employers understand apprenticeships. Fiona identified that employers have to understand the need to develop apprentices including the importance of Maths and English. Some understand better than others. Amanda Mosek pointed out that there were not appropriate apprenticeships to suit all employers.

Helen Wright queried the EV reports and it was explained that there were currently a small number, most would be produced from March onwards.

Orla McMahon asked if college attendance was expected to go down, and was advised that it was so it is rated amber.

7. TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATE

Vicki Locke presented the Teaching and Learning update and the grades were looked at including performance of new teachers' developmental observations. David Hanson asked if the process was the same as previously. Vicki advised that it was but amended to named day observations. This has worked quite well. Feedback is softer in developmental visits and sits beside support.

Amanda Mosek commented on concern about English and Maths. Fiona Grady advised that there was a suggestion of Maths and English going into IPRs.

Jayne Mitchell queried whether top concerns were improving and Vicki felt that they were. Some elements are challenging and need to be addressed specifically.

Amanda advised that the Teaching and Learning Hub had been nominated for a national award.

Helen Wright queried low attendance at J20 meetings and Vicki explained that this is being relaunched.

8. QUALITY MONITORING HE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Fiona Grady presented a report and advised that HEFCE does not want broadening access to have negative impact. Complaints procedures have to be reviewed and separate reporting to governors is required.

9. STUDENT GOVERNORS

It was agreed that further consideration needed to be given to student membership of the committee since their contribution is missed.

10. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on 22 April 2015.