

CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2010 AT 2.30PM**

Members:

Governors: James Wisdom (Chair)
John Bennett
Malcolm Parkinson
Madeline Hall
Irene Byard

Staff Governor: Bob Mallick

Student Governors: Vacancy

In attendance: Steve Dowbiggin, OBE, Principal Designate
Mary Prince, Vice Principal
Nicholas Evans, Director of Estates and Buildings
Damien Fallon, Director of Finance
Simon O'Hear, Director of Human Resources

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from David Triggs.

**2. MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE HELD ON
1 JULY 2010**

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
1 JULY 2010 NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

i. All three action points were confirmed as being completed.

ii. Amendment required to minute no. 7.ix: 14/07/07 should read
14/07/10.

MP

**4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ACADEMIC BOARD HELD ON
3 NOVEMBER 2010**

i. Committee members felt that the item on Learner Satisfaction gave a good flavour of student opinion but raised concern that students felt careers guidance inadequate. This could be due to a misconception students have about what 'career guidance' is. The revised survey has rephrased questions to clarify this. Students are directed to the Landex website to view available careers in the field. Careers Week had been positive with many employers attending and students visiting cross centres. Additional focus groups will also hopefully support the aims of Careers Week for students.

- ii. Six Month Offer – Heartbeat project has been a triumph over adversity (poor communication initially from Job Centre Plus). Participants are highly motivated.
- iii. The large number of new and revised courses presented for approval at Academic Board reflected the volume of work undertaken by staff in adopting QCF qualifications. The new qualifications can be more flexible. They are also essential in securing funding.

5. LEARNER SATISFACTION SURVEY – EXIT SUMMER 2010

- i. Learner Satisfaction Survey responses remain generally positive with the College remaining above the national average.
- ii. Language and phrasing of questions needs continued review to aid clarity of responses.
- iii. Chair noted the issue with careers guidance. May need to rephrase the question on future surveys. **MP**
- iv. 16-19 students are less satisfied than adult students. However, Course Representative meetings so far this academic year have been well attended and positive.
- v. Although areas at Crystal Palace Park have been criticised, many improvements and developments have occurred since the survey.
- vi. Student achievement has increased this year. More work is required to increase satisfaction at similar rate.
- vii. It was reported that issues with disruption by Barking and Dagenham College students had now been resolved.
- viii. Problem of constrained accommodation at Crystal Palace Park is much improved as building work nears completion. Students welcome the new facilities.
- ix. Members felt that the Action Plan was well written and thoughtful. MAH noted that there are variations in how staff complete the Action Plan. MP to agree consistent protocols for Action Plan with staff. **MP**
- x. It was noted that the Learner Satisfaction Survey 3 is the most important of the three surveys, with last year's attracting 1,200 respondents. Garden Design continues to be the strongest respondent area.
- xi. Minor amendments required on the Learner Satisfaction Survey Exit 2010 paper:
 - insert 'support' instead of 'justify' in the first line on page 2; **MP**
 - use alternative phrase to 'feeling safe' in first line of paragraph on 'Feeling Safe'.

6. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2010

- i. Staff were congratulated for completing 78% of actions to deadline given the high number of challenging actions. Noted that funded activity has increased and Beacon status has been maintained.
- ii. Following Ofsted's comment (2008) that the College's capacity to improve was satisfactory rather than good, the Quality Improvement Plan has been tightened and focused. The monitoring visit in 2009 recognised capacity to improve as good.
- iii. Retention rates have dropped slightly. Some students leave for employment. On the 2 year part time Level 3 programmes some students only wanted to do one year. Additionally, some students who believe they will fail leave early.
- iv. Members questioned whether the 'X' on page 5 should in fact be a 'P' and felt that the College was being too hard on itself. MAH explained that although reported staff satisfaction had improved over last year, this improvement had been made on top of a very low result - still more work needed. It was agreed that 'X' should remain despite subsequent improvements.

7. CURRICULUM UPDATES FROM HEADS AND DEPUTIES

Employer Responsive – presentation by Linda Hope

- i. It was reported that Horticulture apprenticeships at Level 2 had been running for 10 years, and Level 3 apprenticeships have increased this year showing progression. Level 2 Trees and Timber has run for 2 years and there is a new Level 3 Trees and Timber course. Floristry and Animal Care apprenticeships are not yet offered.
- ii. BDU continues to build links through networking (particularly with Arboriculture and Horticulture). Specific contacts within Schools are extremely useful.
- iii. Full cost training expected to expand.
- iv. With £5k of sponsorship, the College set up its own National Proficiency Testing Centre/Assessment Centre (NPTC) in September 2010. This is a potential growth area with costs and customer service being most important to employers. A high volume of 73 assessments were delivered in 3 months: 45 of these were external candidates bringing in £2k; 28 were internal and saved the College £3k. Centre has a 75% success rate which is rising.
- v. Further funding for Train to Gain which was popular with employers and staff, has now gone. College now offers Train to Gain diploma (£1,250). Environmental Conservation on a one to one basis is now the focus for Apprenticeships. Hard Landscaping and Sports Turf training will be delivered in the workplace.
- vi. Two employer course advisory committees have been set up and Lantra officers attends both committees.

