

Quality & Standards Committee

Monday 5th December 2016

Minutes

Present: Cindy Berman
Lynn Blades (Chair)
Amanda Forshaw
Marco Macchitella
Emina Pignatelli
Akash Varia
Gloria Wells

In Attendance: Ian Hooper
John Rubinstein
Peter Thompson
Beth Yap

1.	Governance
2.	Minutes of Previous Meetings
3.	Matters Arising
4.	Results Analysis 2015-16
5.	Analysis of UCAS Outcomes
6.	Quality Improvement Plan
7.	Student Satisfaction Survey Results
8.	Risk Management
9.	AOB
10.	Dates of Next Meetings

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Ben Charles.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

1.3 Terms of Reference

As a matter of good practice, all committees review their terms of reference at the first meeting of the academic year.

It was agreed to approve the terms of reference of the Quality & Standards Committee with no changes.

1.4 Meeting Times

It was agreed that the meetings of the Quality & Standards Committee would continue to start at 6:00pm.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 20th June 2016 were approved with minor amendments and will be signed by the Chair.

BY to ensure minutes are signed.

2.2 As no minute was deemed to be confidential, the minutes would be uploaded to the College website in their entirety.

BY to upload to web

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Results Analysis 2015-16

The Committee was presented with an overview of the 2015-16 examination results.

Ian Hooper informed the Committee that overall A Level results were lower this year, which was partly expected due to the poor AS results in 2014-15. The pass rate has now fallen to 98.1%, which is in line with the national average. However the Committee was pleased to note that 23 subjects had a 100% pass rate.

The Committee noted that the rate of 'high grades' fell to 63.6% but this is still much higher than the national average of 52.9%. In addition to this the Committee was also pleased to note that the percentage of students achieving the A* grade rose to 8.5%, which is above the national average.

Ian drew attention to the high-grade trends by gender, explaining that there is considerable variation between girls achieving high-grades in arts/humanities (72%) and maths/science (53%).

The Committee noted this with concern as girls generally enter the College with higher grades than boys but acknowledged that the transition from GCSEs to A Levels is difficult, particularly given that some GCSEs are 60% coursework.

In response to a question from governors, Ian outlined the main causes for the College's decrease in value-added:

- The student body has changed in recent years and are less used to completing homework.
- Students generally travel further and face more personal issues.
- The entry criteria is now higher than it has been in previous years and this is generally harder to add value to.
- GCSEs are less effective in preparing students for A Levels in maths, science and language courses.
- The subjects are delivered in a relatively short amount of lesson time (4 hours 10 minutes a week compared to at least 5 hours in schools).

The Committee was then informed of the College's plans to address these issues by:

- Ensuring that all departments are setting work that demands more thought and resilience.
- Emphasise the difference of A Levels compared to GCSEs and induct students on expectations.
- Changing the structure of the week to a 6-block timetable, which will allow more student/teacher contact time.
- Using staff training and ASTs to focus on 'outstanding' teaching.
- Better monitoring of underachievement, poor attendance, punctuality and behaviour.

The student governors highlighted areas that they think could be improved within the College, such as teachers always collecting in homework and providing opportunities for students to articulate what they have learnt. The Committee were informed that literacy is becoming an issue for students as the

use of slang and 'text language' is having an impact on written work and assessments.

The Principal stated that it would be useful to liaise with another Sixth Form College that have a similar intake to compare value-added scores.

JR to raise this at a future meeting of the Maple Group.

Ian explained that the demand from students is in the STEM subjects, and this is where the College has grown, despite these subjects achieving the lowest value added scores.

The student governors explained that some students are opting to choose STEM due to pressure from parents to study medicine. The Committee agreed that this is an important issue that needs to be addressed by the College during its admissions process.

5. Analysis of UCAS Outcomes

John Rubinstein presented the Committee with the 2016 UCAS summary, highlighting that that 565 students were provisionally offered a place at their desired university. John reminded the Committee that many students opt to take a 'gap year'.

The Committee noted that the number of medicine offers has increased from 11 to 22 in the last year and congratulated the College on this success.

John explained that Oxbridge offers are slightly down from 11 to 9 from last year and also highlighted that 46% of students were offered a place at a Russell Group university.

The Committee was also informed of the top universities that students progress to and the subjects that are taken, noting that 15% of students go on to study 'social studies' at university.

In response to a question from governors, Ian Hooper explained that following the success of the medicine academy the College is looking to open more academies such as law and journalism.

6. Quality Improvement Plan

Peter Thompson presented the Committee with the College's quality improvement plan highlighting that this is now been written at the start of the academic year rather than with the SAR in December.

The Committee noted that the main targets set out in the QIP are to improve high grades in A Level STEM subjects and to improve A Level value-added in all subjects.

The plan goes on to outline the actions that the College will put in place to achieve these targets, which includes using successful upper students to run subject tutorials and act as mentors/subject leaders, visit successful STEM departments in other schools/colleges and challenging 'middle students' to ensure that no student is overlooked.

The Committee agreed that this is a challenging quality improvement plan with

good targets for the College. Governors also requested that the College looks to improve communication with parents.

Governors questioned how the Committee would monitor the success of these actions at future meetings. Peter explained that some would be difficult to measure but the success will be the outcome of the overall target.

In response to a question from governors, John explained that many of these actions are focusing on teaching and learning and being outstanding in this area should impact overall student progress.

7. Student Satisfaction Survey Results

The Committee discussed the end of year student satisfaction results, noting that ‘teaching has been good’ has decreased from 93.6% to 89.6%. Ian Hooper explained that SLT has been working with students to understand what a ‘good’ lesson looks like and the lessons that have the greatest impact are ones that consider assessment objectives and how to achieve them and ‘practical’ lessons. Many students felt that unsuccessful lessons were those that covered the topic too fast, which should change when the College reverts to a 6-block timetable.

In response to a question from governors, Ian explained that the survey has a return rate of around 50%.

8. Risk Management

The Committee considered the risk management plan, noting the risks for which it has responsibility. In particular, the Principal drew attention to the risk of the College losing its ‘outstanding’ status explaining that Ofsted are extremely focused on value-added, which could see the College reverting to good.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Dates of Next Meetings

12 th December 2016	BOARD
9 th January 2017	Annual Strategy & Training Event
20 th February 2017	Quality & Standards Committee
20 th March 2017	BOARD
19 th June 2017	Quality & Standards Committee
10 th July 2017	BOARD

The meeting concluded at 8:00pm