



## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LEARNER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

**Held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 4:30pm in the Boardroom, Lakes College**

**PRESENT:** Eunice Simmons, Michael Doyle, Cath Richardson, and Gerald Humes

**APOLOGIES:** Susie Shepherd

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Jo Lomax (Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality), Howard Beanland (Quality Improvement & Executive Support Manager), Maggie Szuster (Student Support Manager) and Hilary Hemm (Clerk to the Governors).

Danny Braithwaite (Head of Faculty), Jill Campbell (Programme Area Manager, Hair and Beauty) and Carrie Ogilvie (a student in the department) all joined the meeting after the main business in order to provide members with a presentation on the activities of the Hair and Beauty department.

This meeting was the first for this committee following its establishment as a result of the revised committee roles agreed at the Corporation meeting on 11 December 2008.

### **01/09 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR:**

Members were required by the Standing Orders to appoint a Chair for the committee at this meeting. Eunice Simmons was appointed to chair this committee until the end of the summer term after which the position would be reviewed.

### **02/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

There were none.

### **03/09 TEACHING AND LEARNING OBSERVATION PROFILE REPORT 2008-09**

The Quality Improvement & Executive Support Manager presented this report. He reminded members that the results given were interim. He explained how the arrangements for the observations had operated this year and the changes to this system which he had outlined in his report. There were a number of reasons for the proposed changes and in particular the proposal for unannounced teaching observations. The aim was to obtain results that provided a more realistic accurate reflection of the teaching and learning. It was also to reduce stress caused to staff. The purpose of keeping the grade confidential was to prevent staff feeling that they had been "labelled" for the whole year, to enable the assessor and member of staff to concentrate fully on

feedback from the observation and therefore to be able to use the observation as a good developmental tool.

He confirmed that the results were moderated across the team using various tools.

The final results would be presented to the College Quality and Improvement Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of this interim Report be noted and the final report be brought to a subsequent meeting.

#### **04/09 OUTCOME OF CURRICULUM REVIEWS FOR THE AUTUMN TERM**

The Acting Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality presented her report which covered a wide range of topics. Highlights of her report included: 6 out of 8 teaching and learning mentors have been appointed. The Virtual Management Environment (VME) was now being used at least in part by approximate 80% staff. She was pleased with progress to date. The system would enable easier access to information, would enable student reports to be generated and in due course would enable employers to have direct electronic access to their employees' records.

The management of Work based Learning (WBL) was proving more complex due to the current economic climate. Where learners had lost their jobs while still training, College was using its best endeavours to enable them to complete their course and obtain a qualification. Where necessary LSC consent was sought and obtained for this. In response to a member's query she confirmed that College was working to ensure it had the capacity to deal with these changes and in some cases was treating the activity as being to serve the local community rather than one which generated funding for College.

In Train to Gain, growth had come in Level 3 courses, with Hairdressing proving exceptionally successful, bucking the general trend.

Where retention and achievement of individual students was an issue, there had been close monitoring of absence with a co-ordinated approach across various departments to track unexplained absences in particular.

She undertook to identify in future reports the financial costs involved in any parts of her Report.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the Report be noted.

#### **05/09 SUCCESS RATES AND COURSE MONITORING REPORT**

The Quality Improvement & Executive Support Manager presented his report. He was pleased to be able to report that on the 2007/08 figures presented to the LSC, Lakes College was the highest performing college in Cumbria for overall success rates. Total success rates were considerably higher than the national average.

He took members through the various statistical tables of results, explaining that early intervention where difficulties had shown themselves had made a considerable impact on success rates. Use of the VME had also been very helpful to staff.

His predictions for success rates for the current year were optimistic but came with the caveat that it was early in the year and they may change throughout the rest of the year.

He also dealt with courses “Under Review” and subject to “Special measures “ and informed members that where on one particular course the benchmark was set very high, College was running a parallel alternative course so that students had the opportunity to choose which route they wished to take. For many students the move from course assessment to assessment by examination was a difficult one.

He undertook to ensure that data in future reports was dated so that the committee could track progress more easily.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the Report be noted.

## **06/09 THE LEARNER EXPERIENCE**

The Student Support Manager provided members with a review of a number of aspects of student life at Lakes and the ways in which College ensured that the student voice was not only heard but also acted on. Members discussed various issues including accommodation for students especially at break times; lunchtime activities; various levels of consultation with students; collaboration activities; tutorial arrangements and the student questionnaires.

There followed some discussion on the non-smoking policy. It was suggested that the local NHS may be able to provide resources including possibly free patches to assist a campaign of no smoking on site. She undertook to follow up this suggestion. She also undertook to ensure that “Added value” data was presented to the committee where appropriate.

The Chair thanked all the officers for their contributions to this first meeting and requested that everyone ensure that reports and discussion at future meetings be geared towards the learner experience, in accordance with the committee terms of reference.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the Report be noted.

This ended the formal part of the meeting.

## **PRESENTATION BY THE HAIR AND BEAUTY DEPARTMENT**

Danny Braithwaite (Head of Faculty), Jill Campbell (Programme Area Manager, Hair and Beauty) and Carrie Ogilvie (a student in the department) all joined the meeting at this point and provided members with a very informative presentation on the activities of the Hair and Beauty department.

There was good team work across the department, with much work on enrichment of the courses and confidence building skills to enable students to be able to care well for their customers.

The department currently works with 68 hairdressing salons, many of which have staff who are ex-students. There was an excellent record of students gaining employment after completing their courses and relations with local employers were very good.

The department had 15 Hair and 8 Beauty groups of students, working in realistic work environments.

It was hoped to introduce a foundation degree course in salon management in September 2009.

The meeting closed at 6:35pm