- vii. BDU income generation:
 - £431k
 - £20k underspend (19-24 category)
 - £65k Royal Parks
 - £35k Employers fees
 - £44k Train to gain
 - £35 charge for use of BDU equipment
- viii. Board requested clarification on the Centre's liabilities since professional indemnity is not enough cover. NE to confirm with NFU. **NE**
- ix. Alongside further development of the programme and centre, future plans include a roadshow across London in Apprenticeship Week (February 2011).
- x. Members thanked Linda Hope for her comprehensive and stimulating presentation.

8. SELF ASSESSMENT REPORTS

- i. Apologies were made for gaps in achievement data and the draft format due to exam board issues. Staff continue to work on Self Assessment Reports and the Chair of the Committee will receive an electronic update of this before the Governing Body meeting. **MP**
- ii. Editorial suggestions were made about having each School on a different colour paper to aid review, and appreciate the use of sub-headings in bold format. Agreed to revisit and revise presentation. **MP**
- iii. Animal Care and Saddlery, Level 3 achievement much improved but Level 1 achievement has declined due to additional unit not being completed by some students. Achievement on primary learning aims is strong. Teaching grades had improved and this is reflected in the research report. **Agreed Grade 2.**
- iv. Arboriculture and Countryside Level 2 figures presented to the committee in Summer 2010 showed improvement in achievements but drop in retention; Level 3 reveal greater success in achievement and small drop in retention. Noted that national benchmarks may be inflated on the table as some colleges exclude failing students from funding claims. The number of apprentices is high, with apprentices achieving great success. SAR to be expanded to give more evidence to support a Grade 2. **Agreed Grade 2.** **MP**
- v. Floristry: **agreed Grade 1.**
- vi. Garden Design: **agreed Grade 1.**
- vii. RHS pass rates nationally are low, Capel's are amongst the highest across the country. **Agreed Grade 2.**
- viii. Learning Support has improved in Key Skills and has great strength in student support and Additional Learning Support. **Agreed Grade 2.**

- ix. BDU continues to improve with potential to move up to Grade 1 next year. **Agreed Grade 2.**
- x. MAH confirmed her view that the grade 2s given to the areas of 'Overall Effectiveness' and 'Key Questions' were supported by evidence. Some may develop to Grade 1 standard over the course of the year.
- xi. Members suggested that for the spring Academic Board meeting a paper be written focusing on overall effectiveness and key questions – moving from Grade 2 to Grade 1? **MP**
- xii. Members questioned why the brief section on 'Every Youth Matters' was in the report. It was clarified that this is to highlight and celebrate what the College has done. Agreed to omit the section in the final SAR. **MP**

9. QUALITY AND CURRICULUM UPDATE

- i. Members commented on the good reports regarding external verification swiftly followed by action plans.
- ii. Review of employer survey completed.
- iii. Extremely good team work regarding employer responsive.
- iv. Key points have been identified in the Higher Education Action Plan:
 - HEFCE Higher Ambitions initiative;
 - establishment of further progression agreements;
- v. Reduced fees noted on project activity due to boroughs reducing training budgets. The College continues to secure funds including that for Heartbeat, 'Real World' membership and the FE Innovation Efficiency fund. Need to focus on identifying and sourcing more funding in future. **MP**
- vi. Get Up and Grow bid led by Tottenham Hotspur Academy in partnership with London Borough of Enfield was unsuccessful. Planned contribution from London Borough of Enfield (£10k pa for three years) may still be available.

10. PROTECTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN COLLEGES – ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY

- i. Minor alterations to contacts noted. It was highlighted that all staff and new governors will require training as Ofsted will inspect the policy. College's internal audit in spring will be good practice for this. IB to provide assistance and to liaise with MP. SMT to provide training to governors in future. **IB,MP
SMT**

- ii. One member queried whether 'good practice' in 3rd paragraph under section 1 Background on cover sheet refers to all centres. MP clarified that it doesn't. MP to amend. **MP**
- iii. It was noted that the College refers to London Borough of Enfield in the cover sheet as they are a good provider of Child Protection (Grade 2).
- iv. It was felt that the last page on the 'Logging a Concern' form in Appendix B requested too much information to be able to complete 2nd section well. Members clarified that this information is needed in order to progress the case to the next stage. It was suggested that factual elements be moved to the end of the form and keep the priority to logging the 'event' and 'what happened'. Order of form to be amended but keep 'other children at home?' a priority. **MP**

11. CURRICULUM UPDATES – STANDING ITEM SHARING INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS

- i. Changes in Ofsted inspection focus were noted.
- ii. Funding changes will impact on student entitlement:
- issues over adult learning (loans for those over 25 years old);
 - first time Level 2s and Level 3s are being supported;
 - 25 year olds at Level 1 are being supported;
 - withdrawal of Education Maintenance Allowance for 16-18s is a significant loss for students, although providers can offer more limited help via Learning Support Award.
- iii. Scotland has confirmed continuing support for EMAs. (MPs are being lobbied for similar commitment for England and Wales.)
- ii. Congratulations given to the CE and team regarding surveys. Members questioned whether this will affect curriculum design. It was clarified that the meeting in January 2011 will decide the curriculum the College can provide, and that the College's programme is largely QCF accredited - except for two courses.
- iii. RHS Level 3 has been reduced in content and level; therefore, Level 4 will be available.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: 17 MARCH 2011, 1.30pm