



St Helens College

**ST HELENS COLLEGE CORPORATION**

**MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE HELD AT  
1.00 pm on MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2015  
IN THE BOARD ROOM, TOWN CENTRE CAMPUS**

***MINUTES***

**MEMBERSHIP:**

- \* Mrs E Brocklehurst (**Chair**)
- \* Dr J Burford
- \* Mr N Gribben
- \* Mrs S Jee
- \* Mr J Middlehurst
- \* Mr P Round

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr B Dean, Deputy Principal  
Mrs C Lascelles, Director of Contracts and Data Analysis  
Mr M Hodgetts (for minute number 820 only)  
Mrs C Jones, Clerk to the Corporation

**Minute Number 820 was taken as the first agenda item with the details recorded within agenda order.**

**813 ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR**

It was proposed by Mrs S Jee seconded by Dr J Burford and duly **agreed** by the Committee that Ms E Brocklehurst be re-appointed as Chair of Standards and Curriculum Committee for 2015/16.

**814 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest notified.

**815 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**816 NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business notified.

## 817 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 JUNE 2015

The Minutes of the above meeting were **agreed** and signed as a correct record.

## 818 MATTERS ARISING

- a Minute 806.1 p2 – SAR: Quality Improvement Plan: progress report  
The Deputy Principal reported that, following a request made by Governors at the last meeting, overall student attendance in 2014/15 was 86.5% increasing to 87.2% excluding functional skills. Following a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that all schools are performing below the national average in English and maths locally and all colleges are well below the schools' position.
- b Minute 807 p3 – Learner Performance Report  
The Principal reported that the College had introduced a Progress Coach in the Department of Computing and Creative Industries which focuses on pastoral care. Should this development prove to be successful, the approach would be rolled out across other departments.

## 819 ANNUAL PROPOSED CYCLE OF BUSINESS FOR STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE 2015/16

The Committee's proposed cycle of business for 2015/16 was endorsed by the Standards and Curriculum Committee, subject to progress reports in relation to the 'A' level Academy and in English and maths being included at each meeting. It was noted that Governors had agreed that the timing of a staff survey (term number 7) would be at SLT's discretion. It was noted this was a live working document and could therefore be subject to change throughout the year.

**ACTION: Clerk to amend the Annual Cycle of Business to include 'A' level Academy and English and maths progress reports**

## 820 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT: PROGRESS REPORT

Mr M Hodgetts, the T,L&A Manager, reported that, of the 272 observations undertaken in 2014/15 (32 more than in 2013/14), the following grades were reported:

- Grade 1 = 27% (73)
- Grade 2 = 66% (179)
- Grade 3 = 6.5% (19)
- Grade 4 = 0.5% (1)

Those staff not observed in 2014/15 are given a priority for 2015/16. Following a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that there are between 20-30 new staff this year. The process includes a robust external moderating process.

CPD workshops, and departmental meetings to embed marginal gains, have been held with all delivery staff attending at least one session. The College would be applying for a beacon award in relation to the Marginal Gains methodology.

The proposals to support the move with regard to observations to 'progress over time' for all students was presented, with students to have at least three weeks' classroom work present in every session, including the retention of work at the commencement of the course to be able to show the distance travelled since the start of the year. This process had also been rolled out through CPD sessions and would be closely monitored through learning walks and through the observation process.

Following a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that the practical application of this process has been devolved to individual lecturing staff. A standard approach to the presentation of work and marking and correction of English and maths had been rolled-out across the College. Creative assessment methods will be encouraged including tutor, self and peer assessment and double-loop marking/learning being an important element.

The Deputy Principal added that, although OFSTED will not be awarding graded judgements to lesson observations, the College would continue to adopt this approach and this was endorsed by Governors.

**Mr M Hodgetts left the meeting at this point and was thanked for his presentation**

## **821 ENGLISH AND MATHS REPORT**

The Vice Principal presented a report which provided Governors with a summary of the GCSE English and maths results in August 2015 and presented an outline of the measures put in place to improve the achievements and performance in the 2015/16 Academic year.

It was agreed that the conversion rates from D and E grades into A\*-C grades requires a significant focus this year. The volume of X grades ie those students who fail to sit more than 50% of their exams, was also highlighted, and it was noted that these results impact negatively upon the achievement rates. Governors endorsed the proposal that non-attendance at English and maths will result in students being subject to disciplinary procedure with the ultimate a sanction of exclusion from the College, as non-attendance to part of the study programme can no longer be an option. The Policy contains a minimum target of 90% attendance for each individual to English and maths this year.

The English and maths Report was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee, and Governors supported and endorsed the robust actions and approach being taken by the College, as detailed within the report. This included approval of the English and Maths Policy for 2015/16.

The Committee requested an English and maths level progress report, at every future meeting.

**ACTION: Deputy Principal to present a progress report for English and maths at every future meetings**

## 822 AS LEVEL PERFORMANCE 2014/15

The Deputy Principal presented a report which provided Governors with a summary of the AS level results in August 2015 and presented an outline of the measures put in place to improve the achievements and performance in year 2 of the 'A' level provision. Governors concurred with the Executive that the results were disappointing this year, and the very early interventions that have already been taken were outlined, which includes 22 students progressing to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 'A' levels and re-sitting AS level where appropriate.

Following a question from the Committee as to why some students were allowed to enter an examination when there were clear indications that they would not achieve, it was expressed that this was due to the College's culture of supporting students as far as possible by providing them with at least an attempt at passing the examination. This has now been changed and the Deputy Principal will ensure that only students with good progress and attendance will be entered for examinations in the future. Students and parents had been informed.

Some mock examinations were not of sufficient high standard and this will be addressed going forward. It was confirmed that there is a direct correlation between attendance and achievement. Following a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that there was some correlation between teaching and achievement and this has been addressed with the details outlined. All of these issues will be addressed going forward, with the standards reinforced to all 'A' level Academy staff and students.

Parental involvement would be enhanced, as would the individual student tracking processes through the scheduling of staff weekly meetings.

The AS Level Performance Report was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee, and Governors supported and endorsed the robust actions and approach being taken by the College, as detailed within the report. The Committee requested an 'A' level progress report, including a report on ALPS if available, at every future meeting.

**ACTION: Deputy Principal to present a progress report for the 'A' level Academy, and ALPS (when available) at every future meeting**

## 823 LEARNER PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Contracts and Data Analysis presented the latest Learner Performance Report.

Following a question from the Committee about which courses were still awaiting results, it was confirmed that this was mostly attributable to certificates and diplomas for 16-18s and adults and a small amount of functional skills. There are 321 results outstanding, which could account for 7-8% achievement should they all outturn as being positive.

It was noted that the condition of funding rules introduced in 2014/15, where 16-18 learners had to be enrolled on both English and maths unless the student already had a GSCE A\*-C result, had clearly had an impact on learner success compared to the 2013/14 success rates.

The Principal added some additional information to the reasons for the decrease in success rates for 19+ learners, which included the higher level of examination for adults, and it was confirmed that markbook would be utilised for all formative assessments in English and maths this year, making tracking of examinations results easier.

The Committee asked for a check on the retention figures on the graph and in the commentary relating to 16-18s which do not correlate.

**ACTION; Director of Contracts and Data Analysis to review the retention figures for 16-18s outlined on the graph and in the commentary and to confirm which is the accurate figure**

The Committee asked why there is such a significant decrease in 16-18 retention towards the middle/end of the year, and the Principal confirmed that this exercise would be analysed in detail through a small internal working group.

**ACTION: Principal to convene a working group to analyse the reasons for the decline in 16-18 retention towards the year end**

The Deputy Principal gave the best case year-end position in relation to success rates for 2014/5, and a clearer position should be available for this week's Resources Committee.

One Committee Member asked about the apprenticeship position and the correlation with the data between the commentary and the appendix statistics. The Director of Contracts and Data Analysis is checking the figures with Pro-achieve as the reason could be due to a software glitch. It was agreed that all data should be derived from one source to ensure consistency.

**ACTION: Director of Contracts and Data Analysis to review the appendix and the commentary to the LP report relating to apprenticeships**

The Principal reported that the Chair of the Corporation has requested a full report on the effects of English and maths on success rates to be presented at this week's meeting of Resources Committee.

The Learner Performance report was accepted by the Standards and Curriculum Committee as presented.

## **824 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS 2014/15**

The Clerk reported that there had been no items of confidential business reported to the Standards and Curriculum Committee in 2014/15. This would form part of an annual report on confidentiality to be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Board scheduled on 7 December 2015.

**ACTION: Clerk to present an annual report on confidential items to the Corporation**

## **825 ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee undertook the annual review of the Standards and Curriculum Committee's Terms of Reference, which had been populated with evidence to support each statement in order to ensure that the Committee was fulfilling its delegated responsibilities.

It was **agreed** that there were no identified amendments recommended for approval to the Corporation.

**826 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING NEEDS**

As a model of good practice, each Committee is requested to undertake a review of any training/development/information needs specific to the work of each Committee. Any specific development requirements specifically relating to the Standards and Curriculum Committee were therefore invited for notification to the Clerk.

**827 URGENT BUSINESS (AS NOTIFIED UNDER MINUTE NUMBER 816 ABOVE)**  
There were no items of urgent business notified.

**828 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 1.00 pm on Monday 28 September 2015.**

**KEY OUTCOMES:**

**LEARNER PERFORMANCE REPORT:** The Standards and Curriculum Committee continues to closely monitor and scrutinise the Learner Performance position.

**TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT: PROGRESS REPORT:** The Standards and Curriculum Committee received an update on the observation grades for 2014/15 and the new improvement strategies that have been put in place to support continuous improvement eg Marginal Gains and 'progress over time'.

**ENGLISH AND MATHS REPORT:** The Standards and Curriculum Committee continues to closely monitor the progress of English and maths and received a report at this meeting which provided a summary of the GCSE English and maths results in August 2015 and presented an outline of the measures put in place to improve the achievements and performance in the 2015/16 Academic year. The Committee has requested regular report on English and maths.

**AS LEVEL PERFORMANCE 2014/15:** The Standards and Curriculum Committee received a report which provided a summary of the AS level results in August 2015 and presented an outline of the measures put in place to improve the achievements and performance in year 2 of the 'A' level provision. The Committee has requested regular reports on the 'A' Level Academy.